

AFRICA PEACE AND CONFLICT JOURNAL

Executive Editor

Amr Abdalla, *University for Peace, Vice Rector*

Managing Editor

Tony Karbo, *University for Peace Africa
Programme, Senior Programme Officer and
Associate Professor*

Guest Editor

Naison Ngoma, *Dag Hammarskjöld Institute for
Peace and Conflict Studies, Copperbelt University*

Assistant Managing Editor

Catherine Nelson

EDITORIAL BOARD

Amr Abdalla, *University for Peace*
Bertha Kadenyi Amisi, *Syracuse University*
Hizkias Assefa, *Eastern Mennonite University*
Elham Atashi, *Goucher College*
Johannes Botes, *University of Baltimore*
Benjamin Broome, *Arizona State University*
Jean-Bosco Butera, *University for Peace*
Kevin Clements, *University of Queensland*
Alyson Friendak, *George Mason University*
Rachel Goldwyn, *CARE International UK*

Michelo Hansungule, *University of Pretoria*
Geoff Harris, *University of KwaZulu-Natal*
Monica Kathina Juma, *Kenyan Ambassador to the
African Union and Ethiopia*

Tony Karbo, *University for Peace*

Mary E. King, *University for Peace*

Marion Keim Lees, *University of Western Cape*

Gilbert Khadiagala, *University of the
Witwatersrand*

Terrence Lyons, *George Mason University*

Pamela Machakanja, *Africa University*

Guy Martin, *Winston-Salem State University*

Erin McCandless, *Journal of Peacebuilding and
Development*

Christopher Mitchell, *George Mason University*

Tim Muriithi, *Institute for Transitional Justice and
Reconciliation, Cape Town*

Susan Allen Nan, *George Mason University*

Edith Natukunda, *Makerere University*

Sulayman Nyang, *Howard University*

Jan Pronk, *Institute for Social Studies,
The Netherlands*

Martin Rupiya, *Office of the Prime Minister,
Zimbabwe*

Mary Hope Schoewbel, *United States Institute
of Peace*

Craig Zelizer, *Georgetown University*

ISSN 1659-3944

Copyright ©2011 University for Peace

University for Peace Africa Programme

PO Box 2794, Code 1250 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tel: +251-11-6180991 Fax: +251-11-6180993 www.apcj.upeace.org

Jean-Bosco Butera, *Director*

Tony Karbo, *Senior Programme Officer*

Samuel Ewusi, *GLP, Assistant Professor*

Marcel Leroy, *Senior Research Associate*

Tsion Abebe, *Programme Officer*

Golda Keng, *GLP, Programme Officer*



Twodros Assefa, *GLP, Logistics Officer*

Rahel Getachew, *Finance Officer*

Samrawit Tesfaye, *Administrative
Officer*

Tsega Desta, *IT Support*



University for Peace



The mission of the University for Peace is to provide humanity with an international institution of higher education for peace with the aim of promoting among all human beings a spirit of understanding, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence, to stimulate cooperation among peoples, and to help lessen obstacles and threats to world peace and progress in keeping with the noble aspirations proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations.

—Charter of the University for Peace, Article 2, approved by the
UN General Assembly in Resolution A/RES/35/55



Publication of the *Africa Peace and Conflict Journal* is made possible by
the financial assistance of IDRC.



AFRICA PEACE AND CONFLICT JOURNAL

Guidelines for Contributors

The APCJ is a refereed journal with a panel of international editorial advisors and readers. All articles are anonymously peer reviewed by at least two referees. We welcome the following types of contributions year round and will periodically issue calls for papers on specific topics:

Articles and case analysis—critical case studies or thematic discussion and analysis of topical peace and conflict themes (7,000 words maximum, including endnotes; abstract, 150 words or less).

Briefings/practice—training or intervention strategies, outcomes and impacts, policy review and analysis, country situational updates, and so on (2,000 words maximum).

Book reviews—critical assessments of new books that integrate peace and conflict concerns (1,500 words maximum).

Resources—reports, upcoming conferences and workshops, notices of new books and videos, e-communications, and Web sites that link peace and conflict studies (150 words maximum); documents, declarations, communiqués, and other relevant nongovernmental or multilateral organizational statements (1,000 words maximum).

The editors will consider only material that meets the following requirements:

- Submissions must be original and cannot have been published previously, online or in print. They cannot be under consideration for publication by another journal or organization.
- Submissions should be prepared electronically, preferably in Microsoft Word.
- For notes and references, use the short-title system (not the author-date system) as per *Butcher's Copy-editing: The Cambridge Handbook for Editors, Copy-editors and Proofreaders*, 4th edn (2006).

Authors should include full name, brief biography (with institutional affiliation), and contact details, including mailing address and telephone number.

Submit to editor@apcj.upeace.org and assted@apcj.upeace.org.

The editors reserve the right to alter all manuscripts to conform with APCJ style, to improve accuracy, to eliminate mistakes and ambiguity, and to bring the manuscript in line with the tenets of plain language.

AFRICA PEACE AND CONFLICT JOURNAL: ISSN 1659-3944. Published in June and December by the University for Peace Africa Programme, PO Box 2794, Code 1250, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and the University for Peace, El Rodeo de Mora, Ciudad Colón, Costa Rica.

Design and composition: Auburn Associates, Inc., Baltimore, Maryland, United States
Printing: Appi Sàrl, Gland, Switzerland

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION RATES: African subscriptions, US\$50 for institutions, US\$25 for individuals. International subscriptions, US\$100 for institutions, US\$50 for individuals.

ELECTRONIC ACCESS: Visit www.apcj.upeace.org or e-mail the managing editor at editor@apcj.upeace.org.

COPYRIGHT: © 2011 University for Peace Africa Programme. All rights reserved. Requests for permission to reprint material from this publication must be mailed to Managing Editor, UPEACE Africa Programme, PO Box 2794, Code 1250, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, or e-mailed to editor@apcj.upeace.org.



AFRICA PEACE AND CONFLICT JOURNAL

Volume 4 Number 2 December 2011

CONTENTS

Guest Editor's Note	v
From the Managing Editor	vii

Articles

The Nexus among Democracy, Economic Development, Good Governance, and Peace in Africa: A Triangulative Analysis and Diopian Remedy	1
<i>Abdul Karim Bangura</i>	
Managing Intra-State Conflicts: Promises and Failures of Peace Agreements in Côte d'Ivoire	17
<i>Mathieu Bere</i>	
The Dialectics of Faith-Based Peacebuilding in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	29
<i>Ayo Whetho and Ufo Okeke Uzodike</i>	
The Illusion of Home and the Elusion of Peace: Framing the 'Return' of Liberian Refugee Women	42
<i>Olajumoke Jacob-Haliso</i>	
A Critical Assessment of Development Views of Gender in Africa	54
<i>Ibrahim Bangura</i>	
Acting Out of Conflict: Using Participatory Theater as a Tool of Peacebuilding in Rwanda	66
<i>Sydney Smith and Elise Webb</i>	

Briefings

- The War on Women and Children: South Africa and Anomie 81
Priscilla Lynn Schlottman
- The Revolution of Internet Collaboration: African Youth versus Poverty 88
Richard C. Close



Guest Editor's Note

Since its inception, the *Africa Peace and Conflict Journal* has carried articles of great resonance for the African continent in particular and of worth to the world in general. With its dual approach to addressing the conceptual and empirical dimensions of serious issues, the journal has established a place of relevance in efforts to mitigate conflict and find ways toward sustainable peace. This edition of APCJ builds upon this legacy, identifying the critical elements and major components for a peaceful Africa.

Abdul Karim Bangura offers an interesting interrogation of the socio-political and economic dimensions of Africa in an examination of the nexus among democracy, economic development, good governance, and peace. Although the linkages of these dimensions is a well-trodden path, Bangura's triangulative approach restores energy to these investigations. He gathers and analyzes data from the Economic Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, the Global Peace Index, and gross national income in an interactive quantitative and qualitative manner, with the principal objective of attaining stability. His subjection of his findings to a Diopian remedy provides a uniquely African flavor to traditional methodological approaches.

Among endemic conflict in Africa, none is as prevalent as that of the intra-state variety. Mathieu Bere discusses this in the specific context of Côte d'Ivoire, but in doing so also compiles a checklist of conditions necessary for the successful conclusion of such conflicts in general. The extent to which an interstate conflict has a chance of being resolved depends in part on the ability to sustain the quality, impartiality, and trustworthiness of the mediation process; guarantees of the provision of internal, regional, and international support for the mediator; the possibility that all involved parties participate in the mediation process; and patience by all affected by the conflict. While these conditions are desirable, they are unlikely to prevail in imperfect societies, so the success of resolution rests upon the extent to which they can be approximated.

The peacebuilding demands in such countries as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Liberia present equally imposing challenges. Ayo Whetho and Ufo Okeke Uzodike note the prominent role faith-based organizations have played in the DRC and the controversy that sometimes surrounds their activities. There is no doubt that theology can be an integral part of the dynamics of conflicts and their resolution. The biggest challenge is for these groups to help guide post-conflict countries toward sustained peace as they steer through the upheavals of democracy.

One of the issues faced by Liberia and other countries emerging from conflict is that of internally displaced persons and other refugees. Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso discusses the ideal of 'home' in the articulations of forcibly displaced women who have returned to Liberia. This is an apt article on the right of return of refugees, providing context in the Liberian environment while offering insight that might be applied to other countries and regions. Ibrahim Bangura seeks to inform the relationship of development to gender in Africa. He touches on feminist, Marxist, and post-colonialist

theories in assessing the effects of development on women, who are susceptible to gender-based violence in the form of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse by family members within their homes.

Sydney Smith and Elise Webb examine how Search for Common Ground uses theater in Rwanda to demonstrate ways to resolve conflict peacefully and constructively. Through participatory performances, local actors help audience members recognize their role in conflict and their ability to take actions to mitigate it. Smith and Webb's contribution is an emphatic conclusion to the preceding articles, which in their various ways inform the search for peace and mitigation of conflict in Africa.

The global war on women has been particularly intense in the case of conflict and post-conflict societies. Priscilla Lynn Schlottman's briefing shows this to be the case in South Africa, which she notes leads the world in rape, child rape, and violence. She identifies the role of cultural anomie and the country's apartheid history as factors in the intense violence inflicted on women and children. Nonetheless, great care must be taken in placing the blame on culture, in this case South African culture, not least because the issue of gender violence is in fact global.

Richard C. Close's focus on tech-savvy youths provides some optimism for the future of Africa. The technology of mobile phones and the internet has changed political landscapes, catapulting youth to the center of power dynamics in an unprecedented manner. On a continent where the majority of the citizens are under the age of thirty-five, the impact of this development is potentially far-reaching. Close also notes the potential of cell technology to exponentially expand the reach of development programs.

Naison Ngoma
*Dag Hammarskjöld Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies,
Copperbelt University, Kitwe, Zambia*



From the Managing Editor

In early November, I visited Washington, D.C., along with Jean Bosco Butera, director of the University for Peace Africa Programme, to meet with potential donors and prospective partners in development. We spoke with officials and representatives from the United States Agency for International Development, the United States Institute of Peace, the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University, the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy, the Program in Conflict Resolution at Georgetown University, and TechChange (Institute for Technology and Social Change). The meetings were quite successful, as we informed them about the current activities of the Africa Programme and our plans for the future.

We also met with members of the Editorial Board of the *Africa Peace and Conflict Journal* (APCJ) who live in the Washington metropolitan area. Our visit provided us an opportunity to evaluate APCJ and to draft strategies for its sustainability. On behalf of the APCJ secretariat, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to all who took part in the conversations. During intense half-day discussions, the board members present crafted a clear vision for the coming years. Details of the meeting will be shared with the rest of the board so they can offer their perspectives and additional input.

As APCJ heads into its fifth year, we continue to encourage our readers and contributors to send us ideas about how we can improve the journal and make it more relevant to academics, practitioners, and policy makers. It is our current intention to focus more on policy issues, an area to which APCJ has paid little attention thus far. We are, therefore, encouraging the submission of policy-related articles and briefs for peer review and possible publication.

The UPEACE Africa Programme recently received another three-year grant from the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the major sponsor of APCJ. We would like to take this opportunity to thank IDRC for its ongoing faith in and support of our work. With the new funding, the Africa Programme is able to continue its work furthering doctoral research and PhD studies for African students and up-and-coming scholars. To apply for a fellowship or research grant, please see the information in the two announcements that follow in this issue of APCJ.

Tony Karbo

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

2012 UPEACE–IDRC PhD FELLOWSHIPS

I. BASELINE INFORMATION

APPLICATION PERIOD: **1 November 2011 through 28 February 2012**

LOCATION: Sub-Saharan Africa

The Africa Programme of the University for Peace (UPEACE) has secured funding from the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to offer fellowships to African students registered in PhD programmes focused on governance and security studies. The scholarships cover tuition, living expenses, communications, access to scholarly materials, and dissemination of research findings through publications and conference presentations. In addition, part of the award covers expenses related to a semester abroad at a Canadian university. The maximum award is 15,000 U.S. dollars per eligible candidate per year.

The Africa Programme is seeking applications from candidates newly enrolled in a PhD programme (academic year 2010–2011) or who can provide proof of acceptance to a PhD programme at a university in sub-Saharan Africa for the 2011–2012 academic year.

A total of four (4) PhD fellowships will be awarded.

Expected Outcomes

The PhD fellowships are part of a joint undertaking by IDRC and UPEACE to develop an evidence-based, strong research capacity in Africa on critical issues of governance and security. The fellowships will support young African researchers who are embarking on their PhD studies with the aim of increasing the number of African researchers with expertise in issues of governance and security.

Successful applicants will be required to participate in two research training workshops organized by the UPEACE Africa Programme during the award period. In addition, fellows are required to contribute at least one article to the *Africa Peace and Conflict Journal*, a peer-reviewed Africa Programme publication, by the third year of their grant.

II. ELIGIBLE FIELDS OF STUDY

Applications will be considered from candidates who are registered for PhD studies in governance and security studies.

Under *governance*, applications will be considered in the following areas:

- Democracy, political participation, and political settlements
- Elections, electoral reform, and electoral processes and their contribution to democracy
- Devolution and decentralization of power and implications for legitimacy and accountability
- Informal governance institutions and their contribution to sustainable reforms and political arrangements
- Citizen engagement and enhanced state responsiveness and accountability
- Role of women in political processes
- Human rights

2012 UPEACE–IDRC PhD FELLOWSHIPS

Under *security*, applications will be considered in the following areas:

- Citizen protection and the responsibility to protect
- Impact of pluralism of security forces and state legitimacy and accountability
- Non-state armed groups and the link to state authority
- Role of civil society in oversight of the security apparatus
- Cross-border insecurity and the role of the state, regional organizations, and non-state actors
- The role of state and non-state actors in promoting security for women and girls in situations of gender-based violence

III. ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Hold citizenship in a country in sub-Saharan Africa
- Be enrolled or accepted in a PhD programme in the fields of governance and security studies at a university in sub-Saharan Africa
- Be a full-time PhD student
- Submit a letter of support from his or her lead advisor
- Undertake research in sub-Saharan Africa
- Have a master's degree in a relevant discipline

IV. SELECTION CRITERIA

The fellowship is to support original research that addresses clear research question(s), employs appropriate and rigorous design, and has clear implications for national or regional policy. Candidates must demonstrate an interest in pursuing a teaching/research career, and research topics should have the strong endorsement and support of the candidate's department of matriculation.

V. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Relevance to the study of governance and security issues in Africa
- Candidate's background and potential to develop a strong teaching/research career
- Merit of the applicant's PhD proposal, including originality of research question(s), clarity and adequacy of the study design, demonstrated knowledge of relevant/current literature, etc.
- Conducive research environment, including commitment of the lead advisor and department to facilitate the timely completion of studies

VI. DURATION

The fellowship is for three years from the time of notification of selection. Successful applicants will receive the first installment of the award within sixty (60) days of the announcement of the recipients. Future installments will be provided upon satisfactory progress and submission of narrative and financial reports.

2012 UPEACE–IDRC PhD FELLOWSHIPS

VII. HOW TO APPLY

Applicants are required to submit the following documents:

1. Completed checklist (signed and dated)
2. Cover letter
3. Completed application form
4. A personal statement
5. Curriculum vitae
6. Certified transcripts
7. Proof of citizenship
8. Evidence of enrolment
9. Two letters of reference, one of which must be from a faculty member with extensive knowledge of the applicant's academic history and performance
10. Approved research proposal
11. Budget in U.S. dollars

The application form and checklist are available at www.africa.upeace.org and www.upeace.org.

VIII. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION

Completed applications must be received at the Africa Programme office by **28 February 2012**. Incomplete applications and applications that arrive after the deadline will not be considered.

Short-listed applicants will be notified of their status no later than **15 April 2012**. If notification of being short-listed is not received by 15 April 2012, the application was not successful.

IX. ADDRESS

Please send an **electronic copy of your completed application form (in Excel)** to one of the following e-mail addresses:

africaprogramme@upeace.org or
tabebe@upeace.org

In addition, please send a **paper copy of the completed application form along with the other required materials** to the following address:

Director
UPEACE Africa Programme
P.O.Box 2794, Code 1250
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Fax: +251 11 6180993
Telephone: +251 11 6180991/92

For further information, please visit the UPEACE Africa Programme Web site at www.africa.upeace.org or www.upeace.org.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

2012 UPEACE–IDRC DOCTORAL RESEARCH AWARDS

I. BASELINE INFORMATION

APPLICATION PERIOD: **1 November 2011 to 28 February 2012**

LOCATION: Sub-Saharan Africa

The Africa Programme of the University for Peace (UPEACE) has secured funding from the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The funds will be allocated to African students in the final stage of their PhD studies at universities in sub-Saharan Africa. The funding is to support PhD candidates in their field research, data analysis, associated travel, and production costs. In addition, part of the award may be used to access updated scholarly materials and disseminate research findings through publications and conference presentations. The maximum award is 10,000 U.S. dollars per eligible student. A total of eleven (11) awards will be granted.

Expected Outcomes

The doctoral research awards are part of a joint undertaking by IDRC and UPEACE to develop an evidence-based, strong research capacity in Africa on critical issues of governance and security. It is anticipated that the awards will allow African researchers to complete their doctoral studies with high-quality dissertations and top-quality research and analytical skills that enable them to contribute to policy in the relevant fields of expertise.

Successful applicants will be required to participate in two research training workshops organized by the UPEACE Africa Programme during the award period. In addition, each recipient will be required to contribute at least one article to the *Africa Peace and Conflict Journal*, a peer-reviewed Africa Programme publication, before the submission of their final dissertation.

II. ELIGIBLE FIELDS OF STUDY

Applications will be considered from candidates who are doing their PhD studies in governance and security studies.

Under *governance*, applications will be considered in the following areas:

- Democracy, political participation, and political settlements
- Elections, electoral reform, and electoral processes and their contribution to democracy
- Devolution and decentralization of power and implications for legitimacy and accountability
- Informal governance institutions and their contribution to sustainable reforms and political arrangements
- Citizen engagement and enhanced state responsiveness and accountability
- Role of women in political processes
- Human rights

Under *security*, applications will be considered in the following areas:

- Citizen protection and the responsibility to protect
- Impact of pluralism among security forces and state legitimacy and accountability
- Non-state armed groups and their link to state authority

2012 UPEACE–IDRC DOCTORAL RESEARCH AWARDS

- Role of civil society in oversight of the security apparatus
- Cross-border insecurity and the role of the state, regional organizations, and non-state actors
- Role of state and non-state actors in promoting security for women and girls in situations of gender-based violence

III. ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Hold citizenship in a country in sub-Saharan Africa
- Be enrolled in a PhD programme at a recognized university in sub-Saharan Africa
- Have fulfilled all institutional academic requirements
- Provide a detailed timeframe for completing his or her dissertation, which should already be approved by the university structures and lead PhD advisor
- Hold a master's degree in a relevant discipline
- Conduct research in sub-Saharan Africa
- Be able to complete the dissertation within twenty-four (24) months of the start of the research award

IV. SELECTION CRITERIA

The award is to support original research that addresses clear research question(s), employs appropriate and rigorous design, and has clear implications for national or regional policy. Candidates must demonstrate an interest in pursuing a teaching/research career, and research topics should have the strong endorsement and support of the candidate's department of matriculation.

V. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Candidate's background and potential to develop a strong teaching/research career
- Merit of the applicant's PhD proposal, including originality of research question(s), clarity and adequacy of the study design, demonstrated knowledge of relevant/current literature, etc.
- Research environment, including commitment of the lead advisor and department to facilitate the timely completion of studies
- Well-elaborated statement on policy relevance of the research
- Budget summary and justification, including a clear plan to complete the dissertation within twenty-four (24) months.

VI. DURATION

The award is for two years from the time of notification of selection. Successful applicants will receive the first installment of the award within sixty (60) days of the announcement of the recipients. Future installments will be provided upon satisfactory progress and submission of narrative and financial reports.

2012 UPEACE–IDRC DOCTORAL RESEARCH AWARDS

VII. HOW TO APPLY

Applicants are required to submit the following documents:

1. Completed checklist (signed and dated)
2. Cover letter
3. Completed application form
4. A personal statement
5. Curriculum vitae
6. Certified transcripts
7. Proof of citizenship
8. Two letters of reference, one of which must be from a faculty member with extensive knowledge of the applicant's academic history and performance
9. Research proposal
10. Letter of approval of research proposal
11. Budget in U.S. dollars

The application form and checklist are available at www.africa.upeace.org and www.upeace.org.

VIII. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION

Completed applications must be received at the Africa Programme office by **28 February 2012**. Incomplete applications and applications that arrive after the deadline will not be considered.

Short-listed applicants will be notified about their status no later than 15 April 2012. If notification of being short-listed is not received by 15 April 2012, the application was not successful.

IX. ADDRESS

Please send an **electronic copy of your completed application form (in Excel)** to one of the following e-mail addresses:

africaprogramme@upeace.org or
tabebe@upeace.org

In addition, please send a **paper copy of the completed application form along with the other required materials** to the following address:

Director
UPEACE Africa Programme
P.O. Box 2794, Code 1250
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Fax: +251 11 6180993
Telephone: +251 11 6180991/92

For further information, please visit the UPEACE Africa Programme Web site at www.africa.upeace.org or www.upeace.org



The Nexus among Democracy, Economic Development, Good Governance, and Peace in Africa: A Triangulative Analysis and Diopian Remedy

Abdul Karim Bangura

The concepts, or variables, of democracy, economic development, good governance, and peace are very much intertwined; after all, the lack of peace has often been linked to the desires for economic gains and political participation among one or more groups of people. A triangulative methodological approach can be used to critically analyze and provide suggestions for achieving sustainable democracy, economic development, good governance, and peace in Africa. It specifically mixes quantitative and qualitative techniques and examination of Cheikh Anta Diop's restoration of African historical consciousness theoretical postulates and intercultural relations methodology. The major conclusions drawn after data analysis at univariate, bivariate, and multivariate levels are that higher levels of economic development and democracy lead to good governance, Africa is not yet a very peaceful continent, and the levels of governance, democracy, and economic development have not helped make the continent more peaceful.

AFRICA'S ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL STATE has been a hot topic of discussion since decolonization. If it is accepted that underdevelopment is a major cause of Africa's problems, the experience of the past four decades implies that there is a vague understanding of what to do about it. There are thousands of books, articles, assessments, theories, and suggestions advising Africans on how to turn around their situation. Liberal democracy, central direction, and structural adjustment programs are only a few of the approaches that have been put forth but have failed. How then can sustainable democracy, economic development, good governance, and peace be achieved in Africa?

Abdul Karim Bangura is professor of research methodology and political science at Howard University, Washington, D.C. He also is a researcher-in-residence of Abrahamic Connections and Islamic Peace Studies at the Center for Global Peace in the School of International Service, American University, Washington, D.C. He holds doctorates in political science, development economics, linguistics, computer science, and mathematics.

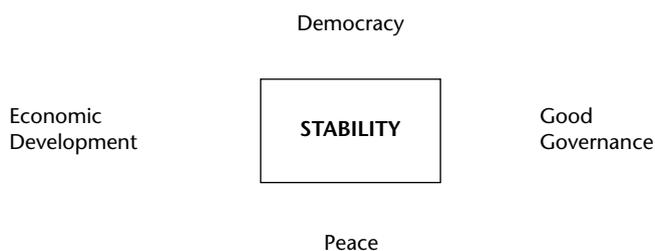
The lack of peace has often been linked to the desires for economic gains and political participation among one or more groups of people, so the interrelationship of these four variables is critical for creating stability. There are no definitive definitions of democracy, economic development, good governance, and peace, only suggestions of what they should imply; these concepts will continue to be redefined as knowledge of their processes deepens and as new problems to be solved by them emerge. Suggestions here on achieving forms of sustainable democracy, economic development, good governance, and peace in Africa are based on employing a conceptual framework and a triangulative methodological approach that mixes quantitative and qualitative techniques, analyzing data collected at the univariate, bivariate, and multivariate levels, and then examining Cheikh Anta Diop's theoretical postulates on the restoration of African historical consciousness and intercultural relations methodology.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK, AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Triangulative methodology involves combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies to investigate a phenomenon or phenomena. The term is borrowed from trigonometry, where it refers to a method for calculating the distance to a point by looking at it from two other points.¹ As Robert Burns explains, 'triangulative techniques in the social sciences attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior, by studying it from more than one standpoint and/or using a variety of methods, even combining qualitative and quantitative in some cases.'² The validity of the hypothesis, or conceptual framework, that democracy, economic development, good governance, and peace influence one another and are critical to stability can be examined by employing triangulative methodology (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

The Nexus among Democracy, Economic Development, Good Governance, and Peace



Source: Abdul Karim Bangura.

1. Paul W. Vogt, *Dictionary of Statistics and Methodology: A Nontechnical Guide for the Social Sciences*, 2nd edn (Thousand Oaks, California, Sage Publications, 1998), 234.

2. Robert B. Burns, *Introduction to Research Methods*, 4th edn (Thousand Oaks, California, Sage Publications, 2000), 419.

Democracy

The word *democracy* is used to describe at least three different political systems. In one instance, it identifies regimes that come as close as possible to the Aristotelian notion of the ‘rule of the many’. In this case, a political system is said to be democratic if all (or most) of its citizens participate directly by either holding office or making policy. Some New England town meetings reflect this notion, with adults in the community gathering once or twice a year to vote directly on major issues and expenditures.

The concept of democracy is also used to describe a system said to serve the ‘true interests’ of citizens, regardless of whether they directly affect decision making. A number of totalitarian regimes, such as those of the former Soviet bloc, China, Cuba, and some Asian, Latin American, and certain European governments, have used this concept. The Soviet Union, for example, claimed that it operated on the principle of ‘democratic centralism’, whereby the true interests of the masses were identified through discussions within the Communist Party, after which the central leadership made decisions to serve those interests. Joseph Schumpeter concisely defines democracy in terms of the principle of governance of a number of other, non-totalitarian countries, such as the United States: ‘The democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote.’³ Whenever *democracy* is used in this essay, it has the meaning assigned to it by Schumpeter.

Sometimes incumbent regimes in Africa have managed to prevent movement toward democratization even when elections have been held. For example, in 2011 in Côte d’Ivoire, Laurent Gbagbo refused to step down as president almost three months after losing an election to Alassane Ouattara; he was eventually forced from office by military intervention. In Kenya in 1997, the opposition Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) fragmented fatally, allowing the ruling party headed by Daniel Arap Moi to win several highly contested elections.⁴ In Ethiopia in 2005, Meles Zenawie and his party won in elections, after which hundreds of students who protested were gunned down in the street, journalists were detained, and a curfew was decreed to prevent social movements from gaining momentum. In such instances, it is not unusual for the military to play an important role in the continuity of the incumbent government.

Even when a discredited regime is replaced by election, the successor normally does not find it a simple task to put into place the necessary economic reforms to improve the country. In Zambia during the 1990s and early 2000s, Frederick Chiluba found it hard to control corruption and reform the economy. Typically, citizens who are eager to see changes are soon disappointed because change is delayed or is simply not possible.⁵ The point to emphasize is that the establishment of democracy is by no means a panacea for all socio-economic ills. Thus, a sustainable government capable of spurring economic, political, and social progress should be built upon strong institu-

3. Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, 3rd edn (New York, Harper Torchbooks, 1950), 269.

4. Jeff Haynes, ‘The state, governance, and democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa’, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 31:3 (1993), 535–39.

5. *Ibid.*

tions that support accountability and governmental legitimacy in order to consolidate long-lasting change.

Economic Development

The concept of economic development is concerned with societies in change, and thus is related to development strategy—the purposive change of economic systems and social institutions. As economic development theory has grown out of a concern with developing countries with the implicit assumption that the conditions in those societies are unsatisfactory and ought to be changed, it is relatively more normative than the social sciences in general. Economic development theory concerns primarily the academic pursuit of knowledge, while development thinking is a more inclusive concept, involving not only academicians, but also administrators, planners, politicians, volunteers, and so on, in economic development work.

Africans themselves have launched a series of initiatives aimed at addressing the development challenges of the continent, in particular the Lagos Plan of Action and the companion African Alternative Framework for Structural Adjustment. These initiatives were, however, counteracted and ultimately undermined by policy frameworks developed outside the continent and imposed on African countries. Over the past several decades, a false consensus has been generated around the neo-liberal paradigm promoted through the Bretton Woods Institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO). This has tended to crowd out the rich tradition of Africans' alternative thinking on development. It is in this context that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), an African initiative, should be assessed.⁶

The challenges confronting Africa's development stem from two inter-related sources: (1) constraints imposed by the international economic and political order within which African economies operate and (2) domestic weaknesses deriving from socioeconomic and political structures and neo-liberal structural adjustment policies. The main elements of the international order include the fact that African economies are integrated into the global economy as exporters of primary commodities and importers of manufactured products, leading to terms of trade losses. The policies of liberalization, privatization, and deregulation have been reinforcing this integration, as have macroeconomic policies imposed through structural adjustment conditionality by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). These policies have now been institutionalized within the WTO through rules, agreements, and procedures that are inherently biased against African countries. In addition, external and domestic policies and structures have combined to generate an unsustainable and unjustifiable debt burden that has crippled African economies and has undermined the capacity of Africa's ownership of strategies for development.⁷

6. NEPAD was adopted in 2001, around the time of the publication of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's *Compact for African Recovery: Operationalising the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme* (April 2001) and shortly after the World Bank's *Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?* (March 2000). See Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), *Declaration on Africa's Development Challenges* (Dakar, Senegal, CODESRIA Publications, 2002), www.codesria.org/Archives/Past_events/declaration_on_africa.htm.

7. CODESRIA, *Declaration on Africa's Development Challenges*.

Good Governance

Governance is generally defined as the act of affecting government and monitoring (through policy) the long-term strategy and direction of a country. In essence, governance comprises the traditions, institutions, and processes that determine how power is exercised, how citizens are given a voice, and how decisions are made on issues of public concern.⁸ According to this definition, governance is bound to have an everlasting impact on the rule of law, local and national institutions, leadership, public administration issues, and in the case of Africa, the goal of sustainable development. Good governance has become a fashionable phrase in the development literature, but treating it as a buzzword is short-sighted.

A government as an institution can be seen as a structure of written and unwritten rules. To engage in governance, then, is to attempt to enforce the rules that constitute governments.⁹ Behind the rules created by governments, another set of rules, constitutional in nature, regulate persons engaging in enacting the rules of government. Great power is held in the hands of individuals and groups that have authority to alter constitutional regulations in any form without consulting the people. The concentration of power determines the character of the political process and must be given a great deal of attention in Africa. When a small group of people or a single person has the resources to establish and enforce a set of constitutional rules, one should expect a high level of danger and instability, because that group or individual is likely to design unilateral advantages and biases into the rules to benefit certain groups or individuals and ignore the rights of the majority.¹⁰ Among the negative outcomes of such regimes are corruption, economic inefficiency, eroded legitimacy, and eventually, economic and administrative decline, as has been witnessed in many cases in Africa.¹¹

Despite Africa's negatives, social order has been maintained for the most part, and civilizations have survived. Voluntary associations, churches, mosques, and traditional ruling structures continue to foster community living. Democracy is not new to Africa; indigenous populations have been practicing it for centuries through consensus and chieftaincies.¹² Basic building blocks already exist in African societies for formulating contemporary democratic solutions to address current problems. Some who support traditional systems of local governance have argued that indigenous institutions could give birth to viable state systems through their bottom-up approaches. Regardless of whether bottom-up strategies will work, the central state strategy in Africa has failed. Traditional political structures and intermixing of cultures seem to be the reasons why Africa has not completely crumbled.

Peace

The word *peace* conjures myriad images. For some, peace represents a world free of violent conflict stemming from ethnic, cultural, religious, or political differences. For

8. James Wunsch, 'Re-founding the African state and local self-governance: The neglected foundation', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 38:3 (2000), 487–509.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. John Makumbe, 'Is there a civil society in Africa?' *International Affairs*, 74:2 (1998), 305–17.

others, the promotion of democracy, justice, and human rights are additional and equally important facets of peace. Although peace connotes stability and solidarity, some definitions of peace are potentially contentious and unacceptable in some societies. According to Robert Elias and Jennifer Turpin, peace can generally be categorized as either 'negative' or 'positive'.¹³ Negative peace, the traditional notion of peace, is defined as the absence of war or other direct violence. Positive peace extends the definition of peace by insisting on the promotion of social justice.

By emphasizing the avoidance of violent conflict, negative peace essentially promotes the idea that war is inevitable. Negative peace has conventionally been established through two tactics: deterrence—the idea that weaker states will not attack relatively powerful states—and collective security. In the modern age, nuclear deterrence prevents countries from attacking one another because of the fear of nuclear holocaust. Thus nuclear deterrence, as a means of avoiding war, has led to collective security.

Negative peace, however, is not 'real' peace, because it is based upon the existence or creation of fear and enemies. Negative peace actually relies upon the acceptance of war itself. The conventional methods of establishing negative peace are not sufficient for creating lasting peace. Avoidance of war by deterrence is based upon a hierarchy of power. In a world order dependent upon deterrence to establish peace, states and people will not be respectful of one another. Furthermore, collective security is not tenable, because weaker states can never be sure that protection from a more powerful state is guaranteed. Thus, peace is not ensured.

Positive peace is attained when social justice is present and promoted. In a world of positive peace, war is absent, and human rights are protected. Elias and Turpin equate social justice with three definitions of human rights: the protection of civil and political rights, which are deemed to be inalienable by the state, a view prominent in western societies; positive peace defined as the absence of structural violence, a view prominent in the developing world (with structural violence defined as underdevelopment and institutionalized poverty); and recognition of development and environmental preservation as essential to peace. The developing world, thus, emphasizes economic, social, and cultural rights. Envisioning a world that operates in a more just and equitable manner, Elias and Turpin further argue that all three definitions of human rights are complementary and can lead to the establishment of positive peace.¹⁴

Thus, the process of establishing positive peace will require negotiation and cooperation. This would involve international institutions, national governments, non-governmental organizations, and private businesses collaborating to build a world in which positive peace is a goal of policy making. In essence, peace is not just avoiding war; peace is also about preserving and promoting human dignity.¹⁵

13. Robert Elias and Jennifer Turpin, *Rethinking Peace* (Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), 4.

14. *Ibid.*, 5.

15. More details can be found in Abdul Karim Bangura, 'Pax Sierra Leona: A typology of the conceptualizations of peace in Sierra Leonean languages', *Association of Third World Studies Proceedings* (2000), 15–19; Abdul Karim Bangura, *Sweden versus Apartheid: Putting Morality Ahead of Profit* (London, Ashgate Press, 2004); Abdul Karim Bangura (ed.), *Islamic Sources of Peace* (Boston, Massachusetts, Pearson Publishing, 2004); Abdul Karim Bangura (ed.), *Unpeaceful Metaphors* (San Jose, California, Authors Club Press, 2002).

OPERATIONALIZATIONS OF THE VARIABLES AND DATA COLLECTION

The four variables under discussion are measured using data from a variety of sources. The Democracy Index compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) is used here to determine the state of democracy. The index is based on the view that measures of democracy which only reflect the state of political freedoms and civil liberties are insufficient, failing to encompass all the features that determine how substantive democracy is or the state of its quality. At the same time, the EIU admits that even its broader, more inclusive measure of democracy omits some criteria, such as levels of economic and social well-being, that observers might argue are crucial components of democracy. Thus, the EIU respects the dominant tradition that holds that a variety of social and economic outcomes can be considered consistent with political democracy.¹⁶

The EIU's index is based on ratings of sixty indicators grouped into five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. Each category receives a rating, on a scale of 0 to 10, and the overall index of democracy is the average of the five category indices. The values of the index are used to place countries within one of four regime types: full democracies, scores of 8 to 10; flawed democracies, scores of 6 to 7.9; hybrid regimes, scores of 4 to 5.9; and authoritarian regimes, scores below 4. Threshold points for regime types hinge on overall scores, which are rounded to one decimal point.

The data for the EIU's index of democracy are collected from experts' assessments, public opinion surveys—the World Value Survey, Eurobarometer surveys, Gallup polls, Latin American Barometer—and national surveys. In the case of countries for which survey results are not available, survey results from similar countries and experts' assessments are used to fill the gap. Also, included are participation and voter turnout rates and the balance between the legislative and executive branches of government.

Figures for 2010 gross national income (GNI) per capita, or gross national product (GNP) per capita in the terminology of the 1968 United Nations System of National Accounts, are used to measure economic development. GNI is the total domestic and foreign value added claimed by a country's residents. It comprises GNP plus net receipts of primary income (compensation of employees and property income) from nonresident sources. GNI per capita is the gross national income converted to United States dollars using the World Bank Atlas Method, divided by midyear population.¹⁷ GNI, calculated in national currency, is usually converted to U.S. dollars at official exchange rates for comparisons across economies, although an alternative rate is used when the official exchange rate is judged to diverge by an exceptionally large margin from the rate actually applied in international transactions. The Atlas method of conversion is also used to smooth fluctuations in prices and exchange rates.¹⁸

16. For the index and background on it, see Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), *The Democracy Index, 2010*, www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=demo2010 and http://graphics.eiu.com/PDF/Democracy_Index_2010_web.pdf

17. World Bank, World Development Indicators Database, 2010, <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>.

18. *Ibid.*

The 2010 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) is used to measure good governance. Index scores range from 0 to 100, with 0 being the worst and 100 being the best. The data were collected from the second edition of the *2010 Ibrahim Index*, published in October 2010.¹⁹ The IIAG considers governance from the perspective of the citizen. It measures the extent of delivery to the citizen of a large number of economic, social, and political goods and services by governments and non-state actors. The index groups indicators into four main categories: safety and rule of law; participation and human rights; sustainable economic opportunity; and human development.

The index is a composite measure utilizing data from twenty-three external institutions. After the gathering of raw data on the eighty-nine indicators, the Min-Max method is employed to re-scale the data so that they can be usefully combined to produce an overall score for each country. After the indicators have been transformed to a common scale, each indicator is grouped with similar indicators to form subcategories. The subcategory score is the average of all the indicator scores; subcategory scores are averaged to produce the category score. The category scores are then averaged to produce the final Ibrahim Index score.

The 2010 Global Peace Index (GPI) of the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) is employed to measure peace. The index is a compilation of twenty-three indicators concerning the existence or absence of peace. The indicators are divided into three broad categories: ongoing domestic and international conflict; safety and security; and militarization.²⁰ All scores for each indicator are “banded,” either on a scale of 1 to 5 (for qualitative indicators) or 1 to 10 (for quantitative data, such as military expenditure or imprisonment, that are converted to a 1 to 5 scale for comparability when compiling the final index). Qualitative indicators in the index are scored by the EIU’s extensive team of country analysts, and gaps in the quantitative data are filled by estimates by the same team.

Ten of the indicators measure the levels of safety and security in a country, ranging from the perception of criminality in society to the level of respect for human rights and the rate of homicides and violent crimes. Crime data are gleaned from the database of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime. Five of the following ten indicators are scored by the EIU’s team of country analysts used by IEP: perceptions of criminality in society; number of refugees and displaced persons as a percentage of the population; political instability; level of respect for human rights or Political Terror Scale; political terror acts; number of homicides per 100,000 people; level of violent crime; likelihood of violent demonstrations; number of jailed residents per 100,000 people; and number of internal security officers and police per 100,000 people.

Eight of the indicators are related to a country’s military build-up, which reflects the idea that the level of militarization and access to weapons is directly linked to how at peace a country feels internationally. Comparable data for these eight indicators are readily available from the International Institute of Strategic Studies and similar organi-

19. Mo Ibrahim Foundation, *The Ibrahim Index: 2010 Ibrahim Index of African Governance*, www.moibrahimfoundation.org/en/section/the-ibrahim-index.

20. Institute for Economics and Peace, *Global Peace Index*, 2010, www.visionofhumanity.org/gpi-data/#/2010/score.

zations: military expenditure as a percentage of GDP; number of armed services personnel per 100,000 people; volume of transfers and imports of major conventional weapons per 100,000 people; volume of transfers and exports of major conventional weapons per 100,000 people; budgetary support for UN peacekeeping missions (percentage of outstanding payments versus annual assessment to the budget of the current peacekeeping missions); aggregate number of heavy weapons per 100,000 people; ease of access to small arms and light weapons; and military capability and sophistication.

The above parameters can provide a useful snapshot of the quality of the four variables in a country, but various researchers have pointed to problems in their construction. These critics claim that users often fail to take into account or often are not aware of the indicators' limitations, which together can be summarized as follows: lack of transparency; unreproducible; overly complex; arbitrary; lack of underlying theory; hidden biases; lack of comparability; lack of actionability; over-selling; and no concept validity.

While these criticisms are valid, no alternative measures have been developed with which everyone agrees. Thus these imperfect but useful measures survive. Indeed, these indicators have contributed to the growing empirical research on democracy, economic development, good governance, and peace and have provided activists and reformers worldwide with advocacy tools for policy reform and monitoring. The indicators, and the data behind them, are part of the current research and opinions that have reinforced the assertion of reform-minded individuals in government, civil society, and the private sector that these variables are imperative for stability. Growing recognition of them, empirical evidence suggests, has stimulated demand for monitoring their quality across and within countries over time. Furthermore, the indicators are a compilation of the perceptions of a diverse group of respondents collected in large numbers of surveys and cross-country assessments. Some of these instruments capture the views of individuals, firms, and public officials. Others reflect the views of nongovernmental organizations and aid donors with considerable experience, while others are based on the assessments of commercial risk-taking agencies.

THE RESULTS

The data collected on the four variables were analyzed at univariate, bivariate, and multivariate levels. The first level entails a descriptive statistical analysis; the second level involves a correlation analysis of the variables to determine the strengths of the correlations between two of them at a time; the third level is a multiple regression analysis of all four variables at a time (with each variable being used as a dependent variable while the other three serve as independent variables). The idea here is to determine which direction best explains the connection among the four variables.

Univariate Analysis

As shown in Table 1, the mean for GNI per capita is \$2,131.51, and the standard deviation is \$2,966.99. The result suggests that the variation among African countries' GNI is quite significant. The mean for democracy is 4.11, and the standard deviation is 1.73, which indicates little variation among African countries for this variable. The

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for the Measures of the Four Variables

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
GNI per capita	2131.51	2866.99
Democracy	4.11	1.73
Peace	2.19	0.43
Governance	48.41	13.82

Source: Abdul Karim Bangura, using SPSS to analyze data from the Economist Intelligence Unit, Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Institute for Economics and Peace, and World Bank.

Table 2

Correlations among the Four Variables

Variables	GNI per Capita	Democracy	Peace	Governance
GNI per capita Pearson correlation		.030	-.293	.368**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.839	.077	.007
Democracy Pearson correlation			-.354*	.806**
Sig. (2-tailed)			.027	.001
Peace Pearson correlation				-.760**
Sig. (2-tailed)				.001

*significant at 0.05 level **significant at the 0.01 level

Source: Abdul Karim Bangura, using SPSS to analyze data from the Economist Intelligence Unit, Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Institute for Economics and Peace, and World Bank.

mean for peace is 4.11, and the standard deviation is 0.43, also suggesting little variation. The mean for governance is 48.41 with a standard deviation of 13.82, which reveals little variation. The largest differences among African countries as far as the four variables are concerned is in their GNI per capita.

Bivariate Analysis

Table 2 reveals a positive and statistically significant correlation between GNI per capita and governance at the 0.01 level of significance, a negative but not statistically significant correlation between GNI per capita and peace at the 0.05 level of significance, and no statistically significant correlation between GNI per capita and democracy at the 0.05 significance level. The table also shows a positive and statistically significant correlation between democracy and governance at the 0.05 level of significance, and a negative and statistically significant correlation between democracy and peace at the 0.05 level of significance. Furthermore, the table reveals that there is a negative and statistically significant correlation between peace and governance at the

Table 3

Regression Coefficients, with Peace as the Dependent Variable

Model	Unstandardized B	Standardized Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	3.399	.210		16.166	.001
Governance	-.031	.007	-.894	-4.548	.001
GNI per Capita	-6.290E-6	.001	-.049	-.360	.721
Democracy	0.73	0.049	.294	1.510	.140

Source: Abdul Karim Bangura, using SPSS to analyze data from the Economist Intelligence Unit, Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Institute for Economics and Peace, and World Bank.

Table 4

Regression Coefficients, with GNI per Capita as the Dependent Variable

Model	Unstandardized B	Standardized Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	182.413	5913.006		.031	.976
Governance	173.270	78.309	.640	2.213	.034
Peace	-587.466	1630.537	-.076	-.360	.721
Democracy	-1269.268	434.792	-.655	-2.919	.006

Source: Abdul Karim Bangura, using SPSS to analyze data from the Economist Intelligence Unit, Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Institute for Economics and Peace, and World Bank.

0.01 level of significance. In essence, GNI per capita and democracy seem to have positively strong associations with governance. Peace appears to have negative associations with the other variables.

Multivariate Analysis

Table 3 presents a negative and statistically significant relationship between governance and peace at the 0.01 significance level. There is a negative but not statistically significant relationship between GNI per capita and peace, and no statistically significant relationship between democracy and peace at the 0.05 level of significance. Thus, none of the three variables treated here as independent variables are positively significant predictors of variation in peace.

As can be gleaned from Table 4, democracy has a negative and statistically significant relationship with GNI per capita at the 0.01 level of significance. Peace has a negative, albeit not statistically significant, relationship with GNI per capita at the 0.05 level of significance. Governance has a positive and statistically significant relationship with GNI per capita at the 0.05 level of significance. Only governance is a positively significant predictor of variation in peace.

Table 5

Regression Coefficients, with Democracy as the Dependent Variable

Model	Unstandardized B	Standardized Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-3.800	1.959		-1.940	.061
Governance	.131	.019	-.940	6.949	.001
GNI per Capita	.000	.000	-.299	-2.919	.006
Peace	.833	.552	.208	1.510	.140

Source: Abdul Karim Bangura, using SPSS to analyze data from the Economist Intelligence Unit, Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Institute for Economics and Peace, and World Bank.

Table 6

Regression Coefficients, with Governance as the Dependent Variable

Model	Unstandardized B	Standardized Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	55.055	7.504		7.336	.001
Democracy	4.416	.635	.617	6.949	.001
GNI per Capita	.001	.000	.192	2.213	.034
Peace	-11.908	2.618	-.416	-4.546	.001

Source: Abdul Karim Bangura, using SPSS to analyze data from the Economist Intelligence Unit, Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Institute for Economics and Peace, and World Bank.

Table 5 shows that governance has a positive and significant statistical relationship with democracy at the 0.01 significance level. GNI per capita has a negative and statistically significant relationship with democracy at the 0.01 level of significance. There is no significant statistical relationship between peace and democracy at the 0.05 significance level. Here again, governance is the only variable that is a positively significant predictor of variation in democracy.

Table 6 best explains the direction of the nexus among the four variables. As can be seen, both GNI per capita and democracy have positive and statistically significant relationships with governance at the 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance, respectively. Peace has a negative and statistically significant relationship with governance at the 0.01 level of significance. In sum, GNI per capita and democracy are positively significant predictors of variation in governance.

From the preceding analysis, two major conclusions can be drawn. The first is that higher levels of GNI per capita and democracy lead to good governance in Africa. The second is that Africa is not a very peaceful continent, and the levels of governance, democracy, and GNI per capita have not helped make the continent more peaceful. So, after four decades of employing western democratic, economic development, governance, and peacebuilding models with little to show for the effort, what alternative

approaches can Africans employ? It is suggested here that Africans look to their history and culture to unearth models that might work for them. Diop's restoration of African historical consciousness and his intercultural relations methodology offer possible options.

DIOP'S RESTORATION OF AFRICAN HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

In *Black Africa: The Economic Basis for a Federated State*, Cheikh Anta Diop discusses the restoration of African historical consciousness.²¹ He traces the presence of Africans back to the appearance of Homo sapiens in the prehistoric Nile basin region. According to Diop, they founded the Nilotic Sudanese civilization—that is, ancient Egypt—as the first black civilization in the world.

Diop asserts that through radiocarbon methods, historians have also found a black prehistoric Homo sapiens presence in the regions of Zimbabwe and Ghana as far back as the first century CE. Furthermore, coin discoveries on the east coast of Africa point to a flourishing sea trade, and ceramics found in the first Nigerian civilization have been dated to the first millennium BCE. Diop illustrates this history by referencing the *Tarikh es-Sudan* (History of Sudan) and detailing the fundamental components of medieval (eleventh-century) West African civilization from aspects of its origins to its culture and political organization, until this civilization was overthrown by European occupation in the nineteenth century.

Despite the dissolution of the West African nations, Diop believed that Africans are probably the only people who can claim a 'sense of unity' on the basis of their common cultural and linguistic foundation in the Nile Valley and surrounding areas. According to Diop, African languages constitute one homogeneous, linguistic family. He states, 'Nothing is easier than to set down the rules that allow transfer from a Zulu language (Bantu) to one of West Africa (Serer-Wolof, Peul), or even to ancient Egyptian.'²² To Diop, this illustrates the linguistic relations among African languages in the realms of government and trade until European occupation.

Diop uses Wolof, one of Senegal's native languages, for a framework to explain his assertions about linguistic unity. He believed that choosing to use an African language on a local scale and then elevating it to a modern cultural and government language would be the best route for overcoming the colonizer's language. He urges territories to follow this model. Diop further advocates for African linguistic unity through the selection of an African tongue to be used as the governmental and cultural language for the entire continent. He argues that the selection of a single language across the continent would ease Africans' interactions with the outside world, thereby improving the state of international relations.

This last step, according to Diop, is what defines national cultural unity, which in turn the basis of political unity and federalism. He strongly argues for the need to de-

21. Cheikh Anta Diop, *Black Africa: The Economic Basis for a Federated State* (Chicago, Illinois, Lawrence Hill, 1987). It was originally published in French in 1974.

22. Cheikh Anta Diop, *A Comparative Study of the Political and Social Systems of Europe and Black Africa from Antiquity to the Formation of Modern African States* (Trenton, New Jersey, Africa World Press, 1987), 7. It was originally published in French in 1960.

velop an African political ideology. To this effect, Diop calls for the idea of a federated African nation in which political leaders are called upon to unite and be conscious of their history and power so that the divisive tactics employed by western imperial powers would not be used by Africans. Through the political and economic organization of a federation of all West African states, for instance, Diop believed that the Africans' economic potential and power would be greater than that of France and England combined. Indeed, according to Diop, West Africa held a privileged position. He contends, 'West Africa became the arena in which France and England strove to outbid each other politically'.²³ The region's resources, and its strategic geographic position, led the French and the British to fight over its conquest.

To Diop, Charles de Gaulle's strategy to deprive African colonies of independence was an act to atrophy black people's national consciousness. The colonizers instilled in the colonized that they were incapable of fending for themselves without their assistance. Diop stresses nonetheless that African unity is possible and that divisions created by colonialists should not be consequential. He also notes historical Africa's culture of matriarchy, as opposed to western-style patriarchy. This difference exposes the 'beauty' of black Africa, he contends, in the sense that men and women worked together to effectively run public affairs within society until the colonial conquest. To Diop, Africans need to reestablish this ancestral bicameralism in modern times because it would allow for the strong and common economic and social development of an African society.

It has always been a challenge to accurately trace the history of black people. As the historian John Henrik Clarke states in the foreword to Diop's book, '[W]hat we know as Black History, are actually the missing pages of World History'. Diop has been praised by many scholars and other observers for his efforts to bring to light the story of black people. His *Black Africa* enables readers to better understand African culture, the roots of where and how Africans became Africans, and the premise of black civilization. He exposes the fact that West African history can be accurately traced back thousands of years. Diop reiterates throughout his work the need for linguistic, political, and economic consciousness among Africans and a cultural unity deeply rooted in African history.

DIOP'S INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS METHODOLOGY

In *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology*, Diop prefaces his arguments about intercultural relations by asserting that its failures and difficulties are shaped by the process in which given cultures are born, develop, make contact, and influence one another.²⁴ He further argues that one peculiarity of intercultural relations resides in the domain of linguistic expression. For instance, for Europeans, there should be only minor difficulties when their nations communicate among themselves. On the other hand, the situation is different when a written work or poem is translated from a European language to an African language. The meanings, concepts, images, and ex-

23. Ibid., 23.

24. Cheikh Anta Diop, *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology* (Brooklyn, New York, Lawrence Hill Books, 1991). It was originally published in French in 1981.

pressions are associated with different thoughts among Africans because of acculturation and cultural alienation. In poetry, for instance, the European linguistic form has not yet assimilated some African terms. Thus, every time an African poet tries to elaborate and transfer an original image from the culture of his native tongue to French, English, or Spanish, the poetic rhythm is not the same as in the original language. As Diop states, '[I]f the African poet proceeds and speaks of roses, of the lily of the valley that he has never "picked in the woods of Chaville", he is simply ridiculous and he no longer produces any effect'.²⁵

Diop cites Jean-Paul Sartre's assertion that African poets express themselves in a French language that is not of the French people; Sartre considers this process one that will 'de-Frenchify'. In essence, what the African poets are saying does not mean much to the French. Diop also examines the prevalence of other modes of expression, such as sculpture, painting, music, and dance, in intercultural relations.

Diop considers how these art forms fall in the category of plastic arts, which are created and understood without one having to use spoken language. Thus, in the domain of intercultural relations, plastic arts reveal that specific elements of a given culture are unique to that culture. Diop uses the example of 'Negro sculpture' to illustrate that fact by mentioning how all modern artists create forms that are related to those of 'Negro art'. He claims that this demonstrates the universality of a common language, across the board, in the domain of plastic arts. The same concept of universality applies to music and to dance.

Diop argues that every culture has two domains: one where the fundamental components of the culture are produced and one of universal relations resulting in widely held concepts as cultures engage with one another. Diop states the need to study factors, or cultural invariants, which he refers to as those elements that have not been affected by radical cultural transformation. Diop concludes with the argument that regardless of the kind of knowledge used to analyze a problem, the conclusions of the account remain the same.

CONCLUSION

The preceding discourse has been edging toward the proposition that in order for Africans to combat the challenges they face in fostering democracy, economic development, good governance, and peace, they need to add a distinctly African flavor and momentum to the endeavor. Diop's restoration of African historical consciousness and his intercultural relations methodology are suggested as a task or *desideratum* for fostering stability in Africa. African historical consciousness is undoubtedly part and parcel of the cultural heritage of Africans, but this consciousness needs to be revitalized in the hearts and minds of some Africans.

Indeed, as Kofi Awoonor and I posit, the African life concept is holistic, that is, based on an integrative worldview.²⁶ All life to the African is total; all human activities are

25. *Ibid.*, 223.

26. Kofi Nyidevu Awoonor, *Ghana: A Political History* (Accra, Sedco Publishing and Woeli Publishing Services, 1990); Abdul Karim Bangura (ed.), *Islamic Peace Paradigms* (Dubuque, Iowa, Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 2006).

interrelated. This perspective has as its underlying principle the sanctity of the person, including her or his spirituality and essentiality. This essentialist view of the person confers value to one's personhood. All else—a person's labor and achievements—flow from this value system. Even personal shortcomings cannot invalidate this sanctity.

Awoonor and I also point out that for Africans, politics defines duties and responsibilities alongside obligations and rights.²⁷ All these relate to various activities concerning survival. The survival concept is ongoing, dynamic, and dialectical. The fundamental principle of this concept is a moral one. The African moral order never defined rigid frontiers of good and evil; rather, they exist in the same continuum. Whatever is good, by the very nature of its goodness, harbors a grain of evil. This is a guarantee against an exaggerated sense of moral superiority that goodness by itself may entail. The notion of perfection, therefore, is alien to African thought. Perfection in itself constitutes a temptation to danger, an invitation to arrogance and self-glorification. The principle of balance defines the relationship between good and evil. As life operates in a dialectic of struggle, so too does good balance evil and vice versa.

Thus, the essence of an African-centered approach is that it is imperative and urgent for Africans to be concerned about broader development as well as approaches to development that are undergirded by humanity or feelings toward others. When African-centeredness is considered along with the idea of the socialization effects of developmental environments and the possibilities of a reinforcement of these notions and contexts, the implications for an African development process appear vital.

Although compassion, warmth, understanding, caring, sharing, humanness, and so on are underscored by all the major world orientations, African-centered thought serves as a distinctly African rationale for these ways of relating to others. African-centeredness gives a distinctly African meaning to, and a reason or motivation for, a positive attitudes toward the other. In light of the calls for an African renaissance, African-centeredness urges Africans to be true to their promotion of good governance, democracy, peaceful relations and conflict resolution, and educational and other developmental aspirations.

27. Awoonor, *Ghana*; Bangura, *Islamic Peace Paradigms*.



Managing Intra-State Conflicts: Promises and Failures of Peace Agreements in Côte d'Ivoire

Mathieu Bere

A number of factors have prevented full implementation of peace agreements, especially the major accords signed at Linas-Marcoussis and Ouagadougou, to restore lasting peace in Côte d'Ivoire. Among them are entrenched distrust between warring parties, lack of political will, insufficient financial resources, militarization of politics, and calculations of political leaders to remain in or obtain power. Four key conditions, if satisfied, would likely yield positive outcomes: an impartial, trustworthy mediation process; strong local, regional, and international support for the mediation; a sense of freedom on the part of the involved parties to negotiation and a sense of ownership by them regarding the outcome of negotiations; and patience, building trust between the former enemies, and giving priority to a restorative justice that reconciles victims and offenders over punitive justice.

THE END OF THE COLD WAR GAVE RISE TO the spread of liberal democracy around the world, including in the global South. This wave of democratization, however, often generated intra-state wars in impoverished, multi-ethnic countries governed by authoritarian regimes. Ensuring peaceful democratic transitions has become a key challenge for the international community in such nations. The civil war in Côte d'Ivoire—which followed a failed coup d'état that began on 19 September 2002 and divided the country into rival (north and south) regions along regional and ethnic lines—is a perfect example of this challenge. Various mediations, peace negotiations, and agreements have all failed to restore peace and the rule of law. Controversy over the results of presidential elections held in November 2010 reignited fighting between forces loyal to Laurent Gbagbo, the incumbent president who refused to concede electoral defeat, and those supporting the opposition leader, Alassane Ouattara, who was recognized as the winner by the international community. Peace and order are being restored, after Gbagbo's arrest and Ouattara's assuming of the presidency, but the new

Mathieu Bere is pursuing graduate studies in social ethics at Regis College, University of Toronto, Canada. For their comments and suggestions on improving the first draft of this article, he would like to thank Alan Alexandroff, director of the Negotiation and Conflict Management Program at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, and senior fellow at the Center for International Governance Innovation; Beth Fischer, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto; and Victor Adangba, S.J., Institut de Théologie de la Compagnie de Jésus, Catholic University of West Africa, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

regime faces major challenges in providing security, justice, and economic recovery and bringing about reconciliation.

Studies on the Ivorian conflict focusing on mediation, peace negotiations, and agreements have offered some insightful conclusions and have proffered approaches to conflict management ranging from empirical, quantitative methods (most often case studies) to prescriptive and normative approaches.¹ Yet, the question remains: Why have assorted peace agreements, especially the 2003 Linas-Marcoussis and 2007 Ouagadougou accords, failed to restore lasting peace in Côte d'Ivoire?² The evidence points to the following reasons: failure to address the root causes of the conflict in a credible way satisfactory to all parties; militarization of politics because of a sustained lack of trust between the belligerents; calculations by self-interested political leaders; and lack of the financial and technical resources required for the implementation of the agreements' key clauses.

A MULTI-FACETED ARMED CONFLICT

Any attempt at resolving a conflict first requires an analysis of its root causes. What led Côte d'Ivoire, a once relatively prosperous and stable country, to civil war and an intractable crisis? The ruling Front Populaire Ivoirien claimed in 2002 that the attempted coup against the government had been backed by foreign countries, namely, France and Burkina Faso, against whom it had to defend the nation.³ This accusation led to violent demonstrations against immigrants from these two countries. Analysis suggests, however, that the conflict resulted from an explosive combination of an economic crisis, competition for the control of state power, a volatile regional context, and actions by the Ivorian defense forces.

The Economic Factor

Côte d'Ivoire's economy fell into crisis in the late 1980s following an economic boom, 'the Ivorian miracle', that had begun in the 1970s. One of the major causes of this downturn was the progressive decline of the prices of coffee, cocoa, and cotton on the international market beginning in 1980 and continuing through 2000 (see Table 1).⁴ The economic crisis was exacerbated by the rising cost of living, which followed a sudden increase in the price of energy and petroleum-based products. The cost of petroleum rose on the international market from 13.11 U.S. dollars (USD) a barrel in 1998

1. Jacob Bercovitch and Scott Sigmund Gartner (eds.), *International Conflict Mediation: New Approaches and Findings* (London, Routledge, 2009); Vanessa E. Shields and Nicholas Baldwin, *Beyond Settlement: Making Peace Last after Civil Conflict* (Madison, New Jersey, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2008); Stephen John Stedman, Donald S. Rothchild, and Elizabeth M. Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements* (Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner, 2002).

2. The texts of the two agreements are available online at www.ci.undp.org/docs/Dialogue%20direct.doc and www.usip.org/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements/cote_divoire_01242003.en.pdf.

3. Simone E. Gbagbo, *Paroles d'honneur: Un devoir de parole* (Paris, Editions Pharos/ Lafont, 2007), 399; Mamadou Koulibaly (ed.), *La guerre de la France contre la Côte d'Ivoire* (Paris, L'Harmattan, 2003), 9–10.

4. World Bank, *World Bank Indicators, 2002* (Washington, D.C., 2002), 342.

Table 1

Primary Commodity Prices, Select Years, 1980–2000 (cents per kilogram)

	1980	1990	1998	1999	2000
Cotton	260	182	145	118	134
Cocoa	330	127	168	114	93
Coffee robustus	412	118	183	150	94
Coffee arabica	440	197	299	230	197

Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, 2002 (Washington, D.C., 2002), 342 (6.4).

to USD 28.98 in 2000.⁵ Economic distress and poverty, in addition to rising corruption and discontent in the army, contributed to the political crisis that led to the toppling of President Henri Konan Bédié in December 1999.

The economic liberalization policies imposed by the Breton Woods Institutions in the 1990s further destabilized Côte d'Ivoire's fragile economic balance.⁶ The structural adjustment programs, despite some benefits at the macroeconomic level, worsened the vulnerability of poor households and widened the gap between the rich and the poor. In August 1999, Ivorian authorities attempted to contain the crisis by dissolving CAISTAB, the fund established by the first president, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, to stabilize prices of agricultural commodities, including cocoa and coffee, the pillars of the Ivorian economy. This remedy, according to some economists, proved inefficient because it allowed private monopolies to emerge, controlled mainly by foreign export companies, a situation that the Front Populaire Ivoirien of Gbagbo tried to tackle when it came to power in 2000.⁷

In the midst of this economic crisis, which impoverished large numbers of Ivorians, scapegoating of foreign nationals and xenophobic policies became common in a country traditionally known for its hospitality. Before 2002, immigrants in Côte d'Ivoire were an estimated 26 percent of the population, the majority from neighboring Burkino Faso. Undeniable economic factors lie at the source of the Ivorian crisis, but the economic downturn alone did not generate the political violence that tore the country apart along ethnic and regional lines. It required a push from poor governance and fierce political rivalries.

Political Crisis, Bad Neighbors, and Military Dysfunction

Côte d'Ivoire's conflict-ridden transition from three decades of one-party rule to multi-party democracy ultimately led to political deadlock. After President Houphouët-Boigny's death in 1993, his successor, Bédié, introduced the concept of '*ivoirité*'

5. World Bank Group, *World Development Indicators Online* (Washington, D.C., 2009); George T. Kurian (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Third World*, 4th edn, vol. 2 (New York, Facts On File, 1992), 924.

6. Yves E. Amaïzo, 'Ce qui paralyse le pouvoir ivoirien', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, January 2003, 21.

7. *Ibid.*

(Ivorianness). This created a distinction between Ivorians of ‘authentic’ descent (*autochtones*) and Ivorians considered to be of dubious descent. The Rassemblement des Républicains Démocrates (RDR), the main opposition party, interpreted the political discourse surrounding ‘ivoirité’ as a policy aimed at disqualifying its leader, Alassane Ouattara, from the 2000 presidential race. Ouattara, who had served as prime minister under Houphouët-Boigny, was deemed ineligible for the presidency because of a new law declaring that both parents of prospective candidates had to have been born in Côte d’Ivoire. Ouattara’s father had been born in Burkina Faso.

In northern Côte d’Ivoire, from which Ouattara came, the predominantly Muslim population resented Ouattara’s exclusion from presidential elections, viewing it as an attempt to marginalize their region politically and economically. Thus the 2000 election, from which Bédié was also excluded, was the main trigger for the violence that erupted in September 2002. The availability of weapons and willing fighters, along with problems in the Ivorian army, made the already tense situation explosive.

West Africa had been volatile in the 1990s, with civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia (including rebel incursions from Liberia into French Guinea). Blaise Compaore, the president of Burkina Faso, from which some exiled Ivorian soldiers were suspected to have planned the 2002 coup, and his long-term ally Charles Taylor of Liberia, were accused of sponsoring the rebel groups that took control of the northern and western regions of Côte d’Ivoire.⁸ In addition to this bad neighbors factor, the flow of refugees, arms, and fighters across borders made Côte d’Ivoire more vulnerable to destabilization. According to the International Action Network on Small Arms, in 2001 an estimated 8 million firearms were circulating illegally in West Africa.⁹

The deficiencies of the Ivorian military were revealed by its inability to crush the 2002 rebellion against President Gbagbo’s regime. This failure revealed weaknesses in the Ivorian army that along with internal divisions, dissent, and frustration of soldiers contributed to the armed insurgency.¹⁰ Hence, when France refused to honor its defense accord with Côte d’Ivoire in September 2002 against the rebellion—labeled by the president’s camp as a foreign attack—the government felt obliged to recruit thousands of youth, purchase additional weapons, and hire mercenaries to counterattack.

The many facets of the crisis in Côte d’Ivoire challenge reductionist, one-sided interpretations of it. After the outbreak of war, several rounds of mediation and negotiations were undertaken at the national, regional, and international levels. They yielded several peace agreements of varying importance, the major ones being the Linas-Marcoussis Accord (LMA) and the Ouagadougou Political Agreement (OPA), the two pillars around which all the others revolve.

THE LINAS-MARCOUSSIS ACCORD

The Linas-Marcoussis Accord (LMA) was the first comprehensive peace deal aimed at ending the Ivorian conflict. The content of the agreement and the process that generated it help explain the reason for its failure. French president Jacques Chirac con-

8. International Crisis Group, ‘Côte d’Ivoire: “The war is not yet over”’, Africa Report no. 72, November 2003, 9–14.

9. Musue N. Haddad, ‘West Africa and the moratorium on small arms’, *Perspective*, 27 August 2001.

10. International Crisis Group, ‘The war is not yet over’, 17, 35.

vened a roundtable in Linas-Marcoussis (France) from 15 January to 23 January 2003 to address the situation. The conference brought together delegates of the seven main political parties and the three rebel groups that controlled the northern and western parts of the country. Facilitators representing the United Nations, the African Union, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) also attended.

One weakness of the process was the failure to include all the stakeholders. For example, Ivorian civil society organizations and other interest groups were not represented, lending the impression that discussion likely focused only on the concerns raised by the politicians and military representatives. The most significant blind spot, however, was that the talks were convened by a French president, held in France, and presided over by a French judge. The Ivorian government had questioned the neutrality of France in the conflict and had doubts about the impartiality and trustworthiness of France's mediation. In a mediation process, 'the parties should choose a suitable person, whom they both trust because he or she is thought to be "without prejudice"'.¹¹ It was not particularly surprising that delegates of the ruling party walked out of the conference and rejected the results of the talks as a constitutionally orchestrated coup that favored the rebels and the opposition parties. That same day, young supporters of Gbagbo held violent, anti-LMA and anti-French protests in the streets of Abidjan. Given the Ivorian government's questioning of the LMA's equity, one would not expect that it would attempt to implement the agreement. The mediators do not appear to have taken fully into account the grievances, interests, and fears of all the parties in trying to find a mutually acceptable solution. Lacking the support of all involved parties, the LMA could not stand as a viable peacemaking instrument.

The authors and signatories of the LMA had two key objectives: first, to ensure the return of peace and stability by creating 'a government of national reconciliation' whose task would be to implement a program that would address the underlying causes of the conflict; and second, to organize a transition towards 'credible and transparent elections'. In addition to the flaws in the mediation process, several elements of the accord were a bitter pill for the government to swallow. The reconciliation government prescribed by the LMA would be a transition government with extended executive powers, headed by a prime minister selected through consensus. The members of the government were to be appointed by the different parties on the basis of balanced power-sharing. The responsibilities of the reconciliation government, as specified in the LMA, included the following:

- resolving issues related to Ivorian citizenship, to the identification of the population, and to the rights of foreigners;
- implementing legal and constitutional reforms, especially regarding the electoral code and articles 35 and 53, which set forth eligibility requirements for presidential candidates;
- adopting measures to inform the rural population about existing land ownership regulations and the need to respect them;
- ensuring impartiality, responsibility, and freedom of the press (which had fueled the conflict with messages inciting hatred and xenophobia) and enforcing respect for human rights and individual freedoms; and

11. Peter D'Ambrumenil, *Mediation and Arbitration* (London, Cavendish Publishing, 1997).

- working (including with foreign donors) toward the economic reconstruction of the country.

According to the LMA, the reconciliation government was not only to develop a demobilization, disarmament, and reinsertion process for rebels, but it was also supposed to grant them amnesty. Given the problems that had plagued the Ivorian security and defense forces, Linas-Marcoussis participants had called for complete reform of the security sector. Although no one doubted the urgent need for such reform, the challenge of carrying it out remained, in large part because of vested interests and distrust between the former belligerents. The reconciliation government was expected to establish a special committee to monitor the implementation of the accord and report any obstructions to relevant national, regional, and international authorities.

In sum, the LMA pushed for government and military reforms, credible democratic elections, and respect for human rights and the rule of law to restore peace in Côte d'Ivoire. Although the agreement addressed some of the key issues underlying the Ivorian crisis, it did so in purely legalistic terms. This approach was perhaps due to the fact that the 'mediator' and some of his assistants were professional judges, and therefore perhaps more inclined toward arbitration than mediation. In a mediation process, the third party facilitates negotiations between the disputants, helping them to arrive at a consensual solution; in arbitration, the third party applies the law and makes a decision for the disputants.¹² The International Crisis Group observed that the LMA, in proposing only legalistic solutions, ignored the fact that the main problem was not legislation as such, but its application, which had been subjected to political calculations and to authoritarian rule since independence.¹³

Another shortcoming of the LMA was that it sought to manage the Ivorian conflict without taking into account the international and regional dimensions of the crisis and thus its ramifications in neighboring countries. Furthermore, the LMA had set up a stumbling block on the way to implementation by failing to fully recognize the legitimacy and authority of the newly elected Gbagbo government. The new government interpreted the LMA as French legitimation of the rebellion. Many doubted the French could be truly neutral, because of economic interests and the potentially jeopardized security of about 16,000 French citizens residing in Côte d'Ivoire. According to some estimates, about 240 French subsidiary firms and 600 companies with French shares operated in the country at the time.¹⁴

Although the LMA addressed the main underlying causes of the conflict, it lacked features essential for the successful implementation of peace, namely, the involvement and support of citizens from all sectors of society.¹⁵ What mattered as much as having a peace deal signed by the belligerents was having it genuinely approved by all parts of a society in order to marshal the resources and foster the mutual trust and political will required for its implementation.

12. Ibid.

13. International Crisis Group, 'The war is not yet over', 37.

14. Claudio Gramizzi, 'La paix s'éloigne de Côte d'Ivoire', *Groupe de Recherche et d'Information sur la Paix et la Sécurité*, November 2004, www.grip.org/bdg/g4554.html.

15. Sharon D. Welch, *Real Peace, Real Security: The Challenges of Global Citizenship* (Minneapolis, Minnesota, Fortress Press, 2008), 49.

A number of factors help explain the foot dragging in implementing the LMA. The ruling party could easily block new bills with its majority in the National Assembly, which was supposed to vote on laws and authorize reforms recommended by the LMA. While purchasing new weapons to crush the rebellion, the party had also been expressing itself directly and indirectly through militia groups, including the Young Patriots (Jeunes Patriotes) in the streets of Abidjan. According to the Ivorian Ministry of Finance, from September 2002 to January 2004 the government purchased new weapons worth 63 million euros.¹⁶ The government does not, however, deserve full blame for the lack of implementation. Mutual distrust and greed undermined the entire peace process. Forces Nouvelles, the rebel movement controlling the northern half of the country, also contributed to the failure of the LMA and to subsequent accords by refusing to disarm and work toward reunification of the country. The war seemed to have become more profitable than peace for a number of actors, who made a fortune through the illegal exploitation and trade of natural resources or of cocoa and coffee.¹⁷

In May 2003, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1479 establishing the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI, or ONUCI in French). UNOCI was given a mandate to monitor the application of the Linas-Marcoussis peace accord, and later the Ouagadougou agreement, especially the disarmament of combatants and the ending of armed violence in the western region, which was under the control of the Mouvement Populaire du Grand Ouest and the Mouvement pour la Justice et la Paix. With the government contesting the LMA, Côte d'Ivoire slipped into a situation of neither war nor peace, with a cease-fire in place but no political resolution. To move beyond this stalemate, the former belligerents eventually took the initiative of holding direct talks, which yielded the Ouagadougou Political Agreement.

THE OUAGADOUGOU POLITICAL AGREEMENT, ELECTORAL CRISIS, AND COLLAPSE

Signed on 4 March 2007 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, under the mediation of President Blaise Compaore, the Ouagadougou Political Agreement—complemented by four subsequent smaller agreements—resulted from the direct dialogue proposed by President Gbagbo with the hope of disarming the rebels and reunifying the country.¹⁸ The OPA was credited with having contributed to reunifying the country and decreasing the tensions between the former belligerents. Both the mediation and negotiation processes that led to the OPA were quite different from those that had generated the LMA.

Although after the failed coup of September 2002, President Compaore had been accused of sponsoring the rebels, he was chosen by Gbagbo to replace South African president Thabo Mbeki as the mediator in a decision accepted by the Ivorian political

16. Gramizzi, 'La paix s'éloigne de Côte d'Ivoire'.

17. On how lootable resources make armed conflicts more intractable, see Paul Collier and Anke Hoefler, *Greed and Grievance in Civil War* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2001); on profiteering in Ivory Coast, see Julia Crawford, 'Disappeared: Guy-André Kieffer missing in Ivory Coast', Committee to Protect Journalists, Special Report, May 2005. <http://cpj.org/reports/2005/05/kieffer-disappeared-journalist.php>.

18. Gbagbo, *Paroles d'honneur*, 491.

class and officially mandated by ECOWAS. His selection had obvious advantages. As the then acting president of ECOWAS, Compaore enjoyed a certain authority, plus he was in a position to exert leverage against the leadership of the rebellion. Furthermore, he understood the Ivorian conflict and its main actors, an important factor for successful mediations.¹⁹

Only representatives of the government and the main rebel group, Forces Nouvelles, participated in the Ouagadougou talks. Notwithstanding this limited participation (compared with the LMA talks), the Compaore-mediated discussion were in the end approved and supported not only by the Ivorian political opposition and civil society, but also by regional and international organizations, including the United Nations, the African Union, and ECOWAS. The facilitation by a mediator whom the belligerents consensually agreed to and who was perceived as having acted with impartiality and neutrality would make the OPA more widely acceptable than the Linas-Marcoussis accord.

The OPA is the last in a series of agreements concluded to resolve the Ivorian conflict. Both the Linas-Marcoussis and Ouagadougou accords called for restructuring the defense and security forces, reunifying the country, consolidating national reconciliation, peace, and security, and ensuring the free movement of persons and goods. The OPA, however, emphasized post-war reconstruction and made the former rebel leader Guillaume Soro interim prime minister. The parties to the Ouagadougou talks identified the problems that had impeded implementation of the previous agreements and UN resolutions. This step was followed by a declaration of goodwill and a commitment by both parties to respect the territorial integrity and unity of the country, the constitution, and all previous accords and UN resolutions. Thus, the OPA did not replace or contradict previous accords. Rather, it complemented them. Its objective was not only arranging for effective power sharing, but also bringing normal political and military life to Côte d'Ivoire, which included free and fair elections.

The OPA tackled five key problems, among others. First, both parties recognized the issue of identification as a major source of tension between communities given that one of the root causes of the conflict was the question of 'Ivorianness'—that is, qualification of who was to be considered a citizen; in addition, many people lacked identity papers that could attest to their citizenship. Resolution of this challenging issue had high political and electoral stakes. Second, the electoral process, from voter enrollment to the distribution of voter cards, needed retooling. Third, it reorganized the military by establishing a center of integrated command, to incorporate some of the rebel soldiers into the national army, and implemented a program of disarmament, demobilization, and reinsertion of rebel fighters who chose to put down their arms. Fourth, measures were needed to reunify the country under the control of a single, consensual government capable of consolidating peace, reconciliation, and security throughout the country. Fifth, follow-up mechanisms were devised that allowed all the major political actors to be involved in monitoring and evaluating the OPA's implementation based on the agreed-upon schedule.

Although laudable, this schedule for implementation was not respected because of a failure to take into account certain realities on the ground. It was slowed primarily

19. Bercovitch and Gartner, *International Conflict Mediation*, 8.

by practical difficulties, for example, a lack of sufficient financial and technical resources, distrust between the government and the former rebels, and perhaps, in some instances, a lack of goodwill from those hoping to safeguard their interests and ensure their political survival by retaining power.

A UN report in April 2009 revealed that the government as well as the Forces Nouvelles had continued to import weapons despite a UN-mandated arms embargo.²⁰ These violations led to Security Council Resolution 1911, passed 28 January 2010, calling for sanctions against parties obstructing the peace and reconciliation process. It also extended the mandate of the UN mission in Côte d'Ivoire to 31 May 2010.

The OPA, although a political and military deal between the former belligerents, also acknowledged in its preamble the pressing need to fight growing insecurity, poverty, and unemployment. As the International Crisis Group noted in a 2007 report, the OPA was 'more a deal between two sides looking for an escape road that protects their own interests than a compromise which guarantees lasting peace'. Nonetheless, it enjoyed broad support and provided a consensual framework for moving ahead.

Full implementation of all the various agreements and UN resolutions was essential for peaceful, free, and fair elections, but the conflicting parties could not overcome their mutual distrust and genuinely commit themselves to holding elections and readily accept the results. With an incomplete disarmament, it was of no surprise that the hardliners of the ruling party refused to concede defeat after losing presidential elections in November 2010 and tried to maintain power through weapons and a nationalistic discourse. Thus, in the absence of good faith and trust, no resolutions, sanctions, or signed agreements could prevent the bloody chaos that followed the balloting.

The Ivorian peace agreements, especially the OPA, had included measures to ensure that the long-awaited elections would be run in a fair and transparent manner. All political parties were to refrain from incitement to violence and hatred, respect a code of behavior during the electoral period, and to accept the results of the balloting. All was quickly forgotten after the Electoral Commission and the Constitutional Council released contradictory results following the second round of voting, one giving the challenger, Ouattara, 54 percent of the vote and the incumbent president, Gbagbo, 51.45 percent. The electoral controversy took Côte d'Ivoire back to square one, with two opposing armed factions in need of impartial arbitrators and trustworthy mediators to settle a dispute.

This dispute, which divided Ivorian citizens as well as ECOWAS, the African Union, and the UN Security Council, revolved around three key questions: Who was the legitimate president of Côte d'Ivoire? Which interpretation of the laws and agreements regarding election results was authoritative? What credibility should be accorded the United Nations, African Union, ECOWAS, and the mediators who had been mandated to help restore peace? An impartial mediator must be able to tell the truth, even when criticized unfairly of appearing to favor one party. Whatever one might say about the partisan character of the United Nations and of major powers, in

20. Rapport du groupe d'experts sur la Côte d'Ivoire adressé au président du Conseil de sécurité, 8 April 2009, as cited in International Crisis Group, 'Côte d'Ivoire: What's needed to end the crisis', Africa Briefing no. 62, 2 July 2009, 11.

this case, France and the United States, the empirical evidence confirms that peace agreements cannot survive without the financial, political, and military support of regional or international organizations and the backing of major powers. Such situations also demand commitment beyond the selfish logic of interests. Restoring peace in a war-torn country cannot be left to the whims of the parties in conflict.

MAKING PEACE: CHALLENGES AND CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

The above analysis of the Ivorian conflict and the two main peace agreements reveals not only the structural failures that generated or fueled the conflict but also the shortcomings of its management. One cannot expect a perfect peace accord, but the Ivorian case illustrates that four conditions must be fulfilled for agreements to be effective peacemaking tools.

First, the quality, impartiality, and trustworthiness of the mediation process are paramount. It matters that all the parties perceive mediators as trustworthy, without prejudice, and that the mediators approach their task not as that of an arbitrator, who may impose a solution on the parties, but as a facilitator, who helps the parties reach a consensus through negotiation. Second, mediation is strengthened by the support and trust of the parties involved and also from the regional and international communities. Without such backing, mediators face frustration and may lose the hope and energy they need to persevere beyond the inevitable misunderstandings and failures in their peacemaking endeavors. The media, civil society, and the private sector should be invited to contribute to peacemaking efforts. They have the potential to exert positive influence on key actors in a conflict, on the evolution of a peace process, and on keeping the process on the right track and focused on the common good.

The importance of securing the commitment of key third parties can never be overemphasized. Statistical data show that most mediations are conducted by state representatives (46.47 percent), international institutions (33.64 percent), or regional organizations (15.38 percent). Even in these cases, however, most mediations (55.65 percent) result in a failure to produce a cease-fire or a partial or full settlement.²¹ Likewise, several studies have concluded that in the most difficult conflict environments, the implementation of peace agreements is likely to fail unless a major or regional power considers implementation to be vital to its strategic interests and accepts to commit resources and troops needed for the restoration of peace.²² In Côte d'Ivoire, this is reflected in the involvement not only of the United Nations—which, if acting alone, could do little to change the situation—but also of the African Union, ECOWAS, European Union, France, and the United States.

Third, the parties involved should feel 'free' in their negotiations and be willing to accept the outcome, which should never be imposed by the mediator or a foreign power. This is a major lesson that can be drawn from the failure of the LMA. Without a sense of ownership by the conflicting parties, a peace deal, even if signed by the parties, is not likely to be implemented fully and at the desired pace.

21. Bercovitch and Gartner, *International Conflict Mediation*, 23.

22. Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars*, 666–67.

Fourth, people living in a conflict situation need to be patient and aware that signing a peace accord is not enough to restore or bring about peace in a war-torn and divided society. Peace agreements should be seen, as John Paul Lederach suggests, as platforms that serve for continuous discussion over the issues that generated the conflict and for 'constructive social change'.²³ After signing a peace agreement, a strong commitment and political will from the different parties and trust between or among them are required to successfully implement it.

Building trust between former enemies is the key challenge. There is no easy formula because it is a matter of rebuilding shattered relationships, reconciling offenders and victims, and persuading people who have fought each other to live and work together without fear. To build trust between former enemies, both of whom may have been involved in gross human rights violations, it is necessary to find a balance between amnesty and prosecution of offenders. The fear of prosecution may make government officials reluctant to leave power and rebel leaders hesitant to lay down their weapons. In such cases, restorative justice may be the solution, as a reconciliation process designed not to punish wrongdoers but to repair the wrongs committed and to facilitate forgiveness.

CONCLUSION

The Ivorian conflict shows that internal armed conflicts are not problems that can be quickly resolved through negotiations and the signing of agreements. Other cases of armed conflict in Africa—in Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Uganda, and other places—corroborate this. Agreements are likely to enhance prospects for sustainable peace when their signatories feel that they have ownership in the accords. They also need to feel that they have signed them after having negotiated freely and through mediation that they both have accepted as trustworthy. Beyond the signing of agreements, there remains the challenging task of implementing them. Without trust between the conflicting parties, political will and commitment, and respect for the common good, dozens of peace agreements can be signed, but nothing will change.

In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, ongoing distrust between the parties, a lack of political will, and the calculations of political leaders to hold on to power or to get it have hampered the full implementation of peace agreements and movement toward sustainable peace. Because of distrust, the government and the rebel movement have relied on military means to ensure their security and to exert leverage regarding the outcomes of the peace process. Experience seems to suggest that a realistic vision of peacemaking aims not at establishing an order free of conflict but one in which people resort to nonviolent, democratic mechanisms to resolve (sometimes inevitable) conflicts.

Thus, after ending organized violence, the more challenging task is to work patiently to create the structural conditions for sustainable peace and security. These conditions include, among others, establishing a reconciliation process to reconnect the opposing factions so that they can live and work together constructively. Authorities must normally undertake a series of reforms in the legal, political, eco-

23. John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2005), 45.

conomic, and security sectors (and in the case of Côte d'Ivoire, adequate legal measures to address the issue of Ivorian identity). This should be done in a way that is fair to all the stakeholders and that tackles root causes. It helps to remember that peace agreements, as Lederach suggests, are not solutions that resolve conflicts once and for all; rather, they are potential 'transformative platforms' that provide a framework for continuous negotiations in order to achieve 'constructive social change over time' and to rebuild relationships between persons and between groups.²⁴ Physical disarmament is not enough to restore a genuine and sustainable peace in a war-torn society. There needs also to be disarmament of hearts and minds.

The insecurity that state failures generate is a difficult issue with which local and global leaders must deal. No single or simplistic solution can claim to be the right one. Stephen Krasner offers cautious wisdom in the generation of alternative solutions when he writes, 'There is no panacea for domestic sovereignty failures. Even with the best of intentions and substantial resources, external actors cannot quickly eliminate the causes of these failures: poverty, weak indigenous institutions, insecurity, and the raw materials curse'.²⁵

Finally, the Ivorian conflict shows that beyond peacekeeping operations, humanitarian aid, and the pressure exerted on local leaders through sanctions and resolutions, the international community is in desperate need of mechanisms adequate enough to manage intra-state conflicts and of effective instruments to address state failures or violent political transitions. The deployment of ECOWAS and French peacekeeping troops along a buffer zone to separate the belligerents helped to enforce the cease-fire in Côte d'Ivoire, but it did not end the division of the country or put a stop to the murderous violence and human rights violations perpetrated by the government and rebel groups.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire points to two paths in need of further research. First, how can the democratization process be made peaceful in multi-ethnic and impoverished societies in which multi-party democracy tends to align citizens along regional and ethnic lines? Second, beyond the deployment of peacekeeping missions and the issuing of sanctions, how can the international community make its intervention in domestic affairs more effective and compatible with the principle of national sovereignty when operating through a multilateral institution such as the United Nations? What is at stake in attempting to maintain international peace and security is the human capacity to reconcile self-interest and a common good by developing legitimate, viable, and effective structures for global governance and by supporting them with adequate resources for conflict prevention and management.²⁶ Although the intervention of outsiders in sovereign states remains a controversial issue in international relations, the decisive role that regional and international states and institutions played through diplomatic pressure and military intervention in the collapse of the Gbagbo regime and in the reduction of Ivorian bloodshed attest to the urgent need for such structures.

24. *Ibid.*, 46–49.

25. Stephen D. Krasner, 'Sharing sovereignty: New institutions for collapsed and failing states', *International Security*, 29:2 (2004), 85.

26. Alan S. Alexandroff (ed.), *Can the World Be Governed? Possibilities for Effective Multilateralism* (Waterloo, Ontario, Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008)



The Dialectics of Faith-Based Peacebuilding in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Ayo Whetho and Ufo Okeke Uzodike

Faith-based organisations are an important segment of civil society in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a country that has experienced decades of governance crises and declining state capacity resulting from deadly and complex conflicts. Faith-based organisations in the DRC have historically demonstrated their comparative advantage in social service delivery in the face of maladministration by the political elite and in the context of state failure or the incapacitation of state structures. The onset of war in the DRC in 1996 deepened the imperative for constructive engagement by faith-based organisations in the public domain, not least in the area of peacebuilding. Drawing from the eschatological underpinning of Christian liberation theology as well as existential causalities, these organisations in the DRC have undertaken a number of development assistance, humanitarian, and peacebuilding initiatives, which some Congolese view sceptically but others perceive as positive.

[Africa] is another part of the globe that urgently needs to be mapped in terms of its rapidly intensifying religiosity if we are to begin to understand what is happening there.

— M. Bunting, 'Where faith is a healer', *Guardian*, 28 March 2005

AMID HARDSHIPS OF ALL SORT, AFRICA HAS BEEN witnessing an increasing recourse to spirituality since the 1990s. Adherents of Christianity and Islam, the two most prominent religions in Africa, have been growing at an astonishing rate. The proliferation of Pentecostal and other charismatic churches typify the growth of the former. The growing ranks of believers have made the religious constituency an important segment of civil society in countries where faith-based organisations (FBOs) and religious networks have proliferated. Many analysts and international organisations, including the World Bank, are increasingly turning attention to the reality of the leverage that FBOs exert in Africa.

Ayo Whetho is a doctoral candidate at the School of Politics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. He is a recipient of the UPEACE–International Development Research Centre doctoral research award (2009). **Ufo Okeke Uzodike** is associate professor of international relations and head at the School of Politics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. He is also the editor of *Afrikka: Journal of Politics, Economics and Society*. The authors would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their insightful and helpful comments.

Because of their influence over large sections of populations in many African countries, it is now de rigueur for governments to mobilise religious constituencies in garnering support for national projects, such as combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic and promoting peace and reconciliation. In other instances, faith-based actors implement initiatives that hitherto had been the exclusive preserve of governments. FBOs and other civil society actors assume great significance in the context of state failure or the incapacitation of state structures. The delivery of public goods by FBOs enhances the influence of religious networks in public spheres in Africa.

The growing importance of religious networks—as exemplified by their involvement in social service delivery and peace processes, grounded in liberation theology—is such that the analyses of contemporary African affairs must take cognisance of the activities of FBOs, especially in the context of state incapacitation.¹ Overwhelming evidence gleaned from the DRC suggests that Christian FBOs have played decisive roles within that country's socio-political arena.² Such FBOs are foremost civil society actors in the DRC, and as such, wield enormous influence over the Congolese. It is apposite to examine their roles in the DRC peace process as well as citizens' reactions to their peacebuilding initiatives, which are here based on qualitative interview data from field research in 2006 and 2010.³ The analysis encapsulates reactions to Christian faith-based initiatives undertaken during Laurent-Désiré Kabila's rebellion of 1996–1997 and the invasion by Rwandan and Ugandan forces in 1998.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: LIBERATION THEOLOGY AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT

The literature on the role of FBOs in facilitating positive social change draws ideological, theoretical, and practical insights from liberation theology. Although the ingredients of liberation theology are considered to be European, its provenance is traced to the cultural, historical, political, and social contexts of Latin America, where the Roman Catholic Church committed itself in the late twentieth century to the emancipation of the oppressed and the afflicted.⁴

1. Commission for Africa, *Our Common Interest: Report of the Commission for Africa* (London, 2005), 120–23.

2. G. Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila: A People's History* (London, Zed Books, 2002), 173, 190; G. Nzongola-Ntalaja, 'The democracy movement in Congo-Kinshasa, 1956–1984' in J. Hyslop (ed.), *African Democracy in the Era of Globalisation* (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 2001), 310; H. Weiss, 'Zaire: Collapsed society, surviving state, future polity' in I. W. Zartman (ed.), *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), 165; T. M. Callaghy, *The State-Society Struggle: Zaire in Comparative Perspective* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1984), 176, 305–6.

3. We have also examined the specific peacebuilding roles of DRC's religious networks in another article. For details, see A. Whetho and U. O. Uzodike, 'Religious networks in conflict and peace: The case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1996–2006', *Gandhi Marg*, 31:1 (2009), 83–109. The paper focuses on the main reactions (from the public sphere) to faith-based peacebuilding in the DRC.

4. D. Tombs, *Latin American Liberation Theology* (Boston, Brill, 2002); L. Boff and C. Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (New York, Orbis Books, 1987); R. Preston, 'Reflections on the theologies of social change' in R. Preston (ed.), *Theology and Change: Essays in Memory of Alan Richardson* (London, SCM Press, 1975), 157.

In terms of the practical manifestation of this theological construct, church leaders transcended their mission of ministering to the spiritual needs of adherents by transforming their religious foundations into social movements. Their aim was to address the issues of poverty and underdevelopment. They predicated social action on the need to liberate people from the shackles of oppression and suffering. They anchored their reasoning on the heritage of a Christian commitment to individual and social emancipation.

Liberation theology as a theoretical construct derives from Gustavo Gutiérrez's treatise wherein theology is conceptualised as 'critical reflection on historical praxis'.⁵ In line with this conceptualisation, Claudio Ribeiro describes the methodology of liberation theology as 'see-judge-act'.⁶ It entails examining the social context and the main developments that characterise society with an eye towards acting, based on theological reflection, for the sake of betterment. In their performance of this role, religious groups, especially churches, in Latin America functioned as ideological apparatuses and mediating structures or agents of change.

Where adopted, liberation theology provided the ideological base for social and political action by religious networks in the public sphere. The churches, *inter alia*, embarked on mass literacy programmes, engaged governments over openness, development and employment-related issues, and galvanised people to mass action for the purpose of actualising humane ends.⁷ In this regard, religious institutions became not only service providers but also forces for social and political mobilisation and change.

Studies on liberation theology highlight the practical ways in which religious networks have given expression to the eschatological construct in Latin America. For example, the Roman Catholic Church was instrumental in bringing democracy to Venezuela in 1968.⁸ In Guatemala (during the 1990s), Peru (1980–2000), and Puerto Rico (1970s), the church facilitated negotiations to end political impasse and ethnic conflict.⁹ These positive interventions have been replicated in other societies, including in Africa, where FBOs have supported democratisation processes and peacebuilding initiatives.¹⁰

Liberation theology is practiced through social action. It is not restricted to one's consciousness but is expressed in the form of social engagement. FBOs give it expression through practical action, which functions as social and political movements in an attempt to remedy a situation that they regard as untenable or as sinful from a theological viewpoint. Put differently, the commitment by FBOs to bring about change within the context of liberation theology finds expression in social action. Such action can be unilateral and unidirectional—whereby religious networks act alone as benefactors and the people as recipients—or synergistic—whereby the FBOs act in collaboration with governments, civil society groups, and individuals.

5. G. Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* (London, SCM Press, 1974).

6. C. O. Ribeiro, 'Has liberation theology died?', *Ecumenical Review*, 51:3 (1999), 304.

7. J. Haynes, *Religion in Third World Politics* (Buckingham, Open University Press, 1993), 98–109.

8. E. A. Lynch, *Religion and Politics in Latin America: Liberation Theology and Christian Democracy* (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1991), ix.

9. R. D. Alarcón, L. Comas-Dias, and M. B. Lykes, 'Ethnic conflict and the psychology of liberation in Guatemala, Peru and Puerto Rico', *American Psychologist*, 53:7 (1998), 781.

10. P. Gifford (ed.), *The Christian Churches and the Democratisation of Africa* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1995).

The spirit of liberation theology demands that religious actors work for the alleviation of suffering, for the attainment of humane conditions, and for social transformation. It is this social and political engagement in the public space that underscores the identification of FBOs or religious networks as social and 'religio-political' movements, especially when they commit themselves to action intended to transform society.¹¹ Although such action is anchored in theological reflection, its intent and goals are secular in that they go beyond the canonical notion of spirituality to embrace social transformation.

Therefore, liberation theology can be considered FBOs' compass for social action. Religious networks have often predicated their involvement in democratisation and peacebuilding processes on this theological cum social construct. History, however, attests to the fact that FBOs have not always played exclusively positive roles in societies, especially in conflict situations. This realisation underpins the analysis here of the role of religion in conflict.

CONTESTED GROUND: RELIGION AND CONFLICT

One of the most important findings of cross-cultural conflict resolution research is that religion is a perennial and perhaps inevitable factor in both conflict and conflict resolution.¹²

It is beyond contention that religion has been appropriated to justify or legitimise violence and social conflict. There has been religious justification of acts such as terrorism, genocide, and war. Furthermore, religion fuels or is implicated in conflict because it is exploited in 'characterising one's own cause as righteous while using religiously based enemy images which tend to demonise' opponents.¹³ Religion potentially hinders the resolution of conflicts in that primordial transcendental values become entrenched in disagreements with the 'other'. Religion and FBOs have been and continue to be implicated in conflicts around the world.¹⁴

The perspective that implicates religion in war dominates the religion-violence nexus literature.¹⁵ Jonathan Smith argues, however, that the emphasis on religion 'as

11. Haynes, *Religion in Third World Politics*, 28–30.

12. A. A. Said and N. C. Funk, 'The role of faith in cross-cultural conflict resolution', paper presented at the European Parliament for the European Centre for Common Ground, September 2001, www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/ASNC83PCS.htm.

13. R. Williamson, 'Why is religion still a factor in armed conflict?', *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, 21:3 (1990), 246.

14. S. Zitrin, 'Millenarianism and violence', *Journal of Conflict Studies*, 12:2 (1998), 110–15. D. C. Rapoport, 'Some general observations on religion and violence', *Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence*, 3:3 (1991), 127–34, contends that violence is an intrinsic element of religion. For an empirical case study cited to buttress this claim, see H. McCullum, *The Angels Have Left Us: The Rwandan Tragedy and the Churches* (Geneva, WCC Publications, 1995); P. Gourevitch, *We Wish To Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* (New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998); C. Rittner, J. K. Roth, and W. Whitworth (eds.), *Genocide in Rwanda: Complicity of the Churches?* (St. Paul, Minnesota, Aegis, 2004). On intriguing details of the culpability of FBOs, primarily churches, in the Rwandan genocide, see N. Eltringham, *Accounting for Horror: Post-Genocide Debates in Rwanda* (London, Pluto Press, 2004).

15. The view that religious networks can facilitate (and indeed promote) conflict resolution is gaining impetus in the analyses of conflict. The following works highlight religious networks' positive contributions

the source of violent conflicts around the world obscures the positive role that religion frequently plays in conflict transformation and peacebuilding.¹⁶ Indeed, the literature on religion as the leitmotif for war often ignores the potential and demonstrated capacity of religion to facilitate peacebuilding and sustainable development within and across societies.

Religion can serve a positive end by teaching adversaries to 'recognize the essential humanity of their political foes and to cultivate the spiritual values of compassion, forgiveness, self-examination, and reconciliation.'¹⁷ The positive roles of religion are reflected in the areas of social services delivery, conflict transformation, and developmental assistance.

Certain variables give religious networks comparative advantage in conflict transformation and development processes. For example, religious institutions have the capacity to cultivate attitudes of forgiveness and reconciliation.¹⁸ The Commission for Africa notes that '[r]eligion provides the means by which to understand and adjust to conflict and tragedy. . . . It provides language of hope and aspiration.'¹⁹ Further, FBOs have extensive communication and infrastructural networks, enjoy the goodwill and allegiance of their members, and thus provide space for expression and for social mobilisation and empowerment, especially when the legitimacy of government, the state, or international institutions is undermined.²⁰

Madeleine Bunting argues that the aforementioned attributes give religious networks advantages over the nation-state in Africa in several spheres of public life, underscoring the success of FBOs where politicians and the state have failed.²¹ Indeed, many African states have failed to fulfil the aspirations of their citizenry, requiring the intervention of non-governmental entities in spheres where the state is found wanting.²² This failure, which represents a decline in statecraft, creates a vacuum which religion can fill in several positive ways, namely, the provision of social services and the facilitation of development efforts.²³

to political development and peacebuilding in a manner that challenges the predominant or the hegemonic thesis on the nexus between religion and conflict: H. Coward and G. Smith (eds.), *Religion and Peacebuilding* (New York, State University of New York Press, 2004); S. W. Ariarajah, *The Axis of Peace: Christian Faith in Times of Violence and War* (Geneva, WCC Publications, 2004); J. I. Coffey and C. T. Mathewes (eds.), *Religion, Law and the Role of Force: A Study of Their Influence on Conflict and on Conflict Resolution* (New York, Transnational Publishers, 2002); F. Arinze, *Religions for Peace: A Call for Solidarity to the Religions of the World* (New York, Doubleday, 2002); D. R. Smock, *Perspectives on Pacifism: Christian, Jewish and Muslim Views on Nonviolence and International Conflict* (Washington, D.C., United States Institute of Peace, 1995); J. Dear, *The God of Peace: Toward a Theology of Nonviolence* (New York, Orbis Books, 1994).

16. J. Smith, 'User's guide to the beyond intractability website, built specially for religious leaders and workers', n.d., www.thegovernancecommons.org/userguide/religious-leaders-and-workers.

17. R. S. Gottlieb, *Joining Hands: Politics and Religion Together for Social Change* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Westview Perseus Press, 2002), 74.

18. L. Reychler, 'Religion and conflict', *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 2:1 (1997), 19–38.

19. Commission for Africa, *Our Common Interest*, 121.

20. Reychler, 'Religion and conflict', 19–38.

21. M. Bunting, 'Where faith is a healer', *Guardian*, 28 March 2005, www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2005/mar/28/religion.hearafrica05.

22. The best outcomes are likely achieved from government and non-governmental organizations having complementary roles in the public sphere.

23. Commission for Africa, *Our Common Interest*, 121.

Nevertheless, objectivity in conflict research—especially in relation to deductions about causalities, catalysts, and actors and their roles—necessitates accepting nuances in the religion-conflict nexus and the varied roles of FBOs in conflict situations. Therefore, although religion has caused or played a role in precipitating or fuelling some conflicts, one must acknowledge that it has also facilitated the resolution of others. As David Little observes, ‘Religion plays a role in conflicts in . . . three ways: legitimation, recruitment, and peace settlement.’²⁴ It is even possible to condense Little’s three modes into two parameters through which the role of religion in conflict can be conceptualised: as a conflict trigger and as a contrivance for peacebuilding. Existential realities have proven that religion ‘is a powerful force that can recruit the faithful in support of either violent conflict or peacebuilding.’²⁵

The contestations in the debate on religion and conflict allude to the objective reality regarding the role of religion in conflict situations and point to the socially ambivalent function of religion in public life. By way of synthesis, one can contextualise the roles of FBOs in conflict situations based on the perspective which construes religion paradoxically as a source of conflict and a resource for peace. The DRC is one of several societies where the activities of FBOs lend credence to this perspective.

THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS NETWORKS IN THE DRC

FBOs are arguably among the more important actors in DRC civil society if not the most important.²⁶ Religious groups exert tremendous influence over the DRC’s population. They have tended to play socio-political roles that historically have disconcerted governments.²⁷ The pre-eminence of these groups in the DRC’s socio-political sphere is not a surprise to anyone who keeps abreast of realities in the country. State inertia and conflict have strengthened FBOs’ leverage. Decades of misrule, political instability, plunder (by both local and external forces), and the incapacitation or implosion of civil society have meant that ‘[o]nly religious organizations [have] had the possibility of retaining some autonomy.’²⁸ The FBOs’ leverage in this realm is rooted deep in Congolese history.

The prominent religious institutions predate the emergence of the DRC as a sovereign entity. In fact, FBOs played crucial roles in the extrication of the country from the shackles of Belgian colonialism. Religious networks that have been active in the DRC include the Roman Catholic Church, several Protestant churches and denominations—under a loose agglomeration known as the *Église du Christ au Congo* (ECC), formerly *Église du Christ au Zaïre* (ECZ)—the Kimbanguist Church, and

24. D. Little, ‘Phenomena of faith: Religious dimensions of conflicts and peace’, *Harvard International Review*, 26:4 (2005), 20, <http://hir.harvard.edu/energy/phenomena-of-faith>.

25. Smith, ‘User’s guide to the beyond intractability website’.

26. Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila*, 51.

27. For instance, Callaghy, *The State-Society Struggle*, highlights the tensions between the government and the Roman Catholic Church in his lucid analysis of the state-society struggle during the Mobutu era in Zaïre (now the DRC).

28. Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila*, 173.

Islam among numerous other local syncretic religious groups and sects.²⁹ The Roman Catholic Church, the ECC, and the Kimbanguist Church have been the most politically active through FBOs.

The influence of religious networks in the DRC's socio-political space finds expression in the stature of the Roman Catholic Church. Michael Schatzberg describes the Roman Catholic Church as the DRC's 'only truly national institution apart from the state, and . . . the only other locus of significant economic, social, and political influence'.³⁰ It has the allegiance of approximately half of the DRC's population. Besides its 'strong external ties', it has tremendous resources and controls 'much of the country's health, wealth, educational, and publications activities'.³¹ Jeff Haynes posits that 'the church moved in to fill the gap as the state withdrew from its responsibilities' to provide basic services and social infrastructure.³² In view of its prominent position in the DRC's public space, the Roman Catholic Church is regarded by some as a 'proto-state'.³³ In addition to its opposition to the regime of Mobutu Sese Seko during the 1970s, the church played a pivotal role in the convocation of the *conférence nationale souveraine* (sovereign national conference, CNS) in 1991 and its reconvening in 1992 after a halt to its proceedings following violence committed by Mobutu's forces.³⁴ In fact, Catholic priests, not the secular opposition, had organised and led the 'most important demonstration' in February 1992 that compelled Mobutu to acquiesce to demands for the CNS.³⁵

The CNS, presided over by Monsignor Laurent Monsengwo, the archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church in Kisangani, was called as part of the democratisation process. It was intended to make sweeping political changes with the goal of dislodging Mobutu's dictatorship and install democratic structures. One immediate objective of the CNS was the formation of a transitional government in which Mobutu would be reduced to a ceremonial president while a prime minister would exercise executive powers. Although the CNS enjoyed 'broad legitimacy' and set the context for democratisation,³⁶ it was hampered by such factors as 'Mobutu's unwillingness to implement democracy, the presence of a large number of opportunist politicians, and the weaknesses of the opposition'.³⁷

The ECC is the second most influential religious organisation. Its institutions serve the needs of its members, such as providing missionary guest houses and maintaining bookstores, and it has played significant a role in national life through its educational and social ministries, acting either independently or in collaboration with the Roman

29. Callaghy, *The State-Society Struggle*, 303.

30. M. Schatzberg, *The Dialectics of Oppression in Zaire* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1988), 117.

31. Callaghy, *The State-Society Struggle*, 176.

32. J. Haynes, *Religion and Politics in Africa* (London, Zed Books, 1996), 116.

33. Ibid.

34. Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila*, 189–208.

35. H. Weiss, 'War and peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo', *NAI Current African Issues*, 22 (2000), 4.

36. Ibid.

37. M. E. Naniuzeyi, 'The state of the state in Congo-Zaire: A survey of the Mobutu Regime', *Journal of Black Studies*, 29:5 (1999), 681.

Catholic Church.³⁸ In 1963 Protestants advanced the promotion of learning and scholarship through the establishment of the Université libre du Congo (Free University of the Congo, ULC) at Kisangani.³⁹ The Mobutu government nationalised the university in 1971 as part of its ‘authenticité’ campaign, a policy to promote ‘Zaireness’.

The third major religious group, and the largest independent church in the DRC, is the Kimbanguist Church, officially known as the Église de Jésus-Christ sur la Terre par le Prophète Simon Kimbangu (Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu). The Kimbanguist Church is an indigenous, syncretic religious movement which originated from the activities of the charismatic prophet Simon Kimbangu around the Bas-Congo area in 1921. Pan-African ideas influenced Kimbangu’s ministry and activism. Kimbangu and his ‘comrades’ held that ‘the realisation of the Pan-African ideal of “Africa for the Africans” was God’s will’.⁴⁰ It is instructive to note that Kimbangu and his followers strongly resisted colonialism ‘at a time when Catholicism was a pillar of the colonial system and Protestantism an advocate for mild reforms’.⁴¹ In spite of a ban on the group and persecution of its adherents between 1921 and 1959, the movement grew stronger and ‘several politico-religious movements of Kimbanguist inspiration arose to occupy the political space’.⁴² The Kimbanguist Church played a major role in the struggle for Congo’s independence, exerting influence on Congolese in general and on workers and peasants in particular.

The strategic importance of these three FBOs in the DRC derives from their historical roles, membership profiles, resources, and activities in the public sphere. It can be argued that the influence that FBOs have on the Congolese rivals that of the state in view of the latter’s failure to meet basic human needs. Haynes asserts that ‘the state virtually gave up its developmental role, passing it to the three churches: Catholic, Protestant and Kimbanguist’.⁴³

These religious networks approximate ‘autonomous structures beyond the state’s control’ and ‘provide development goods which the state has been unable or unwilling to supply’.⁴⁴ Evidence from field research suggests that the Congolese in general view FBOs as an oasis of social service provision and harbingers of hope in the wilderness of crises and disillusionment that state inertia has engendered. FBOs’ pre-eminence as civil society actors in the DRC’s public space stems from their character as forces for social mobilisation and from their economic, social, and political roles. Research findings suggest that religious networks functioned as resources for peace in the DRC but also reveal negative, as well as positive, reactions to their involvement in the public sphere.

CONFLICT, FBOs, AND THE DRC’S PEACEBUILDING PROCESS

During 1996–1997, Laurent-Désiré Kabila waged a rebellion that culminated in the overthrow of the Mobutu regime and the ascent of Kabila. Expectations that Kabila’s assumption of political power in the DRC would engender peace in the country were

38. Presbyterian Church USA, Religions, n.d. (URL no longer available).

39. Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Congo from Leopold to Kabila*, 174.

40. *Ibid.*, 49.

41. *Ibid.*, 51.

42. *Ibid.*, 51.

43. Haynes, *Religion and Politics in Africa*, 116.

44. *Ibid.*

soon dashed as the alliance that brought him to power broke down. In 1998 Rwanda and Uganda—which had backed Kabila in the rebellion against Mobutu—took up arms against Kabila; the country fell back into the throes of conflict, with Rwanda and Uganda capturing and controlling areas of DRC territory, mainly in the east. At one point, armies of nine African countries and as many as twelve irregular non-governmental militia groups were involved in the conflict. The involvement of so many actors, with their divergent but vested interests and agendas—including global business and profiteering networks—engendered the label ‘Africa’s First World War.’⁴⁵

A typically complex conflict scenario characterised by the implosion of state authority over national territory, such as in the DRC, can give civil society actors comparative advantage in undertaking peacebuilding initiatives, especially those that seek to build and improve human security. FBOs made significant contributions to the search for peace in DRC and provided a range of humanitarian services (see Table 1).

As can be seen from the table, the Roman Catholic Church, the ECC, and the Kimbanguist Church performed several functions that are generally subsumed under the peacebuilding or conflict transformation rubric.⁴⁶ The intended net effect of these activities was to transform violent conflict and to create an environment that could promote durable peace. Guided by the ‘see-judge-act’ imperative of liberation theology, FBOs undertook these initiatives to ameliorate human suffering and to attenuate the DRC conflict.

POPULAR PERCEPTIONS ABOUT FAITH-BASED PEACEBUILDING IN THE DRC

The perceptions and responses to the peacebuilding initiatives by FBOs cited here are drawn from common themes that emerged during interviews conducted in 2006 and 2010. Responses to faith-based peacebuilding were noted under two categories: pejorative and positive.

Pejorative perceptions were reflected in scepticism and condemnation of faith-based peacebuilding. Respondents in this category were generally suspicious about the rationale, justification, efficacy, and benefits of religious networks’ involvement in the peacebuilding process. This view was informed largely by the actions of religious actors elsewhere—primarily the complicity of FBOs, especially the churches, in the genocide in neighbouring Rwanda—not by the activities of FBOs in the DRC.

Furthermore, respondents criticised an ‘unholy alliance’ between the political elite and religious leaders in that such collaboration undermined the interests of ordinary citizens whenever the elites’ interests and ambitions coalesced.⁴⁷ This point was seconded by an academic who asserted that religious networks are somewhat similar to or in cahoots with politicians in their pursuit of self-interest and political relevance.

45. On global business interests, see R. Latham, R. Kassimir, and T. Callaghy, ‘Introduction: Transboundary formations, intervention, order, and authority’ in T. Callaghy, R. Kassimir, and R. Latham (eds.), *Intervention and Transnationalism in Africa: Global-Local Networks of Power* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), 2. On profiteering networks, see I. Taylor, ‘Conflict in Central Africa: Clandestine networks and regional/global configurations’, *Review of African Political Economy*, 30:95 (2003), 45.

46. For extensive descriptive and contextual analyses of specific peacebuilding activities, see L. Reyhler and T. Paffenholz (eds.), *Peacebuilding: A Field Guide* (Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001).

47. Personal communication with civil society activist, Kinshasa, 26 November 2006.

Table 1

The Roles of Faith-Based Organisations in the Peace Process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1996–2006

Faith-based Organisation	Activity	Scope
Roman Catholic Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care delivery (clinics, hospitals, and pharmaceutical services) 	Country-wide
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of charity and development offices 	Country-wide (but predominately in North Kivu)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking with civil society organisations for peaceful settlement of the conflict 	North Kivu
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Censure of activities of interlopers, including war-related human rights abuses 	North Kivu
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving endangered refugees to safety 	Goma
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue 	Country-wide
Église du Christ au Congo (Church of Christ in the Congo)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of humanitarian relief to internally displaced persons 	Manirema, North Kivu, Orientale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma counselling for victims of violence 	Goma
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation and reconciliation 	North Kivu, Orientale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation of educational institutions 	Orientale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for civil society-led mediation and reconciliation 	North Kivu, Orientale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convocation of pre-Inter-Congolese Dialogue forum 	Kinshasa
Kimbanguist Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humanitarian assistance 	Bas-Congo, Kinshasa
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation 	Bas-Congo
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace education through village peace committees 	Bas-Congo
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstruction 	Bas-Congo

Source: Adapted from A. Whetho and U. O. Uzodike, 'Religious networks in conflict and peace: The case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1996–2006', *Gandhi Marg*, 31:1 (2009), 108–109.

In seeking material advantages (for example, political appointments and contracts) conferred through patronage, religious leaders, he said, tend to 'forget the people'.⁴⁸ Religious leaders' efforts and practices associated with interest actualisation tend to overlap with or are underpinned by elements of neo-patrimonialism, a core facet of Congolese politics. The unholy alliance mindset, sustained by popular perceptions of the conjoining of political and religious elites' interests, permeated the views of some respondents in this category.

Some respondents highlighted the 'risk' of proselytism through the activities of FBOs. The provision of humanitarian services was occasionally accompanied by 'preaching the word' and attempts at 'converting unbelievers'.⁴⁹ Some respondents were scathing in their criticism of the distribution of food parcels and other essential household items after religious services. It was mentioned that some FBOs limited their humanitarian activities to their members or gave preference to their members over and above other Congolese.⁵⁰ Such actions were perceived as partisan. It was also noted that initiatives confined by denomination could inadvertently 'fester old wounds or open new ones'.⁵¹ A few respondents opined that such practices fostered feelings of alienation and exclusion. Some pointed to the contrast with non-religious civil society actors whose initiatives tended to promote the public good by targeting and providing benefits to all irrespective of their religious affiliations.⁵²

According to some politicians and belligerents who had expected a zero-sum military solution to the conflict, faith-based interventions complicated the crisis. Prior to the convocation of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in Sun City, South Africa, each of the warring parties to the conflict had believed that it could secure 'victory' through the use of force.⁵³ Therefore, the intervention of faith-based actors, especially their denunciation of armed confrontation, undermined the prospects of victory.⁵⁴ Respondents who were sympathetic towards warring parties were wont to assess faith-based peacebuilding from the perspective that denounced intervention as serving to undermine decisive military victory and prolong the conflict.

Nevertheless, the fact that the state bureaucracy did not function in most parts of the DRC compelled even those critical of religiously motivated peacebuilding initiatives to accept help from the religious community. Furthermore, the realisation on the part of many Congolese that politicians had fared badly in areas where FBOs had succeeded, such as the provision of education or health care, engendered positive attitudes towards faith-based peacebuilding.⁵⁵

48. Interview with a professor of sociology, University of Lubumbashi, Lubumbashi, 7 November 2010.

49. Interview with a journalist for *L'Observateur*, Kinshasa, 11 October 2010.

50. Interview with a journalist for *Le Potentiel*, Kinshasa, 11 October 2010.

51. Interview with a member of the Association Africaine des Droits de l'Homme, Lubumbashi, 8 November 2010.

52. Ibid.

53. The Inter-Congolese Dialogue involved negotiations between armed and unarmed groups intended to broker a peaceful settlement to the war that had erupted in 1998 and to resuscitate the democratisation process that had been thwarted by Mobutu.

54. Interview with a member of the Mouvement de Libération du Congo, Kinshasa, 5 October 2010.

55. Interview with a professor of political science, University of Kinshasa, Kinshasa, 6 October 2010.

Positive views of faith-based intervention were premised primarily on religious actors' roles aimed at alleviating war-related suffering and attenuating the conflict. As one respondent noted, 'Many people knocked on the doors of the churches for help' during the conflict and 'had to rely on the churches for daily supplies without which they could not survive'.⁵⁶ Through an assortment of initiatives, FBOs contributed to improving human security, thus 'filling the vacuum' created by state deflation. For instance, Peter Tygesen reported that the ECC in Kisangani supported fifteen health centres which provided basic care for 920,000 persons who had nowhere else to turn.⁵⁷ One of the beneficiaries of the ECC initiative concluded, 'We only find hope in the church'.⁵⁸

One respondent summed up the positive responses to faith-based intervention in the DRC crisis as follows: 'The churches, mainly the [Roman] Catholic Church and the Église du Christ au Congo, played the social, political and economic roles that were expected of the government before, during and after the war. Add to that, the intervention of the churches did save lives that otherwise would have been lost. Many children are now going to schools owned by the churches; the parents of these children have also been assisted to support their families. The people of [DR] Congo are therefore grateful to the churches for their help during the difficult period'.⁵⁹

One person with a positive perception of the church declared that '[p]eople really wanted religious [groups] to be involved in the peacebuilding process'.⁶⁰ Positive reactions to FBOs' roles have not been entirely local; international non-governmental actors have also applauded faith-based peacebuilding in the DRC. Organisations such as the International Rescue Committee, Oxfam, Human Rights Watch, and the International Crisis Group have acknowledged the constructive efforts of FBOs in reports on their own activities in the DRC.⁶¹ The reports endorsed religious groups' intervention in opposition to foreign military intervention, provisioning of humanitarian assistance to displaced persons, and infrastructure rehabilitation. They also highlighted the benefits of faith-based peacebuilding initiatives.

CONCLUSION

This assessment of faith-based peacebuilding in the DRC takes cognisance of the argument that certain 'contextual, institutional and personal factors' give FBOs a comparative advantage in the peacebuilding process.⁶² Often the reality is that in 'various conflict-affected areas the state apparatus is weak or is absent and religious structures are some of the strongest institutions in place'.⁶³ The DRC's demography reveals that

56. Interview with an official of Caritas International, Kinshasa, 7 October 2010.

57. P. Tygesen, 'Abandoned and neglected', 2000, http://archive.act-intl.org/news/dt_nr_2000/dtdrc0200.html.

58. *Ibid.*

59. Interview with a member of La Voix des Sans-Voix pour les Droits de l'Homme, Kinshasa, 8 October 2010.

60. Interview with a professor of political science, University of Kinshasa, Kinshasa, 6 October 2010.

61. The Web sites of these international non-governmental organisations describe the various projects undertaken in the DRC and elsewhere.

62. *Ibid.*, 143–46.

63. *Ibid.*, 143.

FBOs are the strongest institutions in the country and have been the most prominent civil society actors in the face of state deflation. As ‘moral beacons’ and an ‘oasis of integrity in the desert of corruption’, FBOs’ track record of service delivery provided leverage for intervention in the public sphere before, during, and after the episodes of conflict in the DRC.⁶⁴

Findings from qualitative interview data suggest that faith-based peacebuilding—in the form of mediation, facilitation of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, peace education, humanitarian assistance, and reconstruction—contributed significantly to the attenuation of the DRC conflict. It appears that FBOs have played a generally positive role in the DRC conflict environment. Nevertheless, an objective assessment also brings to the fore the inherent limitations of faith-based peacebuilding, as revealed by some interviewees. As a 2005 study of faith-based peacebuilding notes, ‘[A]ssessing the impact of [religious networks’] peacebuilding initiatives continues to be a challenge.’⁶⁵

One challenge associated with denominationally confined initiatives is the lack of coherence or unanimity in terms of efforts, strategies, and focus by the FBOs. Furthermore, such an intervention potentially undermines peacebuilding as it unwittingly exacerbates schisms that engender conflict. For faith-based peacebuilding to succeed, religious actors need to promote non-partisan social action as they seek to harness the benefits of religiously motivated peacebuilding.

In general in the DRC, religious leaders undertook peacebuilding initiatives, such as mediation and peace education, on the basis of their religious mandate, not necessarily because they possessed the requisite skills or expertise. The apparent lack of professionalism in faith-based peacebuilding necessitated significant support from other civil society actors and from international humanitarian and development agencies. This should not be construed entirely as a criticism of FBOs’ roles in the DRC but as a factor that underscores the need for complementarity between faith-based and secular peacebuilding. The limitations of faith-based peacebuilding offer lessons that should inform intervention by FBOs in the public domain in the DRC and other societies plagued by or emerging from conflict.

64. A. Whetho, ‘Religion and conflict transformation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1999–2004’ (master’s thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2006), 114.

65. T. Bouta, S. A. Kadayifci-Orellana, and M. Abu-Nimer, *Faith-Based Peacebuilding: Mapping and Analysis of Christian, Muslim and Multi-Faith Actors* (The Hague, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael, 2005).



The Illusion of Home and the Elusion of Peace: Framing the 'Return' of Liberian Refugee Women

Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso

Why do home and peace remain an elusive illusion when forcibly displaced women return home? How does the illusion of home contribute to the elusion of peace? In the case of Liberia, four analytical frames from the literature and fieldwork in Liberia can help unravel the above questions: academic critiques of state 'territoriality' policies; Cockburn's frame of the continuum of violence, which draws upon Galtung's theory of structural violence; and Rogge and Lippman's push-pull theory of returnee reintegration. The home to which women return typically is not the home they expect, yet there is an elusion of peace as they contend with the practical realities of existence in a post-war (but not post-conflict) society. The women's 'return' may not, therefore, be sustainable.

Home is the place where, when you have to go there, They have to take you in.

— Robert Frost, 'The Death of the Hired Man', *North of Boston*, lines 118–19

THE IDEA OF HOME IS ONE OF THE MOST ROMANTICIZED in the human experience. It is now axiomatic to use expressions such as 'East or West, home is best', or 'Home is where the heart is', or 'Home is where you make it', and in the timeless words of Robert Frost, home is the place that offers unconditional acceptance of a person and an undeniable connection. Indeed, it is almost taboo to utter negative judgements about the idea of home, as it is presumed to be unquestionably desirable, good, and ideal. Shield from one's mind any negative experiences that may occur in the space traditionally defined as home. Alternative axioms proclaim that the ideal exists—somewhere. It is thus a somewhat difficult task for anyone to deconstruct the idea of home. In the context of return migration, however, scholars have had reason to question the idea of

Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso is a lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at Babcock University, Nigeria. She earned her doctorate in political science at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. She wishes to acknowledge the grants by the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation / African Association of Political Science, the University for Peace Africa Programme, and the Canadian International Development Research Centre that made her doctoral research possible. She would also like to thank Professor Adigun Agbaje for his academic guidance, Dr. Yacob Haliso for his support, and her Liberian family and friends, to whom this work belongs.

This article is adapted from a paper delivered at CODESERIA's '2010 Gender symposium: Gender, migration and socioeconomic development in Africa', 24–26 November, Cairo.

home as used in international praxis to regulate the movement of people across borders, whether voluntary or forced.

The question asked here is Why do 'home' and 'peace' remain elusive when refugee women 'return' to their country of origin? Could it be that there is a difference between the 'home' touted by the agencies involved in repatriation, the 'home' the refugee remembers or constructs in her memory while in exile, and the 'home' the returnee actually encounters? In addition, what are the implications when home remains an illusion upon return? In other words, how does the illusion of home contribute to the elusion of peace?¹ What frames from the literature can help answer these questions?

The issues involved seem to be below the radar of most organizations and researchers concerned with Liberia. The research discussed here was carried out in and on Liberia from 2006 through 2010 and focuses on the conditions of female refugee returnees in their various communities, especially with respect to their reintegration. It examines the issue of home, peace, and 'return' as constructs used by the returnee women and the government and non-governmental agencies that work with them.

SETTING THE CONTEXT: THE GLOBAL REFUGEE REGIME

And yes, it was visibly obvious that the overwhelming majority of the one hundred sixty-seven returnees were children, then young girls with children, then women. . . . I noticed one woman alone with seven children; one girl in her twenties with three children with her; one grandmother-like person with three children with her, and so on. And I wondered where all these children came from . . . and where all the men had gone.²

Among this group of one hundred sixty-seven returnees, assisted in their return to Lofa county by the UN Refugee Agency and other partners, there seemed only to be young children and the young and old women who cared for them. The conspicuous absence of men in this space raised questions about the gendering of various stages and spaces in the migration trajectory, from flight, to encampment, to return. To answer these questions, it is apposite to explore also the official accounts of the composition and character of refugee and returnee populations globally and in relation to other migrants.

Refugees flee their country of origin or of habitual residence because of perceived or real threats to their life, fear of persecution, and related reasons, finding temporary protection or 'refuge' in a country other than their own. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that there were 15.2 million refugees worldwide in 2009.³ Within the broader context of migration, forced migrants—

1. For clarification, the 'elusion of peace' here implies that peace has become elusive, evasive, difficult to grasp or realize. It is the returnee who is in pursuit of peace, but peace, as demonstrated here, does not lend itself to easy apprehension.

2. Researcher's field notes, observations at a transit center in Voinjama, Lofa County, Liberia, during the arrival of a convoy of five trucks filled with refugees returning from camps in Guinea, 12 October 2006.

3. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, '2009 global trends: Refugees, asylum-seekers, returnees, internally displaced and stateless persons', Geneva, 15 June 2010, www.unhcr.org/4c11f0be9.html.

refugees and internally displaced persons—account for 43.3 million of the world's 214 million migrants⁴—approximately 20 percent of all migrants.

In the past few decades, especially since the end of the cold war, repatriation has been the solution of choice by the international community for ending a person's refugee status. Today, however, a decline in the number of repatriations has become a significant trend in forced migration. Whereas in 2005 the Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) declared an 'era of return', official UNHCR figures today indicate that return is on the decline. Relying on reports from countries of asylum (departure) and of origin (return), the UNHCR estimated that 2009 would see a drop of 42 percent in the number of refugees repatriated compared with the figures for 2008. This is part of an overall decline in the number of repatriations since 2004, with the 2009 figures being the lowest since 1990.⁵

It seems, however, that African refugees continue to return in large numbers, even to countries where conflict has not come to a definite conclusion. With the exceptions of Afghanistan and Iraq, the other four of six countries that top the list of major countries of return are in Africa.⁶ Three of the four countries that top the list of countries of departure are on the continent.⁷ These numbers have implications for understanding return migration because historically states have the primary responsibility for the welfare of refugees and returnees, and decisions concerning migration and return for forcibly displaced persons are usually concluded by authorities, not by the refugee.

It has become somewhat axiomatic in the literature on refugees to state that 75 to 80 percent of refugees are women and children. To avoid the single conceptual category that Cynthia Enloe refers to as 'womenandchildren', one must be specific about the female and youth composition of the refugee and returnee population.⁸ The UNHCR reports that 47 percent of refugees and 51 percent of returnees in 2009 were women.⁹ Certain internal factors in a country may affect the location of refugee women or children and their locations in turn—such as whether concentrated in a camp or dispersed in a city or rural area—may determine whether they are counted. For example, the refugee agency's report indicates that in Chad, whereas only 33 percent of urban refugees were women, up to 70 percent were counted in Daha 1 camp.¹⁰ With respect to children, while 41 percent of refugees or people in 'refugee-like' situations were children, 54 percent of returnee refugees were estimated to be children. Such demographics would (or should) affect the reintegration programs available for returning refugees. Whether they actually do so is a separate issue.

4. International Organisation for Migration, 'Facts and figures: Global estimates and trends', www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/about-migration/facts-and-figures/lang/en, from UN Department of Education and Social Affairs, 'Trends in international migrant stock: The 2008 revision', July 2009, <http://esa.un.org/migration>.

5. UNHCR, '2009 global trends', 10.

6. The four countries are the Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, and Sudan.

7. The three African countries are Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Pakistan is the other country.

8. Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1990).

9. UNHCR, '2009 global trends', 14.

10. *Ibid.*

SETTING THE CONTEXT: THE CASE OF LIBERIA

Home is where I was safe. Home is what I fled from.

—Mervyn Peake, *Titus Alone* (1959)

After decades of relative calm under minority rule, Liberia erupted into political instability with a series of riots that culminated in the military coup of 12 April 1980. Hailed as a ‘revolution’, the coup succeeded in wresting political power from the minority Americo-Liberians and into the hands of the majority Liberian population, which experienced its first taste of ‘indigenous’ rule.¹¹ Ultimately, however, further splintering along ethnic lines led to the incursion of a group of Libyan-trained guerrilla fighters under the auspices of Charles Taylor’s National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) on 24 December 1989. Thus began fourteen years that witnessed two civil wars (during 1989–1996 and 1999–2003) punctuated by a brief period of uncivil ‘civil’ rule (1996–1999) under Taylor as president.

The Liberian civil war eventually ended with Taylor exiled to Nigeria on 11 August 2003. This paved the way for warring factions to lay down their arms in accordance with the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed earlier that year and for the war-weary population at home and abroad to begin to hope for a return to peace. After winning the presidential run-off election in 2005, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was sworn in on 16 January 2006, bringing with her a track record of professional achievement and promises to return the country to prosperity against all odds.

It is within this context that tens of thousands of Liberian refugees returned to their country. According to the UNHCR, an estimated 200,000 refugees returned to Liberia between the end of the conflict in 2003 and the installation of Johnson Sirleaf’s government.¹² Of this number, 51 percent were female. Almost an equal number of refugees, approximately 190,000, remained in exile, particularly in neighbouring countries. They have been returning in slower, smaller groups. In 2009, some 8,800 Liberians repatriated from Ghana. Official estimates indicate that Liberians are still the majority of refugees in Nigeria.¹³

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

A combination of methods and approaches were used to collect data for this research. These include one hundred in-depth interviews with Liberian returnee women and other stakeholders, such as returnee men, government officials in various government agencies responsible for returnees, UNHCR and other non-government agency staff, and members of Liberian civil society groups. The other methods of data collection were focus group discussions, non-participant observation, review of documents, and peer validation. Interview, observation, and focus group data were collected during fieldwork in five of Liberia’s fifteen administrative counties. Documents were also retrieved from relevant agencies at this time.

11. James Youboty, *A Nation in Terror: The True Story of the Liberian Civil War*, 2nd edn (Philadelphia, Parkside Impressions, 2004), 26.

12. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, ‘New president appeals for refugees to return to Liberia’, *News Stories*, 16 January 2006.

13. UNHCR, ‘2009 global trends’.

Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Lofa, Montserrado, and Nimba counties were selected for this research because, with the exception of Bomi, they are among those listed by the government and UNHCR as hosting the largest number of returnee refugees in the post-war period. All these counties were important sites for the prosecution of the war and thus exemplify the post-war social environment to which refugees return. Including a variety of returnee experiences was a particular concern in the selection of respondents. Thus the respondents came from rural, urban, and semi-urban settings, ranged in age from fifteen to seventy, and varied in ethnicity, education, country of exile, and duration of exile. The data collected were analyzed using thematic coding and grounded theory methods, from which subsequent questions emerged. These questions were then examined after the additional collection of documents, further review of the literature, and validation by experts on various issues.

This research has privileged a feminist methodology, relying on qualitative methods and a multi-vocal analysis that pays particular attention to the voices of the respondents in drawing conclusions. In this, women are 'not objects of study, but subjects, authorities of knowledge.'¹⁴ As Bolanle Adetoun wrote in reference to marginalised research subjects, '[T]he work of a researcher in this type of project is to listen to [and present] all parties concerned'.¹⁵

RETURN AND THE ILLUSION OF HOME

The UNHCR exercises primary responsibility for the international protection of refugees and also has a mandate to find 'durable solutions' to the refugee problem. The classic solutions favoured by UNHCR, in order of preference, are voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement in a third country. UNHCR'S leading role is supported by the activities of host governments and international governmental and non-governmental organizations. Repatriation to one's country of origin is expected to be followed by reintegration, the process expected to enable former refugees (and other displaced persons) to enjoy progressively greater degrees of physical, social, legal, and material security.¹⁶

Refugees return to their country of origin for various reasons, which was confirmed by the Liberian refugee women interviewed for this research. The women's most often cited reasons included homesickness or the desire for home; the need to escape harsh conditions in exile; the end of the war and the hope of participating in upcoming elections; the desire to locate family members; and pressure by the United Nations (specifically UNHCR).

When asked why they returned to Liberia, several women would look at the interviewer as if to say, 'Isn't it obvious?' Then they would add simply, 'Because Liberia is my home.' In other words, 'This is my place, where I come from; where I was born. Is

14. Erin K. Baines, 'Gender research in violently divided societies: Methods and ethics of international researchers in Rwanda' in Elisabeth Porter et al. (eds.), *Researching Conflict in Africa: Insights and Experiences* (Tokyo, United Nations University Press, 2005), 145.

15. Bolanle A. Adetoun, 'The role and function of research in a divided society: A case study of the Niger Delta region in Nigeria' in Porter et al., *Researching Conflict in Africa*, 50.

16. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *State of the World's Refugees 97/98: A Humanitarian Agenda* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998).

any other reason necessary? One returnee said, 'We left Liberia because of war, . . . and we returned because we wanted to see our country because it had been a long time'. This longing for the country of their birth seems for the returnee respondents the most significant reason for return.

The word *Home* used here as a proper noun would best denote the transcendent idea of Liberia as the country of origin described through positive remembrances and depictions by the returnee refugees who participated in this research. This phantasm that beckoned the lonesome refugees while abroad exerted the greatest influence on their choices to return to Liberia. Further examination, however, reveals layers of reasons for longing for this Home, a place about which the end of war has given them the leave to dream.

The presence or lack of family ties is one reason often cited for returning to Liberia. Several women gave a variation of this response: 'I heard that Liberians were repatriated and that things are fine in Liberia. My parents are here [in Liberia], my brothers are here, so I was encouraged to come back'.¹⁷ Conversely, some returned because they had lost all family while in exile: 'I returned because I wanted to come back home. My older sister passed away. My mother left Guinea in 1997. My father left me in the night while I was sleeping. I returned voluntarily because I will not have nobody in Guinea. [Here] is still hard time. The situation here is the same situation [as in Guinea]'.¹⁸

One factor that leaps out from the information collected is the way the women link their construction of home with the difficulties experienced in exile:

- [I had] a very unpleasant experience in the camp. I had a boyfriend who ruined my daughter's life and always threatened my life because he lost his job in the camp. . . . I returned because of ill-treatment from my children's pa in Guinea and the unbearable conditions. [I] prefer being here because of my daughter. She is no more threatened by their father because her father is a Guinean. The situation here is better because there is nowhere like home.¹⁹
- [I returned] because this country na my country. Sometimes in Guinea we no get food, nothing. So I decide to come back. UN came and said we should come back. No school again; all the work in the camp closed. Also no resettlement option.²⁰
- I was very idle in that country [Guinea] and felt that I should come home to play my part.²¹
- We returned because of the difficult time and there was no overseas support for my family. Another reason was I felt that peace was gradually returning to Liberia. . . . Liberia is my home, peace has been restored.²²

17. Interview 23 with returnee woman, 4 October 2006, Monrovia, Montserrado. All the quotes used in this work are cited verbatim, retaining seeming grammatical errors and the Liberian pidgin where the meaning of statements is clear with or without a prior knowledge of it.

18. Interview 89 with returnee woman, 27 September 2006, Duport Road, Montserrado.

19. Interview 18 with returnee woman, 4 October 2006, Monrovia, Montserrado.

20. Interview 5 with returnee woman, 27 September 2006, Duport Road, Montserrado.

21. Interview 15 with returnee woman, 4 October 2006, Monrovia, Montserrado.

22. Interview 48 with returnee woman, 7 October 2006, Ganta, Nimba County.

- My situation here [in Liberia] is different than in exile. The difference is that here na my home; the people here they can feel sorry for you sometimes and give my children something. But not in Ivory Coast.²³
- I returned to Liberia because the struggle [in exile] wasn't easy. . . . Here is my home unlike Sierra Leone.²⁴

The women's statements above indicate also that return to Liberia is driven by both 'push' and 'pull' factors. According to John Rogge and Betsy Lippman,

The most successful return and reintegration processes have been those where 'pull' factors have been created in areas of origin through upgrading of basic services, creation of livelihood opportunities and, most importantly, the establishment of law and order. Returnees who have left their places of displacement because of 'push factors—such as acute discrimination or overt hostility by local authorities or populations—often require special assistance and protection in areas of displacement, during—and even after—return.²⁵

RETURN AND THE ELUSION OF PEACE

The construction of home is intimately interlinked with the construction of peace as a condition that enhances the desirability of home and contributes to its pull. Indeed, while in exile, refugees construct peace simply as the end of hostilities or sometimes as the possibility of reuniting with family; upon return, they construct it as the availability of certain opportunities, rights, and privileges.

Several Liberian women described peace as the absence of war, for instance: 'I felt that there was no more war and I wanted to be a part of the decision making and peace-building process, and to also help in the reconstruction of my dear country.'²⁶ Another young woman spoke of her mother's description of Liberia and how her own experience did not coincide with the home to which she was returned: 'I came to Liberia because my mother said I should come, because its my father's home, our home, so I should come back. No war to keep us in Guinea again. It's our home. [Now] . . . no father to assist; my mother not alright to help us. For me now, Guinea was better.'²⁷

This young lady's disillusionment is obvious and keen. She had spent twelve years of her life in exile, taken there as a young child with little memory of the home that her parents left over a decade before. Her experience suggests that the home touted by an older generation of refugees may differ significantly from that which a younger or second generation of refugees would prefer.

Another woman who had returned in 1998 said, 'I don't see anything becoming good for the next three, four years. We expect things to go [in a particular] way . . . but everyday things are getting harder.'²⁸ This person clearly compared her expectations

23. Interview 11 with returnee woman, 27 September 2006, Duport Road, Montserrado.

24. Interview 10 with returnee woman, 4 October 2006, Sinje, Grand Cape Mount.

25. John Rogge and Betsy Lippman, 'Making reform and reintegration sustainable, transparent and participatory', *Forced Migration Review*, 21 (2004), 4.

26. Interview 55 with returnee woman, 7 October 2006, Ganta, Nimba County.

27. Interview 36 with returnee woman, 27 September 2006, Monrovia, Montserrado.

28. Interview 66 with returnee woman, 29 September 2006, Montserrado.

with the keenly felt alternative reality. Home is much more than where the heart is, especially when basic amenities become difficult to obtain. Thus some women began to relate their peace to the availability of certain facilities or resources: 'I am happy to be home although there was free services render to us in exile but I feel fine to be at home because I have right to my country. I am a part of the decision-making and peace-building. Although I don't have money to provide wants but my needs are met . . . and there is no more gun sounds. We live in a peaceful environment'.²⁹ Another returnee, equally somewhat conflicted but relating peace to the availability of certain freedoms in spite of hardship said,

I felt that there was security back home in Liberia. I overstayed my welcome in exile, [so] I felt that I should come back home. . . . I am very happy to be back home. There is security. Even with the difficulty in getting money, there is peace and one is free to go anywhere. I feel that my condition now is far better than in exile where I was constantly called a foreigner. . . . [Now] I live in my own country, live in my own house, there is peace, and I do what I want to do.³⁰

Evident in the statements above are the returnees' uncertainty about the nature of their existence in the aftermath of return. Whereas some no longer chase the phantasm of the home they expected to see and experience, several continued to hold on to the idea, replacing its meaning as they went along and constructing for themselves a measure of peace, subjectively defined. In other words, peace is the reason why 'home' (defined as Liberia the place, not the idea) and 'Home' (the idea, the phantasm) is possible. In light of the returnees' experiences, peace is a dependent variable, capable of being adjusted to fit reality.

THEORETICAL FRAMES

The previous sections illustrate the perceptions of Liberian returnee refugee women about their country, first as refugees with the prospect of return, and then as returnees who must now grapple with a new existence in a significantly altered context. The home of peace that they described may not be the actual home they now live in, while peace, they discover, is indeed about the silencing of guns but also about so much more. What theoretical frames help decipher the dilemma of returnee refugee women in Liberia?

The bifurcation of the idea of home that emerges from the experiences of returnee refugees is fundamentally constructed by the international refugee regime that has vested interests in seeing refugee numbers decline and camps closed. According to D. C. Sepulveda, the assumption that repatriation is the best possible solution stems from the belief that 'a singular and immutable bond exists between a "people" and a particular "space"'.³¹ This territorialization of space and identity is the first frame employed here. While proffering arguments to the contrary, Gaim Kibreab acknowledges that

29. Interview 47 with returnee woman, 7 October 2006, Ganta, Nimba County.

30. Interview 54 with returnee woman, 7 October 2006, Ganta, Nimba County.

31. D. C. Sepulveda, 'Challenging the assumptions of repatriation: Is it the most desirable solution?' unpublished paper, 1996, cited in B. S. Chimni, 'From resettlement to involuntary repatriation: Towards a critical history of durable solutions to refugee problems', *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working paper no. 2 (Geneva, UNHCR Centre for Documentation and Research, 1999), 8.

the modern international political system is such that ‘spaces are more territorialized than ever before. . . . “Fortress Europe” is the culmination of the territorialization process.’³² This idea had been put forth also by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, which explains that the discourse surrounding displacement and solutions ‘contains the implicit assumption that a given population has its own proper “place”, territory or homeland. This assumption is deeply embedded in the European political theory of nationalism, according to which there is a natural identity between people and place and the world is naturally made up of clearly bounded politico-territorial entities—sovereign states.’³³

Tania Ghanem explains, in support of Laura Hammond, that refugees are perceived as *uprooted* and *displaced* and returnees are considered to be naturally ‘*re-rooted*’, placed back in the proper order of things, *re-placed* as soon as they are ‘back home.’³⁴ It seems inescapable thus that we challenge this ‘static and unrealistic “repatriation = homecoming” model.’³⁵ The logical consequence of the ‘territoriality’ mode of thinking is the international community’s unsubstantiated ‘reliance on the questionable assumptions that *all* refugees want to go home and the best place for refugees is home.’³⁶ This assumption, asserts B. S. Chimni, ‘was not seen as a “hypothesis to be tested” . . . , but as a statement of fact which presumed knowledge of refugees’—implying a certain arrogance of attitude that precluded further investigation of repatriation theory and practice.’³⁷

One can easily identify a number of scenarios in which refugees would be reluctant to go back to their country of origin and it would not be advantageous for them to do so even if they so wished. Some of these include the status of being a second-generation refugee;³⁸ a bifurcation of the idea of home for long-time refugees;³⁹ the

32. Gaim Kibreab, ‘Revisiting the debate on people, place, identity and displacement’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 12:4 (1999), 387.

33. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, ‘Refugees returning home: Report of the Symposium for the Horn of Africa on the social and economic aspects of mass voluntary return movements of refugees, Addis Ababa, 15–17 September 1992; Geneva, 1992, 7.

34. Tania Ghanem, ‘When forced migrants return “home”: The psychosocial difficulties returnees encounter in the reintegration process’, Refugee Studies Centre, Working paper no. 16, University of Oxford, 2003, 15; Laura Hammond, ‘Examining the discourse of repatriation toward a more proactive theory of return migration’ in Richard Black and Khalid Koser (eds.), *The End of the Refugee Cycle? Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction* (New York, Berghahn Books, 1999), 229–30.

35. Hammond, ‘Examining the discourse of repatriation’, 229–30 (emphases in the original). Hammond’s assertion is thought-provoking: ‘Terms to be found in the discourse of repatriation include: *reintegration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, rebuilding, readjustment, readaptation, reacclaculturation, reassimilation, reinsertion, reintroduction, recovery* and *re-establishment*. . . . Among the most problematic terms of the repatriation canon are the very words *return* and *returnee*, which imply that by re-entering one’s native country a person is necessarily returning to something familiar. These terms are riddled with value judgments that reflect a segmentary, sedentary idea of how people ought to live, what their relation to their “homeland” should be, and ultimately how they should go about constructing their lives once the period of exile ends’ (ibid., 230).

36. Sepulveda, ‘Challenging the assumptions of repatriation’, 11 (emphasis added).

37. Chimni, ‘From resettlement to involuntary repatriation’, 5.

38. John R. Rogge, ‘Repatriation of refugees: A not so simple “optimum” solution’ in T. Allen and H. Morsink (eds.), *When Refugees Go Home* (Geneva, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 1994); see also Chimni, ‘From resettlement to involuntary repatriation’.

39. Mark Graham and Shakram Khosravi, ‘Home is where you make it: Repatriation and diaspora culture among Iranians in Sweden’, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 10:2 (1997).

persistence of the cause of fear or persecution for the individual after the general situation of conflict or unrest has abated;⁴⁰ a gendered view that acknowledges the fault in the idealization of home, which may not translate into peace for women who return to the same patriarchal social structures in place before their exile.⁴¹

The idea of peace has been adequately critiqued by feminists writing on peace, conflict, and international relations generally. Particularly compelling is Cynthia Cockburn's explication of the continuum of violence, which lends credence to Johan Galtung's idea of structural violence and positive and negative peace, the second and third theoretical frames discussed here. In the introductory chapter of *The Aftermath: Women in Post-Conflict Transformation*, Sheila Meintjes, Anu Pillay, and Meredith Turshen conclude that there is no aftermath of war for women: 'Evidence confirms that the gender violence women experience in wartime increases when the fighting dies down. . . ; and clearly there is no one aftermath because the scenarios following war are as various as the conflicts themselves. . . . The post-war period is too late for women to transform patriarchal gender relations.'⁴²

In short, the experiences of women after conflict are just an extension of the structural violence they bear in so-called peacetime. Galtung conceived the concept of structural violence, explaining that 'conflict is much more than what meets the naked eye as "trouble", direct violence. There is also the violence frozen into structures, and the culture that legitimates violence.'⁴³ Cockburn takes this idea further in her exposition of violence in the pre-war period, which she calls the 'uneasy peace'. For her, 'violence exists whenever the potential development of an individual or group is held back by the conditions of relationship, and in particular by the uneven distribution of power and resources.'⁴⁴ Thus she concludes that 'gender links violence at different points on a scale reaching from the personal to the international . . . ; that it is meaningless to make a sharp distinction between peace and war, prewar and postwar . . . [and to] consider one moment in this flux in the absence of the next is arbitrary; [and] the continuum of violence runs through the social, the economic and the political.'⁴⁵

The implication of this perspective for the study here is that structural violence of the kind explicated by Galtung and framed as a continuum by Cockburn is present in the situations experienced by the returnee refugee women, whose positive ideas of home and peace showed evidence of shifting once back in Liberia. For example, one

40. Olajumoke Oyinloye, 'Issues and trends in the protection of refugee women and children in Africa: A study of the refugee women and children at the Oru refugee camp, Nigeria' (master's thesis, University of Ibadan, 2004).

41. Helia Lopez-Zarzosa, 'Internal exile, exile and return: A gendered view', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 11:2 (1998).

42. Sheila Meintjes, Anu Pillay, and Meredith Turshen, 'There is no aftermath for women' in Sheila Meintjes, Anu Pillay, and Meredith Turshen (eds.), *The Aftermath: Women in Post-Conflict Transformation* (London, Zed Books, 2001), 4; in the same volume, also see Okechukwu Ibeanu, 'Healing and changing: The changing identity of women in the aftermath of the Ogoni crises in Nigeria', and Meredith Turshen, 'Engendering relations of state to society in the aftermath'.

43. Cited in Cynthia Cockburn, 'The continuum of violence: A gender perspective on war and peace' in Wenona Giles and Jennifer Hyndman (eds.), *Sites of Violence: Gender and Conflict Zones* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2004), 30.

44. *Ibid.*

45. *Ibid.*, 43.

woman said, 'I don't feel a need to retain a place in my former place of asylum because Liberia is my home. [But] my situation now is worse because in Guinea, UN helped a whole lot but now there is no assistance'.⁴⁶ In this case, the practical constraints of daily living point to the latent violence that makes reintegration difficult for returnee Liberian women. Many of the women reported that schools, healthcare facilities, and indeed food (or the financial means to access these resources) were elusive upon their return home. One woman stated, '[I returned because] I was homesick and wanted to build lives anew . . . [but] now no job or financial aid to start up with. Children care and also education [are difficult]'.⁴⁷ Another woman displayed the ambivalence common to returnees who had spent a longer period in Liberia:

I came to Liberia because there was green light of peace, schools were re-opened, there was job opportunity available to help women and children and I also wanted to be a part of the electoral process. [But] in exile my children were attending schools that were tuition free, [now] I have to spend almost all my earning for school fees and school materials. [But] after all of the difficult times, God has finally brought peace into this land. Nowadays we sleep fine. There is nowhere like home.⁴⁸

When basic human needs are not met for such women, or the many children they care for on behalf of society, then home remains a mirage. Home can be as sweet as a dream, a reason to continue living during the adversities of exile and camp life, but increasingly useless as disappointment dampens hope. Peace becomes elusive as they find they have only exchanged one form of hardship for another or one location or place of privation for another. As evidenced here, even the 'advantages' they might have enjoyed in exile, such as privileged access to schools or skills training, might no longer be available as the international community and its representatives on the ground insist on making them more 'self-reliant'. This self-reliance, however, is usually poorly conceived and intensely gendered to the disadvantage of women.⁴⁹

The fourth frame attempts to predict the possibility of return being durable. Rogge and Lippman's 'theory' to this end bears remembering.⁵⁰ Further investigation may be needed to unravel the other socio-personal and political factors that mediate the process by which returnee refugee women in Liberia or elsewhere achieve reintegration that may be termed 'sustainable' (as unsustainable has been the case so far). Several agency staff said in interviews that many of the returnees living close to borders did not remain in their country of origin permanently; they often criss-crossed the border, maintaining bases in Liberia as well as their 'former' host country. One Mandingo chief, who was having problems recovering land and property that had been occupied during the war, asserted in no uncertain terms, 'I don't have the means

46. Interview 22 with returnee woman, 4 October 2006, Monrovia, Montserrado.

47. Interview 2 with returnee woman, 4 October 2006, Monrovia, Montserrado.

48. Interview 9 with returnee woman, 7 October 2006, Ganta, Nimba County.

49. Olajumoke Jacob-Haliso, 'Non-governmental organisations and the construction of gender rights notions and practice in addressing gendered violence in post war Liberia', paper presented at the Men, Masculinities and Family Planning Conference, University of California, Los Angeles, 14–15 October 2010.

50. See above, p. 48. Rogge and Lippman, 'Making reform and reintegration sustainable, transparent and participatory', 4.

to bring back my family from Ghana. [My only problem] is my property business; I never get it. . . . If I don't get my property, I'll go back; if I get it, I'll stay'.⁵¹

CONCLUSION

[One thing] you just can't do in life. . . .You can't go home again.

—Bill Bryson, *The Lost Continent* (1990)

The home Liberian refugee women return to does not correspond with the home they expect at the moment of taking the decision to return. The peace they expect is only partly achieved as there is no overt generalized violence to a large extent anymore. In their narratives of experiences in Liberia, however, one finds evidence of an elusion of peace as women contend with the practical realities of existence in a post-war, but not post-conflict, society. Although war might have ended officially, returnees must still battle structural violence, interpersonal and social conflicts, and social injustice in all its forms. The implications are that 'return' may not be sustainable or that returnee women may end up with greater disadvantages than they had while in exile given the eventual withdrawal of aid and the dire lack of opportunities for advancement in a poor country such as their beloved Liberia.

More broadly, metaphorical references to refugee 'flows', 'streams', 'waves', and 'trickles', though seemingly innocently employed, actually require that one think of refugees and other migrants as an undifferentiated mass, as molecules in a liquid.⁵² To the contrary, the effects of forced migration vary in different political, socioeconomic, and cultural contexts, and differ according to various factors, such as gender, class, age, and race or ethnicity, a theme insufficiently pursued in the literature on refugees.⁵³

51. Interview 76 with 'returnee' refugee man, a chief of the Mandingo tribe, 8 October 2006, Saclepea, Nimba County.

52. David Turton, 'Conceptualising forced migration', Refugee Studies Centre, Working paper no. 12, University of Oxford, 2003, 4–5.

53. Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso, "If I could speak to Madam President . . .": Returnee women's experiences of return, reintegration and peace in Liberia', *Liberian Studies Journal*, 33:1 (2008) 4



A Critical Assessment of Development Views of Gender in Africa

Ibrahim Bangura

The patriarchal cultures, institutions, policies, and structures in the developing world have for many years disadvantaged women. This affects their personal growth, consequently, reducing their potential to contribute to the socio-economic and political development of their families and communities. Some of the activities carried out by international organizations in the developing world are perceived to be strengthening patriarchal systems instead of helping to ensure social and economic justice and the emancipation of women. The post-colonial gender approach challenges prevailing patriarchal ideologies in the developing world. After assessing the concept of gender, the current status of women in Africa, and various theories of development mirroring, it appears that post-colonialism may be more beneficial to women than other theories of development.

All those men of whom we are afraid, who crush the jealous emerald of our dreams, who twist the fragile curve of our smiles, all those men we face who ask us no questions, but to whom we put strange ones.

—Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution* (1964)

THE WORDS OF FRANTZ FANON REPRESENT the reality of billions of women around the world who must find practical answers to the daily challenges of surviving in a world of unending difficulties, entangled in the mesh of a world where their gender defines their present and future. ‘Gender’ refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female that affect the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as relations between women and between men.¹ Relationships between people in a community are socially constructed and are learned

1. UN Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), ‘Gender mainstreaming: Strategy for promoting gender equality’, August 2001, www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/factsheet1.pdf.

Ibrahim Bangura has wide-ranging experience in the fields of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-combatants, gender, and child protection monitoring and rehabilitation. He holds a bachelor’s degree in political science and history, University of Sierra Leone; a master’s degree in gender studies, University of Sierra Leone; and a master’s in international development studies, University of Amsterdam. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in economics at the HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management, Germany.

through socialization processes.² In some places, gender is viewed as part of an attempt by feminists to stake claim to a certain definitional ground in order to confirm the inadequacy of existing bodies of theory for explaining persistent inequalities between women and men.³ The debate over gender and sexuality transcends the institutional boundaries of women's studies programmes, asserting its relevance to all disciplines and fields of enquiry.⁴ As a broad concept, gender has been used over the last decade by governments and non-governmental institutions in designing and implementing development projects and programmes.

In many parts of the world, an assumption prevails that the concept of gender involves only women and their concerns. Although this is not true, women are often disadvantaged, oppressed, and marginalized, justifying a global effort to bridge the gap that exists between women and men. In doing so, it is necessary to take into consideration concepts such as mainstreaming gender—the process of assessing the implications for women and men of planned actions in new legislation, policies, or programmes—and gender equality—ensuring that individuals' rights, responsibilities, and opportunities do not depend upon whether they are born male or female.⁵ Some gender coinages exclusively concern the domain of women. Examples of these include women's rights, which is subsumed under human rights, and women's empowerment, which has components that deal with women's sense of self-worth, their right to choices and to make their own decisions, and their right to access economic, social, and political opportunities.⁶

A number of prominent theories and approaches address gender, including feminism, Marxism, and post-colonialism. Feminism, the movement to end sexism and the exploitation and oppression of women, has experienced a variety of waves and models based on the experiences of different generations of women. For example, some radical feminists hold that 'sexual equality can only be achieved through revolutionary changes in the structure of society, particularly in the institutions of marriage, motherhood and heterosexuality'.⁷ Marxism generally looks at the intersection of gender and class and these two categories' relation to social change; it views familial oppression and its abolition as important aspects of social change.⁸ Post-colonialism asserts the right of all people to material and cultural well-being and seeks to end inequalities created by the division of people in the West and elsewhere resulting from colonial and imperial rule.⁹ Post-colonial feminism is concerned with challenges to dominant patriarchal ideologies in the developing world.¹⁰

2. Ibid.

3. J. Scott, 'Gender: A useful category of historical analysis', *American Historical Review*, 91:5 (1986), 1,066.

4. A. McClintock, Aamir Mufti, and Ella Shohat (eds.), *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nations and Postcolonial Perspectives* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 5.

5. UN General Assembly, 'Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997', A/52/3, 1997, chap. 4, p. 3; OSAGI, 'Gender mainstreaming'.

6. H. Clinton, 'Remarks to the U.N. 4th World Conference on Women, Plenary Session', Beijing, China, 1995, 3, http://5wcw.org/docs/Clinton_Speech.html.

7. M. Warren, *The Nature of Woman: An Encyclopedia and Guide to the Literature* (Inverness, California, EdgePress, 1980), 664.

8. H. Brown, 'Gender, politics and political thought: Revisiting Marx's early work', paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association's 67th annual conference, Chicago.

9. R. J. C. Young, *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003), 2.

10. Ibid., 109.

Although these theories express different points of view, the concept of gender has a place in all of them. If one examines the concept of gender and its consequences today vis-à-vis life for women in local African communities, it appears that post-colonialism has more to offer women in terms of potential benefit than the other theories of development.¹¹

DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONCEPT OF GENDER

In one of her articles, Rebecca Klenk asks the question, Whom do we call a developed woman?¹² Her inquiry begs a follow-up: What does development in the context of women mean, and who determines who a developed woman is? ‘Development’ in a broad, ordinary sense implies creating a better life for people.¹³ It means ensuring that people’s basic needs are met—that they have adequate food to maintain good health, a safe place in which to live, and affordable services; they should also be treated with dignity and respect.¹⁴ Amartya Sen insists that development should not be limited to the growth of gross national product or national incomes, industrialization, technological advancement, or social modernization. Rather, development is a process of expanding the freedoms that people enjoy.¹⁵ The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were established in 1944 to facilitate the global development movement.¹⁶

The concept of development has dominated discussions in reference to the South, which is often viewed as underdeveloped and backward and thus in need of development. Klenk, in asking about the ‘developed woman’, was trying to grasp the usefulness of recent scholarship for understanding connections between development and subjectivity from a gender perspective.¹⁷ She notes that in the development discourse, women in the South are seen as ‘marginal, “problematic” subjects of underdeveloped nation-states.’¹⁸

Janet Momsen asserts, ‘[T]he development process affects women and men in different ways. The after effects of colonialism, and the peripheral position of poor countries of the South and those with economies in transition in today’s globalizing world, exacerbate the effects of discrimination on women. The penetration of capitalism, leading to modernization and centrally planned economies, often increases the gender based disadvantages.’¹⁹ She further stresses that the modernization of agriculture has altered the division of labour, rendering women dependent on men and with

11. Although gender encompasses relations between women and men in society, the focus here is primarily on women.

12. M. R. Klenk, ‘Development and change’, *Institute of Social Studies*, 35:1 (2004), 57.

13. R. Peet and E. Hartwick, *Theories of Development: Contentions, Arguments, and Alternatives*, 2nd edn (New York, Guilford Press, 2009), 1.

14. Ibid.

15. A. Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York, Anchor Books, 1999), 3.

16. R. Reddock, ‘Why gender? Why development?’ in J. L. Parpart, M. P. Connelly, and E. Barriteau (eds.), *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development* (Ottawa, International Development Research Centre, 2000), 30.

17. Klenk, ‘Development and change’, 57.

18. Ibid., 61.

19. J. H. Momsen, *Gender and Development: Routledge Perspectives on Development* (London, Routledge, 2004), 1.

heavier workloads. In such cases, women have to intensify their search for fuel, water, and food and are left with subsistence production as their only means of survival.²⁰

The arguments of Janet Momsen and Naila Kabeer are seconded by Rhoda Reddock, who sees the development policies and activities carried in the South by international organizations as being more destructive than constructive for the 'southern woman'. She offers the following to justify her perspective: development policies are not tailored to the particular needs of individual economies; they contribute to major declines in standards of living, including nutritional levels, educational standards, employment rates, and access to social support systems; they shift more of the responsibility for health care and care of the sick and elderly to women already burdened by unpaid work; they increase social ills, such as violent crime, drug abuse, and violence against women; and they result in increased levels of migration (legal and illegal) from the South to the North.²¹ While Reddock may be correct on some points, the work of development institutions and donor agencies such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) should not be broadly branded as destructive, although existing policies and programs could and should be reformed to better meet the actual needs of women in developing countries.

Proponents of post-developmentalism completely reject modern development processes; they see no benefit in attempts to modify or democratize it. They propose instead that when lives are lived in poverty, people should think locally, rather than globally, and try to live simply, in material terms.²² Post-developmentalism argues that development was never intended to better people's lives; rather, it was charged with being unconcerned about prosperity and was geared toward establishing external control over people's lives.²³ Despite the tenor of the post-development discourse, its basis remains an agent of capitalism.

NEO-LIBERALISM, MODERNIZATION THEORIES, AND COLONIALISM

Dag Einar Thorsen and Amund Lie describe neo-liberalism as a discourse that helps the spread of global capitalism and consumerism as well as the demolition of the proactive welfare state.²⁴ Neo-liberalism has a strong political orientation toward wielding capital and serves as an agent for change. In regard to the political spectrum, it represents a parallel attempt to bring about a free market utopia, as the downsizing of nation-states enlarges the space for private accumulation, individual liberties, and market forces.²⁵ At the end of the 1980s, it appeared that the history of neo-liberalism would prove to be brutish and short, no more than a destructive, (de)regulatory ex-

20. N. Kabeer, *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought* (London, Verso, 1994), 63.

21. Reddock, 'Why gender? Why development?', 31.

22. Peet and Hartwick, *Theories of Development*, 1.

23. J. Rapley, *Understanding Development: Theory and Practice in the Third World* (Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007), 4.

24. D. E. Thorsen and A. Lie, 'What is neo-liberalism?', University of Oslo, 2004 (available online).

25. A. Tickell and J. Peck, 'Making global rules: Globalisation or neoliberalisation?' in J. Peck and H. Yeung (eds.), *Remaking the Global Economy: Economic-Geographical Perspectives* (London, Sage, 2003), 163–81.

periment.²⁶ In the liberal or neo-liberal universe, the state or public space is the sphere of men, with women relegated to the private sphere.²⁷ The control of the instruments of production enforces gender inequalities and discrimination. The result is poverty and destitution for women.

Modernization is widely viewed as a uniquely Western process that non-Western societies could follow only in so far as they abandoned their traditional cultures and adopted technologically and morally 'superior' Western ways.²⁸ Modernization theorists, who view the world through a colonial lens, see Africa as a continent that should reject what it naturally possesses for what they believe it should have—that is, 'modernization'. These theorists have been criticized for ethnocentrism, optimism, and 'failure to recognize the political implications of economic dependency on the West'.²⁹ To modernization theorists, the words 'tradition' and 'feminine' are passé. They portray development as a struggle of dominance over nature, and implicitly, over women. According to C. Scott, to modernization theorists, women are either invisible, treated paternalistically, or used as a litmus test for determining the degree of 'backwardness' of a country.³⁰

Indonesian president Sukarno described colonialism as 'a skilful and determined enemy, and it appears in many guises. It does not give up its loot easily. Wherever, whenever and however it appears, colonialism is an evil thing, and one which must be eradicated from the earth'.³¹ Colonialism, considered to be interchangeable with imperialism, is reducible to the word *empire* (to which could be added *hegemony*, *dependency*, and *globalization*).³² In 'The Future Results of the British Rule in India' (1853), Marx asserts that despite colonialism causing untold destruction, it would rouse Indian society from the 'stagnation' of the 'Asiatic mode' of production on to a course that would eventually lead through capitalism to an Indian transition to socialism.³³ Such thought is in direct opposition to a world where people would be free to determine their way of life, what development means to them, and the kind of political system they prefer to live.

Women in Africa during the colonial period did not have a place in society or a voice. Chauvinism and patriarchy were the rule, as all institutions empowered men.³⁴ Put another way, women had no place in the public sphere; instead, they were relegated to the shadows of the home, where the whims of men also reigned.

26. Ibid.

27. N. El-Kassem, 'Empire, neo-liberalism, and the ideologies of transnational gender construction in the Iraqi and Kurdish constitutions', Life and Peace Institute, Uppsala, 2006, 4.

28. R. Inglehart and W. E. Baker, 'Modernization, cultural change, and the persistence of traditional values', *American Sociological Review*, 65:1 (2000), 19.

29. V. Randall and R. Theobald, *Political Change and Underdevelopment* (Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1985), 33.

30. C. Scott, *Gender and Development* (Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), 23, 25.

31. Sukarno's opening speech at the Bandung conference, 18 April 1955, <http://www.sukarnoyears.com/305aa.htm>.

32. P. Wolfe, 'History and imperialism: A century of theory, from Marx to postcolonialism', *American Historical Review*, 102:2 (1997), 388.

33. Ibid., 390.

34. Interview with Ramatoulaye Balde, protocol officer, National Assembly, Conakry, Guinea, 25 September 2011.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE CURRENT CONTEXT OF AFRICAN WOMEN

In Africa, heightened attention to the concept of gender stems in part from the persistent oppression women face because of various policies, systems, and other structures. According to development, modernization, and neo-liberal-backed institutions, many women in Africa cannot compete for decent jobs because they lack access to education and the basic means of production.³⁵ Their basic human needs are not always met, and it is not uncommon for their rights to be violated in their homes, places of work, and broader community. Such gender-based oppression becomes entrenched in societies over time.³⁶

In some places, women are denied rights to inherit and hold property on par with men, and this has consequences for their physical and economic security. In many places in Africa, women are hindered by the resolve of their community leaders to deny them access to farmland.³⁷ Their disproportionately low land and property ownership rates render them less likely to be able to secure credit with which to embark on entrepreneurial activities.³⁸ The unavailability of collateral frustrates women who are willing and physically able to engage in profitable businesses that would help them provide for their children and other members of their family. This poses undue challenges in particular for female-headed households.

In countries with discriminatory family laws, women are often left with little choice but to remain in unhappy or even violent marriages. Girls at an early age are forced into marriage, often to men they may not wish to marry, denying them the possibility of attending school or receiving training in a trade that would be beneficial to them. Upon the dissolution of a marriage, women may not have equal rights to custody of their children or visitation.³⁹ In some communities, for instance in northern Nigeria and Senegal, divorce is frowned upon, and women who brave it are treated as outcasts.

Women are sometimes subjected to gender-based violence, which takes place mostly within their homes and at the hands of family members. Such violence takes the form of physical, sexual, or psychological harm, including threats, coercion, and arbitrary deprivation of liberty. Thus, women suffer in the place they are supposed to feel and be the safest, their homes, and at the hands of people they should be able to trust. The entrenched nature of these acts in communities leaves women with no place to seek redress. Instead, they suffer in silence.

Some societies, because of entrenched male-dominated institutions, structures, and policies, discourage women from involvement in politics and decision making.

35. Madinatu Kamara, who works with the United Nations Development Programme in South Sudan, made this point: 'In countries like South Sudan, Mali, Senegal, and Niger, there still exists male preference especially in the area of access to education. With no education, women cannot compete for access to the means of production and they become defenseless against the ills that are perpetrated against them in their communities'. Telephone interview with Kamara, 30 July 2011.

36. Interview with Zhengzheng Qu, programme officer of Girls Empowerment, Landgraaf, Netherlands, 30 July 2011.

37. Telephone interview with Aminata Sillah, deputy commissioner of the National Youth Commission of Sierra Leone, 29 July 2011. She specifically referenced Gambia, Nigeria, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.

38. Bina Agarwal, 'Gender and land rights revisited: Exploring new prospects via the state, family and market', *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 3:1-2 (2003), 184-224.

39. *Ibid.*

Those brave enough to challenge the prevailing order expose themselves to imminent danger, which sometimes causes them to back off and leave the stage to men. In northern Sierra Leone, women are not allowed to be paramount chiefs. The justification is that paramount chiefs must be members of the Poro secret society, which only men can join. Therefore, women can never hold the most important position in the land and must remain subject to the caprices of men. Attempts by women to change the system can have the effect of reinforcing such structures, rendering change even more unlikely.⁴⁰

The reality of the oppression women continue to face in Africa is well documented, but it is becoming increasingly clear that gender oppression also weighs heavily on men, who are becoming more concerned about it. A remedy to oppression can be found only when the two sexes collectively address existing challenges. The effects of oppression also trickle down in a multiplicity of ways to children, communities, and subsequently societies.

An uneducated woman cannot contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic and political development of her community. She must instead most likely rely on backyard farming or petty trading (where possible) for her livelihood and survival. Her consequent limited possibilities for productivity affect the entire household; what she could provide if she were educated and had access to the means of production could far exceed what she normally manages to provide. This situation in no way helps her children or husband; it only entrenches their collective poverty and contributes to the poverty cycle.⁴¹

For instance in Sierra Leone, women constitute about 51 percent of the population. With the constant oppression of such a significant proportion of the population, growth and subsequently development are almost impossible. Stakeholders do not acknowledge that 49 percent of the population cannot create all that the society needs. The 51 percent who are excluded or whose participation is restricted must be given access to the socio-economic and political structures of the country for it to take advantage of the full utilization of the country's potential workforce.

Denying women and girls access to education correlates with high rates of maternal and child mortality. An educated woman would tend to be more knowledgeable about what to do and what not to do during pregnancy than would an uneducated woman. Women with access to education are also more likely to prevent unwanted pregnancies. Children born to uneducated mothers may be put in harm's way simply as a result of ignorance.⁴²

The above points, it could be argued, are linked to poverty, and one may be tempted to conclude that the poverty suffered is self-inflicted. Having denied women access to resources that could alleviate their poverty, one would not expect poverty or its effects to disappear overnight. In some cases, men do not make an effort to provide means for their wives. They might change course and do so on occasion, for instance, after a situation has gotten out of hand, resulting in endangerment or a loss of life.⁴³

40. Telephone interview with Yeama Bishop-Robinson, head of Women's Advocates, Sierra Leone, 29 July 2011.

41. Interview with Zhengzheng Qu.

42. 'Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997', chap. 4.

43. Telephone interview with Amie Tholley, United Nations Children's Fund, 30 July 2011.

As briefly mentioned above, men until recently have paid little attention to traditional practices that oppress women, but this is slowly changing as more of them come to realize that they too are affected by their consequences.⁴⁴ In West Africa, governments and nongovernmental organizations are working with women's groups to combat harmful practices. In response to lobbying and advocacy in Sierra Leone, in June 2007 the parliament passed laws on domestic violence, registration of customary marriage and divorce, and devolution of estates.⁴⁵ This legislation provides women the possibility of seeking redress for violence and abuses perpetrated against them. It also gives them access to and the right to own property and protects them when entering into marriage or seeking divorce.

Among harmful traditional practices are early marriage and female genital mutilation. Early marriage prevents girls from normal development and can force them to begin undergoing child bearing before they are sufficiently mature, physically and mentally. Some girls whose bodies are not ready for child bearing suffer from vesicovaginal fistulas, as do some of those on whom female genital mutilation is performed.⁴⁶ According to one estimate, some 3 million women in poor countries have unrepaired vaginal fistulas, and 30,000 to 130,000 new cases occur each year in Africa.⁴⁷ In addition, HIV/AIDS can be contracted during genital cutting if a knife with infected blood is used on a number of females. Women and girls who contract the disease could then infect their partners, who may then transmit it to other people in their community. In countries such as South Sudan and Sierra Leone, where polygamy is practiced, a husband who contracts HIV/AIDS from one of his wives or another partner is likely to then spread it to the other wives, who might then pass it along to their children. As increasing numbers of people fall ill, the community could become non-productive, as has been the case in some places in Botswana and South Africa.⁴⁸

BENEFITS OF GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The empowerment of women and their inclusion in decision making processes can help advance equality, whose benefits will trickle down to their communities and their countries. Women tend to be more concerned and involved in the daily activities of their children than are men. They can play an even more positive role if they are educated and can contribute to the education of their children. Women who are educated understand its essence and value and are thus less likely to deny their children the same. 'Education for the next generation' can break the intergenerational chain of poverty.⁴⁹

44. Ibid.

45. Alyson in Africa (blog), 'Implementing the Gender Acts in Sierra Leone', *Social Edge*, n.d., www.socialedge.org/features/skoll-world-forum/blogs/alyson-in-africa/archive/2008/01/29/implementing-the-gender-acts-in-sierra-leone.

46. Interview with Binta Barrie, International Human Rights and Rule of Law Training and Research Institute (Sierra Leone), Heerlen, Netherlands, 30 July 2011.

47. L. Lewis Wall, 'Obstetric vesicovaginal fistula as an international public-health problem', *Lancet*, 368:9542 (2006), 1201–1209.

48. Telephone interview with Ayesha Sankoh, Mano River Union, 1 August 2011.

49. Ricardo Hausmann, Laura D. Tyson, and Saadia Zahidi, 'The global gender gap report, 2009', World Economic Forum, Geneva, Switzerland, 2009, p. 39.

Girls' education produces some of the highest returns of all development investments, yielding private and social benefits that accrue to individuals, families, and society at large.⁵⁰ Girls are just as productive as boys, and the two can complement each other's efforts. When empowered women are allowed to contribute to development processes, it improves livelihoods in their communities. The more education they receive, the more productive they become, and the more positive their contributions.

Women are also more concerned about their households than men are, so they consciously reinvest in them to aid growth and development. A 2009 study by the Nike Foundation revealed that 'women reinvest 90% of their income back into the household, whereas men reinvest only 30% to 40%'.⁵¹ This is beneficial to the household and the community and helps produce healthy children by providing for their basic needs. Eco-feminists assert that women are closer to nature and therefore care about the environment. Even if true, this does not preclude the two sexes complementing each other in making their environment safer and usable by the next generation. The Millennium Development Goals Task Force on Gender Equality and Education has set forth a vision in which gender oppression is not simply a concern for women:

The vision is of a world in which men and women work together as equal partners to secure better lives for themselves and their families. In this world women and men share equally in the enjoyment of basic capabilities, economic assets, voice, and freedom from fear and violence. They share the care of children, the elderly and the sick, the responsibility for paid employment and the joys of leisure. In this world the resources now used for war and destruction are invested in human development and well-being, institutions and decision making processes are open and democratic, and all human beings treat each other with respect and dignity.⁵²

The UN World Summit of 2005 reaffirmed gender equality as a Millennium Development Goal (MDG) and underlined its importance as a means for reaching all the other goals.⁵³ Attempting to achieve the MDGs without promoting gender equality will raise the cost of the other goals and decrease the likelihood of realizing them.⁵⁴ The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) shapes its priorities on creating an environment in which men and women can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accordance with their needs and interests.⁵⁵ This is based on the realization that inequalities hinder and cannot in any way aid develop-

50. World Bank, 'Girls' education' Web site.

51. Nike Foundation, 'The girl effect: Not just about girls: Engaging men and boys is key to girls' ability to achieve their full potential', 2009, www.nikefoundation.org/media_room.html.

52. Statement by Carolyn Hannan, director, Division for the Advancement of Women, United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs, at the launch of the Millennium Development Goals Global Watch, New York, 22 November 2004, www.mdg-globalwatch.org/carolyn_hannan.html, 2.

53. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 'Empowered and equal: Gender equality strategy, 2008–2011', New York, 2008.

54. United Nations Development Programme, 'En route to equality: A gender review of national MDG Reports, 2005', 2005.

55. UNDP, 'Empowered and equal', 3.

ment projects and programmes. In expanding women's opportunities the Millennium Project's Task Force on Education and Gender Equality identified seven strategic priorities that could be targeted to make a positive difference in the lives of women:

- Strengthen opportunities for post-primary education for girls while simultaneously meeting commitments to universal primary education;
- Guarantee sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- Invest in infrastructure to reduce women's and girls' time burdens;
- Guarantee women's and girls' property and inheritance rights;
- Eliminate gender inequality in employment by decreasing women's reliance on informal employment, closing gender gaps in earnings and reducing occupational segregation;
- Increase women's share of seats in national parliaments and local government bodies; and
- Combat violence against girls and women.⁵⁶

Despite an emphasis on economic issues when assessing the situation of women in Africa, there is also recognition that the entrenchment of social structures and institutions can impede women's participation in political and social arenas. Inclusive democracy is one popular program that has been implemented by organizations in the global South. Its goal is the participation of all social actors in decision making and public policy dialogues; the program and strives for the active participation of women as decision makers in government.⁵⁷

In the last few decades, widespread sensitization has successfully broken down many barriers for women. According to one UN staff member, 'Even though progress is slow, the difference can be seen, there is a rise in the number of female parliamentarians in Africa and Asia and there is even a female president [Ellen Johnson Sirleaf] widely supported and voted for by men in Liberia. As the first female president in Africa, she is serving as a role model to other female politicians in other countries in the continent'.⁵⁸ The United Nations has also recognized that women can play meaningful roles in helping resolve violent conflicts. As Secretary-General Kofi Annan noted, 'Women, who know the price of conflict so well, are also often better equipped than men to prevent or resolve it'.⁵⁹

The modernization, neo-liberal, development, and post-development theories do not seriously discourage gender inequality. As a result, perhaps the best development interventions should be based on the wishes and needs of women, rather than on the perceptions of outsiders. Certainly the women know what development and modernity means to them.

56. United Nations Development Programme, 'Innovative approaches to promoting women's economic empowerment: Paper for the partnership event on September 25, 2008: MDG 3—Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women—A prerequisite for achieving all MDGs by 2015', September 2008, 3.

57. *Ibid.*, 24.

58. Interview in Frankfurt, Germany, 29 July 2011. The staffer requested anonymity.

59. 'Secretary-General calls for council action to ensure women are involved in peace and security', 24 October 2000, www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2000/20001024.sgsm7598.doc.html.

POST-COLONIALISM: THEORISTS' POSITIONS ON GENDER

The 1955 Bandung conference, where representatives of twenty-six newly independent countries met, marks the beginning of post-colonialism as a self-conscious political philosophy.⁶⁰ Indeed, Bandung was a call for people and nations to stand up against colonialism and its oppressive nature. Post-colonial theory is a coherently elaborated set of principles that predict the outcome of a given set of phenomena and comprises a related set of juxtaposed perspectives.⁶¹

Post-colonial writers—including Homi Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, Ashis Nandy, Albert Memmi, Edward Said, and Gayatri Spivak—have contributed immensely to the discourse on gender. Fanon clearly defined how colonialists perceived woman in the South. In 'Algeria Unveiled', he asserts that the colonizers thought of veiled women as 'humiliated, sequestered and cloistered' and in need of emancipation.⁶² Fanon counters, however, that the veil, as a cultural element, should not be interpreted as a symbol of oppression, because people dress according to cultural preferences. He noted that 'there are civilizations without neckties, civilizations with loin-cloths, and others without hats.'⁶³ Fanon's post-colonial arguments on gender are intrinsically significant to study of the subject.

Homi Bhabha's childhood was filled with accounts of India's struggle for independence, of the complicated history of sub-continental cultures caught in the embrace of imperial power and domination, which produces an uncomfortable residue of enmity and amity.⁶⁴ This history shaped Bhabha's post-colonial focus, which has been critical of liberalism and its perspectives on women. He views liberalism as a system of divide and rule that creates tensions that cause women to oppose each other. To summarize his position, 'An awareness of the ambivalent and "unsatisfied" histories of the liberal persuasion allows "us"—postcolonial critics, multiculturalists, or feminists—to join in the unfinished work of creating a more viable, intra-cultural community of rights.'⁶⁵

One of Edward Said's most popular works is *Orientalism*, in which he examines depictions of and attitudes about the 'Orient', whose population is viewed by westerners as the 'other' and characterized as inferior and alien. Speaking of the concepts of the Orient and the West, he asserts, 'That these supreme fictions lend themselves easily to manipulation and the organization of collective passion has never been more evident than in our time, when the mobilizations of fear, hatred, disgust and resurgent self-pride and arrogance—much of it having to do with Islam and the Arabs on one side, "we" Westerners on the other—are very large-scale enterprises.'⁶⁶ The cultural and class structures Said attributes to capitalism resemble those that have led some in the West to view women in the South as inferior and backward.

Ashis Nandy is of the belief that colonialism is a weapon of the colonizers used to directly subjugate the psyche of the colonized. According to him, 'The political econ-

60. Young, *Postcolonialism*, 17.

61. *Ibid.*, 6.

62. F. Fanon, *Studies in a Dying Colony* (Paris, France, 1959), 164.

63. *Ibid.*, 162.

64. K. H. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York, Routledge, 1994), ix.

65. K. H. Bhabha, *Liberalism's Sacred Cow* (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1999), 2.

66. E. Said, *Orientalism* (London, Penguin Books, 2003), xii.

omy of colonization is of course important, but the crudity and inanity of colonialism are principally expressed in the sphere of psychology and, to the extent the variables used to describe the states of mind under colonialism have themselves become politicized since the modern colonialism on the world scene, in the sphere of political psychology'.⁶⁷ He asserts that 'the drive for mastery over men is not merely a by-product of a faulty political economy but also of a world view which believes in the absolute superiority of the human over the nonhuman and the subhuman, the masculine over the feminine, the adult over the child, the historical over the ahistorical, and the modern or progressive over the traditional or the savage'.⁶⁸ He also wrote of 'the dominant culture of the colony' that 'aggression, achievement, control, competition and power' were the 'final differentiae of manliness'.⁶⁹ In theory, displays of virility in post-colonial societies represented a process of self rediscovery on the part of the colonized and frustration against the humiliations of colonialism. For post-colonialist thinkers, the oppression and 'othering' of women is a weapon of domination exercised by agents of neo-colonialism.

CONCLUSION

Gender dynamics have continuously disadvantaged women, leading in Africa to their treatment in abysmal and inhumane ways under existing systems. Disregard for the aspirations of women has impaired their socio-economic and political growth. Until gender equality is ensured by the theories of development, giving opportunity and space to women to determine their way of life, men and women will continue to live in communities suffering from the effects of child marriage, high infant mortality rates, HIV/AIDS, poverty, unhealthy environments, and personal insecurity.

To overcome these challenges requires viewing the current situation through a post-colonial lens in the West and in the South. What post-colonialism offers is a call for women to be seen on par with men, not as pitiable people trapped by an ill-defined development process. One African scholar asserted, 'To the Western development worker, the southern woman is always carrying her burden or hiding behind shadows, she knows no life other than that of suffering and pain and she does not have a mouth to say what she thinks'.⁷⁰ What she did not say is that the challenges southern women face are created by the systems of development that westerners claim are the 'only' remedy for their situations. Africans need to assert their right to access to resources and material well-being through the dynamic power of their cultures.⁷¹

67. R. Carlston, 'Ashis Nandy's construction of Sri Aurobindo: Some comments. Post human destinies', 2010, www.sciy.org/2010/01/24/ashis-nandy-on-sri-aurobindo-an-examination-by-r-carlson.

68. A. Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1983), 9.

69. Ibid.

70. Lecture by Memunatu Pratt, University of Sierra Leone, Freetown, April 2003.

71. Young, *Postcolonialism*, 4.



Acting Out of Conflict: Using Participatory Theater as a Tool of Peacebuilding in Rwanda

Sydney Smith and Elise Webb

Rwanda, one of the most densely populated countries, remains a largely agrarian society. As a result, conflict over land is pervasive and only increases with Rwanda's growing population. Many Rwandans in rural areas are unaware of their land rights and do not fully understand the roles and responsibilities of local authorities in resolving conflicts. This lack of understanding is frequently two-sided, as local authorities often do not possess the skills or motivation to mediate conflicts effectively. Search for Common Ground, an international nongovernmental organization, uses participatory theater to equip Rwandans with the tools for resolving personal conflict and building stronger relationships between local authorities and their communities.

IN A LARGELY AGRARIAN SOCIETY, land ownership can quickly become a point of conflict and contention. Although no stranger to violent conflict, Rwanda has made impressive strides toward peace and stability since the 1994 genocide. Conflict over land, however, is an issue that will continue to stress Rwandan society, as its population grows, and require peaceful and effective community-level mediation and management. Participatory theater is a creative way of informing communities of their rights and changing attitudes and approaches to conflict at a grassroots level. The entertaining format makes it attractive, especially in rural areas, and its reach can easily extend beyond the initial audience as people share their experience with others.

SQUEEZED FOR SPACE

Issues of land scarcity predate the 1994 genocide, but the pressures they impose on Rwandan society are acknowledged to have played a role in the resort to mass violence. The scarcity of arable land has only grown worse as Rwanda's population continues to grow at an estimated rate of 2.8 percent per year.¹ With 11.4 million people

1. 'World Bank indicators: Population growth', <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.GROW> (accessed 11 October 2011).

Sydney Smith is a communications associate at Search for Common Ground, Washington, D.C. She holds a master's degree in media, communication, and development from the London School of Economics. **Elise Webb** is a master's candidate in the global comparative sociology program at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

sharing slightly more than 10,000 square miles, Rwanda is easily the most densely populated nation in Africa. Unlike most densely populated areas, however, Rwanda remains predominately rural, with 90 percent of the population engaged in '(mainly) subsistence agriculture.'²

To sustain its rural population, the country is increasingly being divided into ever-smaller plots of land, which Rwanda's overworked hills cannot support in the long term. This scarcity has also driven up the value of land. Conflicts involving inheritance are likely to become more frequent due to Rwanda's very young population, 43 percent of whom are under the age of fourteen.³ Land reforms, although well meaning, could cause additional tensions, especially if they are not fully understood by the population. For example, in an effort to institutionalize the process of landownership, the National Land Center and its advising body, the National Land Commission, introduced mandatory land registration in 2009. The implementation of this reform created an unexpected rush of would-be registrants to government offices and raised questions of inheritance and rights of orphans and refugee returnees that the government had not been prepared to address.

Five years after the 1994 war and genocide, Law no. 22/99, 'to supplement book one of the civil code and to institute part five regarding matrimonial regimes, liberalities and successions', was passed specifically to assist the large number of widows who did not have the right to inherit land in their families. Article 43 of this law states that 'all children, without distinction between girls and boys, alive or where deceased before parents their descendants [*sic*], excluding those banished due to misconduct or ingratitude, have a right to the partition made by their ascendants.'⁴ The law proved difficult to implement due to resistance from Rwandan culture over female inheritance. Although increased gender equality is to be encouraged, it does further complicate the process of dividing and allocating land. Women's inheritance adds to the increasing number of people who have inherited or will inherit plots that are too small to support an average family.⁵ Cultural norms regarding land and farming will have to evolve with changing demographics, but there is presently a need for effective ways of resolving the conflicts that will naturally arise from population pressure.

SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND AND PARTICIPATORY THEATER IN RWANDA

Rwandans' lack of knowledge concerning land rights and inheritance, and their expectations of local authorities, leave many of them feeling as if they have no recourse for their grievances. Such discontent can lead to conflict or escalate existing tensions. Although Rwanda has been cited as the least corrupt country in East Africa—a testament

2. Rwanda is roughly the size of the U.S. state of Maryland. 'Rwanda', *CIA: The World Factbook*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rw.html>.

3. Ibid.

4. Ministry of Justice, Codes and Laws of Rwanda, Law no. 22/99, 1999, www.amategeko.net/display_rubrique.php?ActDo=ShowArt&Information_ID=678&Parent_ID=3068178&type=public&Langue_ID=An&rubID=3068209.

5. Tara Mitchell, 'Rwanda and conflict,' Inventory of Conflict and the Environment Case Studies, American University, 1997, <http://www1.american.edu/ted/ice/RWANDA.HTM>.

to the emphasis placed on improving governance—the issue does occasionally arise.⁶ A more benign cause of ineffectiveness on the part of officials is their lack of understanding of the scope of their roles. Many could benefit from training in mediation and dialogue to build their conflict resolution skills.

Search for Common Ground (SFCG), an international nongovernmental organization (NGO) working in Rwanda and twenty-eight other countries (fourteen of them in Africa), implements initiatives to counter and transform conflict at local and national levels. Established in 1982, SFCG has developed a time-tested ‘toolbox’—a broad array of operational methods of peacebuilding and conflict transformation that include well-known techniques, such as mediation and facilitation, as well as less traditional ones, such as television productions, radio soap operas, community organizing, and participatory theater.⁷ Through employing several methods simultaneously, SFCG increases their overall effectiveness and is able to achieve both breadth and depth in their impact.

SFCG began working in Rwanda in 2008 in conjunction with other SFCG Great Lakes country offices to build peace nationally and regionally. Based in Kigali, the office addresses a range of issues that contribute to Rwanda’s peace and stability, including good governance, inclusion of majority and minority groups (including women and youths), reconciliation, and collaboration involving land. The organization’s work in Rwanda has two main objectives: to promote constructive and collaborative dialogue within Rwanda and in the broader Great Lakes region and to reinforce regional and national media capacity to address conflict issues with accuracy, impartiality, and responsibility.

Through the implementation of grants from the European Commission and United States Agency for International Development, SFCG has used a variety of different initiatives to address issues of conflict over the past two and a half years. These include training local leaders and mediators, producing and broadcasting radio programs on issues of contention, and using participatory theater to reach more rural audiences. Thus far, the theater performances have reached more than 20,000 people. The case study here focuses on the impact of SFCG’s participatory theater program in Rwanda in resolving issues of conflict. The thematic focus of the participatory theater was two-pronged. For the first phase of the project, the team focused on resolving issues of land conflict across the country. Within the second phase, the theater focused on elections and good governance issues, corresponding to the country’s political context.

Theater has long been used as a tool for dialogue. Audience members can watch their own stories being told from an outsider’s perspective, allowing and encouraging them to identify with the characters onstage on all sides. Participatory theater takes such identification a step further by enacting dramatized stories from the audience and by asking audience members to inhabit a character in the performance and play

6. ‘Rwanda has negligible corruption—Transparency [International]’, 22 July 2010, www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-10726324.

7. Here peacebuilding may be defined as a long-term engagement in the promotion of reconciliation, reintegration, leadership, and civil society development to contribute toward sustained social, political, and economic stability in a society and to prevent a relapse into violent conflict. Conflict transformation is not about ending conflict, but about altering, from an adversarial stance to a collaborative one, the way individuals, communities and societies view conflict and approach their differences.

a role that may be counter to their own position. Cynthia Cohen notes that one of the key imperatives in making theater an effective peacebuilding tool is emphasizing relationships and interdependence.⁸ It requires ‘individuals and communities to imagine themselves in a web of relationships[,] even with their enemies’ and recognize ‘that the well-being of our grandchildren is directly tied to the well-being of our enemy’s grandchildren’⁹

Participatory theater has been used as an effective tool of behavior change communication, especially in developing countries, on issues such as health and sanitation, sexual violence, and religious tensions. It can be especially effective in rural areas as a relatively low-cost way of reaching populations that often lack access to other forms of media. Its use for conflict transformation and peacebuilding is guided by the theory of social learning, whereby people consciously change their behaviors through observing dramatized scenes and modeling. They receive instant gratification for their choices when the conflicts in the drama are successfully resolved as a direct result of their positive suggestions and solutions. SFCG has used participatory theater in a number of its country programs, including in Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), to support community management of conflict. The organization applied best practices from its implementation in these countries to the Rwandan context.

Two different methods of participatory theater were applied in Rwanda: a classical method based on the approaches of the other SFCG offices and a method specially designed for Rwanda’s unique political conditions. The first step in both methods is to train local actors in the Common Ground approach to theatrical performance, which included interaction with spectators to make the performances participatory. They are also trained in techniques of conflict management. This reinforces the local capacity for peacebuilding and trains local entertainers in a method of acting that can be adapted for future use with or without the support of SFCG.

The classical method employs interviews before the performance. The actors disperse into the community and interview average citizens about their conflicts or the role of conflict in their lives. Special attention is paid to understanding all aspects of a conflict and all points of view. The actors then fashion a show with three to five scenes based on the information about conflicts gathered from the various individuals. The scenes present the conflict in a fictionalized manner, and then audience members are asked to join the actors in resolving the conflict. Those who volunteer come onstage, where they replace an actor, and in that actor’s role, offer advice for solving the problem. This was the basic procedure for performances revolving around land conflicts. Local officials were much more likely to invite the theater group to perform and allow them to interview local residents when the performances involved land issues.

The method was modified slightly for SFCG performances dealing with more politically sensitive issues, such as elections or good governance. In these instances, the team constructed a loosely scripted version of the show, which was then presented to

8. Cynthia E. Cohen, Roberto Gutierrez Varea, and Polly O. Walker (eds.), *Acting Together: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict* (Oakland, California, New Village Press, 2011), 11.

9. John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2005), 34.

district officials in advance to gain their trust and to allow the performances to be held. In lieu of interview-based scenes, the team wrote four scenes to highlight hypothetical issues that might arise between local leaders and their constituents.

KARONGI CASE STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

This case study focuses on the implementation of the participatory theater program in Karongi district, in the Western province. Karongi, like most other places in Rwanda, has concerns about conflict over land rights and use. Also like other locations, Karongi is adjusting to a relatively new system of collaborative democracy, so issues between leaders and constituents can arise from simple misunderstandings about individuals' role in a functioning democratic process.

Karongi district invited the participatory theater team to perform on several occasions in different sectors (local administrative units) over the course of eighteen months. The theater troupe was more readily welcomed into the community when invited by local district authorities. Even with local support, however, there was often a measure of initial mistrust or reluctance among community members to share their stories of conflict with the visiting performers. The urban-rural divide between actors and villagers, respectively, played into this dynamic as did villagers' concerns that their perspectives might be misrepresented or interpreted.

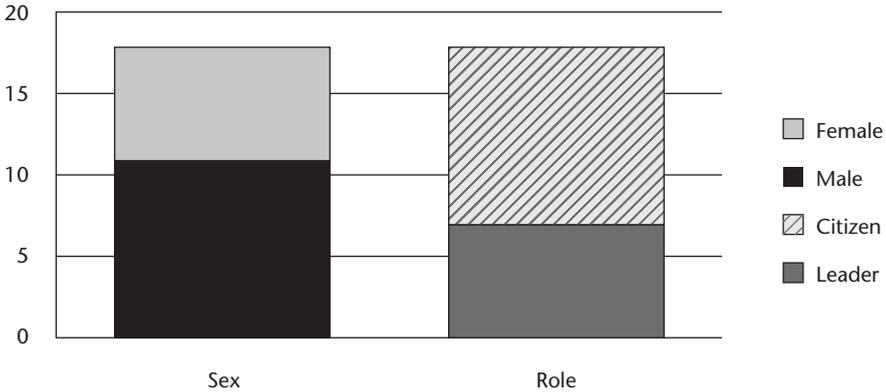
The shows centered around encouraging dialogue between citizens and local officials to find solutions for community-specific land conflicts and for general issues, perhaps affecting good governance in the area. Immediately after some of the performances, statements by leaders and members of the audience indicated that they intended to use the dialogue started in the shows to try to solve their real-life problems.

This case study focuses on follow-up in two sectors in Karongi district: Rubengera (the capital) and Gishyita, both of which indicated enthusiasm for conflict transformation shortly after performances there. The study aims to determine whether the communities that participated in the SFCG theater productions remembered the shows as providing useful information, continued to use the channels of communication they had opened, and applied new ideas inspired by the theater in resolving problems within their communities. The objectives of the case study are as follows:

- To identify the role SFCG's participatory theater played in informing rural communities about their rights and responsibilities in regard to land and government.
- To assess the role SFCG's participatory theater played in the resolution of problems regarding land in the communities.
- To identify and document the specific aspects of the participatory theater initiative that led to positive changes.
- To record measurable indicators to provide evidence of a decline in conflicts after participation in theater productions.

The Karongi case study was carried out in two parts. First, interviews were conducted with a sample of people who attended a 2010 theater performance in Rubengera sector focusing on land issues. Second, interviews were conducted with a sample of people who attended a 2011 performance concerning good governance issues in Gishyita sector. District officials in both sectors were interviewed to get an overview of any

Figure 1

Characteristics of Individuals Interviewed in Karongi District

changes taking place. Analysis was then done to identify overlapping and diverging themes in feedback from the two performances. A total of eighteen interviews took place over three days in Karongi district (see Figure 1).¹⁰

Rubengera Land Performance

Using a snowball sampling technique, the researchers first met with local leaders and *abunzi* (traditional mediators), who were trained by SFCG staff in conflict mediation. The training culminated in a public theater performance in the Rubengera market-place on 26 August 2010. The sample of *abunzi* interviewed was selected from a list of those who attended the training. A special effort was made to speak with male and female mediators from different communities.

The *abunzi* were first asked their opinions on the training and whether they felt they had used the skills learned. They were then asked to provide examples of how the theater performance had helped them to understand the training and whether they perceived or discerned lasting changes in their behavior or approach to mediation. The *abunzi* were finally asked to identify citizens who had also attended the performance. Because the performance had occurred ten months earlier, they were given photos from the event to assist their recollection. Even with the aid, however, the *abunzi* were unable to recall or recognize anyone they knew who had attended the performance. They were, however, able to locate an employee of the Local Defense based on his uniform, and he in turn provided researchers with names of several individuals in the photos.¹¹ This Local Defense employee introduced the researchers to these people, who readily volunteered their stories.

10. All the interviews in Gishyita took place on 30 June and 1 July 2011 and in Rubengera on 29 June 2011.

11. Local Defense Forces were originally set up as a civilian complement to the military to support security in the villages and remain active in their communities. They often help keep order at large events and work with the police to ensure security.

Gishyita Good Governance Performance

A similar method was used to locate interview subjects for the Gishyita good governance portion of the study. Again, the snowball sampling technique was applied, but because the researchers did not have photographs of the event, they relied on word of mouth to identify audience members. The first contact was the executive secretary of the sector, who led the researchers to the local primary school to speak with teachers who had attended the performance on 26 April 2011. The executive secretary and the others were each interviewed about the effect of the theater performance to see whether they had made any changes two months after the performance.

KEY FINDINGS

The interview process revealed that the two participatory theater programs had informed people and also had inspired changes in behaviors and attitudes. Those interviewed shared an increased understanding of the skills that could be gained from attending such performances. Across the board, they recognized the conflicts portrayed as relevant to their own lives, realizing that they themselves played a role in the conflict, seeing their particular rights and gaining and understanding of the appropriate role of local authorities in mitigating and mediating conflict.

Beyond gaining knowledge and skills, the interviewees could cite specific examples of how they applied this new knowledge to their own lives. They reported changes in behavior among leaders toward citizens, reciprocal changes in citizens' attitudes toward local leaders, and resolution of personal conflicts. In addition, the trained actors were empowered as social communicators and expanded their skills to successfully manage conflict.

Recognizing the Reflection

The Theater was like showing the local leaders a picture of themselves, both the good and the bad sides.

— Respondent in the Gishyita sector

Recognition of the conflicts presented as relevant to their lives is the first step in getting an audience to own the process of conflict transformation and the possible solutions that may arise from the hypothetical interventions presented in the theater performances. Without this recognition and ownership, there is no feeling of personal responsibility or even ability to change the conflict. At each performance, the theater team asks members of the audience to raise their hands if they have encountered a conflict like the one being enacted. This often engenders a sense of shared experience among audience members and between the audience and actors. It is also a monitoring tool to ensure that the activity design is relevant to the targeted communication.

Those interviewed in Rubengera and Gishyita expressed appreciative recognition of the conflicts presented and their relevance to their daily lives. All those interviewed said they were familiar with the scenes of conflict depicted. Even with the passing of time, respondents could still recall readily the themes and specific scenes performed in the pieces. Each also mentioned that the scenes had reflected something they or someone they knew had personally experienced.

A female abunzi interviewed in Rubengera said, 'One of the scenes presented was about two neighbors; one was a widow and the other neighbor changed the border of the property without permission. The theater was a reflection of how the people in my cell live. Problems like this happen often when widows feel they have no one to stand up with them' (Rubengera, 29 June 2011). Another woman who attended the same performance recalled the same scene and added, 'Some of my neighbors are in a conflict very similar to the one with the widow having her border moved' (Rubengera, 29 June 2011). The executive secretary of Gishyita sector commented, 'The performance was good and was a reflection of society. Some citizens do not do their part to help, and some leaders are corrupt' (Gishyita, 30 June 2011). One of this leader's young constituents said, 'The theater was like showing the local leaders a picture of themselves, both the good and the bad sides.'

Understanding One's Role in Conflict and Conflict Resolution

Prior to the theater performances, many locals did not realize that they played a role in a conflict, and thus also did not recognize their potential to resolve it. The theaters presented scenes of familiar conflict and also demonstrated the characters therein working as forces for positive change. Moreover, the theaters depicted the reality that rarely is one side solely responsible for sustaining a conflict, and audience members were able to see ways that they may have been complicit in their disputes.

The head of the land office at the Maison d'Accès à la Justice (House of Justice, MAJ), which handles civil claims in Karongi district, said, 'The theater that was played helped the citizens understand that if they felt someone was oppressing them, the way to solve it is not through violence. Violence is not the only way and the theater showed some alternatives' (Rubengera, 29 June 2011).

One woman who attended the Rubengera performance on land issues saw her own family's conflict dramatized. Seeing the show led to her realization that she could help resolve the disagreement simply by speaking to her family about the division of their inheritance. She was able also to see, by watching how the conflict was solved on stage, that she and her family could solve their conflict without mediation from the courts or the abunzi. Another audience member from the same performance came to a similar conclusion about keeping his familial disputes out of court after watching a conflict that was similar to his own. He said, 'I chose not to go to the courts to arbitrate between my family and myself over my inheritance of land and instead spoke directly with my mother and her siblings to work out a peaceful resolution of our differences' (Rubengera, 29 June 2011).

One audience member came to the realization that he could support his neighbors simply by being willing to give information to the abunzi who were trying to mediate the conflict. This understanding of one's role not only in one's personal conflict resolution but in the resolution of others' conflicts helps strengthen community ties and improve citizens' relationships. This man justified his need to help resolve others' conflicts because 'people should not bring conflict into the community. Even if there are conflicts, they are still neighbors who must live together, so there is no need to face the consequences of conflict' (Rubengera, 29 June 2011).

Without understanding their own role in conflict resolution, it is impossible for individuals to employ agency in finding mutually beneficial solutions. Participatory

theater provides a space for the audience to take on the role of someone who solves conflict. This sort of practice is invaluable when the alternative results of trial and error can exacerbate conflict through unintentional missteps that began as well-intended efforts.

Understanding the Role of Local Leaders in Conflict Resolution

Before the performance and training we thought the role of the abunzi was just to know the local history and judge based on that. We didn't realize we needed to dig deep to find the source of the problem.

— Abunzi from Rubengera sector

The good governance performance depicted scenes of positive and negative behavior by leaders. Local leaders and citizens agreed that the theater accurately represented what the people wanted from their leaders as well as behaviors they did not want. By watching the theater performance, many of the abunzi were able to 'see the steps to solving a problem', as one put it, as well as to view their role more broadly. In clearly defining the role of local authorities, the play incorporated a depiction of corruption and actions that fell outside the boundaries of appropriate behavior. One woman who attended the good governance performance said, 'I did not know what corruption looked like until this production. I thought leaders were allowed to demand money for their services' (Gishyita, 30 June 2011).

IMPLEMENTING THE LESSONS

One of the most effective ways the participatory theater initiative has been used is as a tool for inspiration in the communities served. The mediators who attended the performances were able to better understand the nuances of conflict resolution and were inspired to imitate those skills in their work. Those who attended the performance were able to confront issues of tension in their lives because the theater presented conflict as normal and as something that people could resolve on their own without necessarily turning to government structures or local authorities for help.

Change in Conflict Management Style by Abunzi

The theater helped the abunzi see the way to talk to people in a non-aggressive tone. This showed them how to mediate peacefully."

— Leader of MAJ in Karongi district

As noted above, the abunzi were trained in mediation prior to the theater performances. The portrayal of conflict mediation by actors using a 'common ground approach' built upon this training and demonstrated how to apply the approach to conflicts the abunzi adjudicated. Both abunzi and laypeople were invited to play the part of mediator and to see the mediation process through to a successful conclusion. 'It was like a demonstration or a practice round of how to solve the conflict', said one abunzi of the theater performance (Rubengera, 29 June 2011). Another abunzi from Rubengera sector said the theater was invaluable to her understanding of how to solve

a similar conflict. She commented that she had watched the scene and then ‘knew the process’ for resolving her conflict (Rubengera, 29 June 2011).

The change in the way abunzi mediated was not only self-reported, but was also remarked upon by members of the community. The local MAJ leader in Rubengera stated that she had seen a clear change in the way abunzi in her community approached conflict:

The abunzi have worked here for a while, but before the training and the theater, there was not real justice. The mediators did not listen enough to the citizens’ problems, which is the beginning of injustice. The abunzi used to think the person who talked the most should win. Now it is different, after the training and the theater they spend much more time on each case to find the root of the problem. . . . The theater helped the abunzi see how to handle problems in a non-aggressive way. Before the theater, the abunzi would react to problems forcefully. Now they actively listen to all sides of the story. They now mediate more peacefully. (Rubengera, 29 June 2011)

Personal Conflicts Resolved

Many people interviewed were inspired to speak to those with whom they were in conflict and to come to a peaceful resolution that did not involve formal intervention or mediation. One woman and her family resolved their conflict after they saw a dramatization of it played out by the actors who had initially interviewed them. Their decision to divide their inheritance equally was due to the conclusion that ‘this land is our common ground and we cannot let it be the source of our conflict’ (Rubengera, 29 June 2011). One man convinced his mother to draft an official will to give him a parcel of land. He learned that it was a legal possibility through the performance. Yet another was inspired to speak with his family peacefully about allowing him to use some land and thus was able to avoid hefty court fees associated with using official mediators.

Changes in Attitude toward Working with Local Officials

We no longer feel like we are begging when we ask a leader for help.

— Respondent in Gishyita sector

In the two months after the performance of the good governance–themed production, attitudes toward collaboration with local government leaders subtly changed. After understanding their roles and rights in working with local leaders, the citizens interviewed no longer felt like helpless supplicants. Many thought the performance held up a mirror in front of officials in a way regular citizens could not. One person, Benoît,¹² from Gishyita commented, ‘I was very happy to see the local leaders also attend the performance. It was as if they were put on the stage themselves. . . . One scene featured a leader who asked for money in exchange for doing his job. This happened to me before the theater performance, when I tried to get some official papers signed and the leader refused to do so unless I paid. I could easily relate to the scenes in the performance’ (Gishyita, 30 June 2011).

12. This respondent’s name is fictitious.

Respondents' increased knowledge and recognition of corruption had an empowering effect on many of them. Benoit went on to say that citizens had become more assertive in asking for a change of venue when meeting with authorities. Prior to the theater performance, he said, 'It was possible to find many people accepting that they should meet with their leaders in a bar. This setting made it easier for the leader to ask for bribes for the work he needed to do. Now we meet in offices when we want to request something' (Gishyita, 30 June 2011). Another Gishyita resident said, 'The theater showed us we have the right to have the local leaders work on our issues for us. Many who saw the performance still remember this lesson' (Gishyita, 30 June 2011). Though the change is understated, the impact is clear, showing that citizens and officials are on their way to collaborating on an equal playing field.

IMPACT ON THE THEATER TROUPE

In my community, I saw there were long-standing problems, but when I tried to raise them I was told to leave it alone, it was 'cultural'. But after learning about conflict resolution, I see that it's not about culture, and these are conflicts that need to be discussed and resolved.

— Actor in the SFCG participatory theater troupe

Another notable effect of the participatory theater initiative is the impact that it has had on the actors implementing the performances. When reflecting on their involvement with the theater, the actors revealed that they too had been affected by their training in conflict resolution and by the messages they had helped to spread. The training enhanced the capacity of the actors to be effective social communicators. Largely from urban centers, many remarked upon the fact that their experiences with the troupe had brought them to parts of their country they had never seen. A number of the actors had previously worked in radio, and the participatory theater approach allowed them to more directly engage with their audience. It also honed their skills in mobilizing and leading others.

Many of the actors spoke about the idea of conflict being perceived as cultural, as noted above. They believed that their greater knowledge of conflict resolution allowed them to recognize conflict not as 'tradition' but as a challenge that could be overcome. Many actors were further empowered to resolve conflicts in their own families and communities. 'This experience has helped me realize that I can't just look at myself as an actor', said one. 'I also have to look at myself as a leader, and recognize what that role entails' (Kigali, 13 December 2010). Another actor reported his experience mediating conflicts concerning water: 'I am able to analyze conflicts and see that there are often hidden issues that are not being discussed. For example, we had a big conflict over the water hole in my community. I talked about it with the different parties and discovered that the conflict was actually about suspicions over an affair and really had nothing to do with the water at all' (Kigali, 13 December 2010).

In addition to building the actors' capacity to mitigate conflict, the project also gave them participatory theater as a valuable and new tool with which to do so. The idea of this kind of interactive theater was initially as alien to most of the actors as it was to the audiences. One commented on his initial skepticism:

When we started working with participatory theater, it was completely impossible to me that we would go out without scripts and develop the performances in the field. I was really resistant to the methodology and the idea. But I found that when you include lots of locally gathered information, people relate to it better and they pay more attention to what you're doing and saying. This process actually simplifies things, and it helps people to speak more easily. This approach helps you become part of the community, and that helps the message you're trying to share circulate better. (Kigali, 13 December 2010)

The participatory theater proved to be a two-way street, with implementers gaining skills and knowledge along with the audiences. Both groups can continue to use the skills they learned to teach others and to help manage conflict in their communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While the research here showed participatory theater to be an effective tool for managing conflict and building skills, it was also found to work best in conjunction with other tools that SFCG uses to build peace. It is a positive supplement to the radio programs SFCG broadcasts and the training it conducts and is useful for demonstrating and reinforcing the concepts introduced on-air or in workshops.

In Rubengera sector, however, it was found that none of the abunzi trained by SFCG were from the community where the theater was performed. This meant that the abunzi and their fellow citizens had no common understanding of this specific conflict resolution process nor was it possible for the performance to spark a shared motivation to resolve conflict. In Gishyita sector, it was discovered that few people interviewed had heard SFCG radio programming, which could have built upon the ideas introduced by the performances. It is recommended that special effort be made to coordinate the training, performance, and radio broadcasting teams to make sure SFCG's programming reaches its highest potential.

Proof of the theater's positive impact, but also a need for expansion, was that each interview subject requested that the theater be performed more often, in more cells of each sector. More remote areas would especially benefit. Repetition is important in shifting attitudes and provides greater reinforcement of conflict transformation methods. One interview subject said, 'Rwandans have a saying, "Learning happens every day. It is a process". So what we learned in the theater was good but sometimes it is easy to forget if you do not return' (Gishyita, 30 June 2011).

CONCLUSION: SPREADING LIKE A GOOD RUMOR

SFCG's participatory theater program has been shown to be successful in achieving its aims. Those interviewed recalled the theater performance readily, felt they had been informed of their rights and responsibilities within the context of conflict situations, and stated that the theater program had played an inspirational role in their resolution of personal conflicts.

The impact of the participatory theater program on the two sectors in the Western province of Karongi can be interpreted as social change through art. Those who solved their conflict took the initiative to do so because they were first inspired by the per-

formance. It also reinforced the power of modeling. Some of the people who saw the performance found tools that applied directly to their personal conflict, such as understanding a key aspect of the law or seeing how they could change their role in the conflict to engender peace. Others who saw the performance were inspired to work collaboratively with their local officials because they now perceived themselves as having equal power in the citizen–elected leader relationship.

Audience members are given ownership of the process through their participation. Freed from negative consequences, they are allowed to experiment with trial-and-error solutions in a way that is impossible in real life. Once equipped with new tools, however, they are empowered to resolve conflicts in their own lives. The act of performing and donning another perspective opens new channels of dialogue and understanding. Further, if they share the process with their neighbors, their communities will develop a common language of conflict transformation. The actors present a step-by-step framework for solving conflict that members of that community can return to and apply to multiple areas of their personal lives, not only the particular conflicts dramatized in the production.

The elements of inspiration, instruction, and experimentation during the performances lead to reflection and action by the audiences that spreads into the community beyond those who attended the performance. As one interviewee put it, “The theater allowed citizens to gain a level of understanding that enabled many to discuss their own conflicts, which led them to talk about unresolved tensions and issues even with the people who did not attend the theater. I have seen the ripple effect of this change. Neighbors talk to each other about the show and it spreads like a good rumor” (Rubengera, 29 June 2011).

The drama of participatory theater transports audiences to a realm where they can see alternative solutions to their own conflicts. Its fictions are grounded in reality, but by virtue of being fictitious, they can be taken more lightly, and sensitive subjects can be broached. The theater is a safe space in which to address issues that are otherwise left as whispered tensions or angry hands. The impact of the participatory theater program has the potential for further growth and reach through word of mouth, hopefully to be utilized in real-world conflicts and contexts.

ANNEX: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In 2010, SFCG produced several participatory theater shows regarding land reform and good governance in rural districts of Rwanda. These shows were focused on encouraging dialogue between the citizens and the local officials, finding solutions to community specific land conflicts and challenges to good governance. SFCG is now seeking to explore the effect these programs had on creating lasting change and more harmonious communities.

Key Research Questions

1. What sorts of land conflicts were occurring in the area before the theater production? Were these addressed in the show?
2. How, if at all, were these conflicts being resolved before the theater production?
3. How did these conflicts affect the personal relationships between citizens and the public relationships between citizens and their local representatives?

4. What sorts of land conflicts are occurring now? Are the conflicts new or a continuation of unresolved conflicts? How quickly are conflicts resolved?
5. What can the respondents recall from the theater production? How did the respondents hear about the theater production? What words do people use most when talking about the performances?
6. Did the theater production strengthen communication and social dialogue privately between citizens on a more long term basis?
7. What aspects of the theater production were most useful for them? Did the respondents learn new information about land reform from the theater production?
8. Have the *abunzi* applied their knowledge from the performances and trainings to settle land conflicts due to the theater performance?
9. How do they solve conflicts now in their community? Is it different? Do they see an influence of the theater production?
10. What other mechanisms played / are playing a role in resolving conflicts? Do those mechanisms complement the conflict resolution tools presented by the participatory theater?
11. Do the citizens recognize the performances as coming from SFCG or do they attribute them to other sources, i.e., the government? Is there a rural urban divide between the actors and the audience?
12. How do men and women choose what they will intervene in or comment on? Do men tend to choose the public sphere and women choose the private sphere?
13. Have people felt more comfortable working with local leaders? Have these leaders reached out to their constituents to work on issues that concern them?

Target Populations

This case study will involve data collection with the local officials and citizens of two sectors of Karongi district in the Western province:

1. Rubengera Sector where SFCG's participatory theater performed on August 26, 2010.
2. Gishyita Sector where SFCG's participatory theater performed on April 26, 2011.

In both sectors, individual interviews with the help of a Kinyarwanda-speaking co-researcher will be conducted with local leaders and *abunzi* who will act as key informants. From there, follow-up interviews will be conducted with individual citizens whose names will hopefully be provided by the key informants. In Gishyita there will be special attention paid to whether or not citizens believe that government is making a stronger effort to work more collaboratively with them.

Target Locations

1. Following the theater performance in Rubengera sector it was noted that the audience expressed an interest to use the conflict resolution tools presented in the show in the future. The research will follow up with district leaders and individual citizens to see if the tools were actually implemented.
2. Feedback from the theater performance in Gishyita Sector showed that citizens expressed a need for a good leader who solves community problems without discrimination. This implies that before the theater performance there was little collaboration between leaders and the population. The research will follow up with district leaders and citizens to see if they were inspired by the theater to work collaboratively.

Continues on next page

Sample Questions for Local Leaders

- What do you remember from the performance?
- Were the issues raised relevant to your sector?
- Do you know anyone who has resolved a land conflict since the participatory theater performance in July of last year?
- What were the conflicts like before the theater program?
- What conflict was resolved?
- What was the conflict and who was involved?
- How was the conflict resolved?
- What influence did the participatory theater have on the conflict resolution in your community?
- What did you think of the solutions the citizens presented?
- Have you been able to incorporate some of their suggestions into your work?
- How were issues brought by citizens addressed before the performance? Is there a difference now?

Sample Questions for Citizens

- What do you remember from the performance?
- Did you feel comfortable with the actors' portrayal of the local situation?
- What do you think the impact of the performance was?
- What were the steps that were taken to resolve conflicts?
- Do you know anyone else who has resolved conflicts since the participatory theater performance?
- Have you taught others to resolve conflicts in similar ways to those presented in the participatory theater?
- What influence did the participatory theater have on the relationship between you and your local leaders?



The War on Women and Children: South Africa and Anomie

Priscilla Lynn Schlottman

SOUTH AFRICA CONTINUES TO LEAD THE WORLD IN rape, child rape, and violence despite the passage of legislation to deal with these problems. In 2006, South African police recorded 54,926 rapes and 18,545 murders.¹ Such a large number of offenses occurred despite a narrow legal definition of rape at the time that did not include penetration of boys and men and conservative estimates that only one in nine rapes was actually reported.² KwaZulu-Natal province had the highest rate of rape and abuse of children in the country.³ Statistics for child rape are no longer published by the South African Police Service, but one report recorded 437 alleged rapes of children in KwaZulu-Natal province in December 2008.⁴

In addition to the high incidences of rape, it has been reported that ‘an estimated 5.6 million people were living with HIV and AIDS in South Africa in 2009, more than in any other country.’⁵ This potentially deadly mixture of sexual violence and disease puts the next generation of South Africans at a high risk for contracting HIV/AIDS. South Africa’s high rates of gender violence and violence toward children continue to escalate. Underreporting of rape is most dramatic when children are the victims, with only one in thirty-five rapes of children recorded.⁶ Despite post-apartheid legislation designed to protect women and children from domestic violence, including sexual

1. M. Nduru, ‘South Africa: Daughter of murdered man pushes DNA profiling’, *Global Information Network*, 28 February 2007, 1.

2. B. Gerretsen, ‘Sex offence stats indict children’, *Health Systems Trust*, 4 May 2007, www.hst.org.za/news/20041594; editorial, ‘South Africa needs an HIV truth and reconciliation commission’, *Lancet*, 367: 9523 (2006), 1629.

3. A. Stuijt, ‘Child rapes soared in South Africa this month’, *Digital Journal*, 31 December 2008, www.digitaljournal.com/print/article/264259.

4. Ibid.

5. AVERTing HIV and AIDS, ‘Gender violence, inequality and HIV in South Africa’, www.avert.org/aidsouthafrica.htm.

6. L. M. Richter, ‘Baby rape in South Africa’, *Child Abuse Review*, 12:6 (2003), 392–400.

Priscilla Lynn Schlottman, a graduate of Saybrook University, San Francisco, California, is currently assisting in the development of several nongovernmental organizations in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Her doctoral work focused on participatory empowerment-based programs in South Africa.

abuse, the resources needed to translate law into practice have not been made available, and legislation that declares rape illegal is culturally at odds with what a great many people believe.⁷

In this situation, it is no exaggeration to assert that there is a war on women and children in South Africa. It is difficult to imagine a culture turning on its women and children, especially when one considers the behavior involved—child rape, infant rape, murder, and astronomical crime—and the resulting high rates of infant and maternal mortality and trauma. The sociological concept of cultural anomie, the erosion and corruption of moral values that occurs when a culture loses or is stripped of its power, provides a framework for understanding in part how such situations evolve. The protection of women and children tend to be strong moral values in most societies; in the context of anomie (from the Greek, meaning “without law”), these values disappear or are ignored. In their absence, a desperate, disorganized attempt to reclaim power can set the stage for unspeakable violence. Intense racial oppression, in combination with rapid social change, have generated high levels of anomie in South Africa.

Anomie usually occurs when a society experiences extreme stress and suffers from indifference, isolation, and a lack of social structure.⁸ D. Huschka and S. Mau discuss two different forms of anomie. They note that Emile Durkheim conceptualized anomie as ‘the overall absence or weakness of normative regulation’, that is, as a condition of relative ‘normlessness’ in a society or among its component groups.⁹ Durkheim describes anomic forms as ‘situations in which [the] integrative mode of organic solidarity is disrupted, for example if social inequalities grow too large, social injustices and a lack of opportunity are apparent or if a growing polarization of social groups makes moral integration difficult.’¹⁰ The disruption of solidarity as a fundamental element leading to anomie is an important factor in discussions about healing that focus on participatory, empowerment-based approaches in bringing together troubled communities.

Huschka and Mau also note that Robert K. Merton, building on Durkheim, asserts that social anomie occurs when there is disjunction between culturally prescribed goals and the accepted means of achieving these goals.¹¹ In South Africa, this balance was disrupted for indigenous peoples before and during apartheid and exacerbated by the rapid social change spurred by the end of apartheid. According to Huschka and Mau, ‘When rapid social change occurs, social regulations can break down, the controlling influence of society on individual propensities is no longer effective and individuals are left to their own devices.’¹² This describes South Africa, where isolation, a lack of solidarity, and an every-man-for-himself attitude came to underlie a climate of violence.

7. H. Epstein, ‘AIDS and Africa’s hidden war’, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, 82:1 (2006), 31–41.

8. Association for Advanced Training in the Behavioral Sciences. ‘Anomie’ (licensure study materials, flashcard), Advanced Training in Behavioral Sciences, Ventura, California, n.d.

9. D. Huschka and S. Mau, ‘Social anomie and racial segregation in South Africa’, *Social Indicators Research*, 76:3 (2006), 469.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*, 492.

Huschka and Mau compared levels of anomie in nine countries by integrating data from the 2002 South African General Household Survey into the Euromodel.¹³ The study found that South Africa had the highest level of anomie among all of the countries examined and that black South Africans had the highest level of anomie across racial groups. Huschka and Mau later argue that ‘anomie in South Africa is a phenomenon that is both influenced by race and socio-economic stratification, but is also a syndrome of common disorientation.’¹⁴ People’s level of education, employment or unemployment, and financial status are all factors affecting anomie. High levels of anomie in South Africa can be traced to the legacies of colonization and apartheid. Land taken from black South Africans was not returned after apartheid ended; as of 2006, only 4 percent of South Africa’s arable land was in black hands.¹⁵ Lacking land, indigenous South African farmers and cattle owners did not have the means to support themselves. In some areas, unemployment rates exceeded 70 percent.¹⁶

The prevalence of anomie in South Africa eroded the value structures that could have moderated violence in the country. Patriarchal hierarchies tend inherently to repress women, and additional damage follows when anomie begins to act upon patriarchal systems (and others). Conditions that raise levels of anomie erase the societally sanctioned boundaries of acceptable behavior, which also exist in patriarchal societies. Beliefs in the value of women and children—the least powerful members in patriarchal societies—disappear and in their place socially unacceptable behaviors become the norm. The anomie generated by oppression and rapid social change helps explain the devaluation and degradation of women and children that has occurred in South Africa and the climate of valuelessness, which produces a culture of self-gratification punctuated by desperate attempts to feel or assert a sense of power. These fragmented, disorganized, and impulsive efforts take the form of violence, crime, substance abuse, and the use of women and children as objects of self-gratification. Of great importance, as noted above, widespread crime and gender violence have exacerbated the health issues faced by South Africans through an association with HIV transmission that has created in South Africa one of the world’s most devastating epidemics.¹⁷

The proliferation of HIV is not always related to choices made by those who contract it. In some ways and in some instances, global economic and historical structures perpetuate the epidemic. According to one source, ‘Research has found that women who have been physically and sexually assaulted by their partners, as well as those who are in relationships with men who have a greater degree of control over them, are at a

13. The Euromodule is a survey instrument designed for a cooperative research initiative of nineteen countries and used to compare quality of life and welfare between societies through a combination of indicators of measurable living conditions, subjective scales of well-being, and quality of society. See J. Delhey et al., ‘Quality of life in a European perspective: The Euromodule as a new instrument for comparative welfare research’, *Social Indicators Research*, 58 (2002), 163–76.

14. Huschka and Mau, ‘Social anomie and racial segregation in South Africa’, 487.

15. Epstein, ‘AIDS and Africa’s hidden war’, 35.

16. *Ibid.*

17. S. Kalichman et al., ‘Integrated gender-based violence and HIV risk reduction intervention for South African men: Results of a quasi-experimental field trial’, *Prevention Science*, 10:3 (2009), 260.

higher risk of HIV infection'.¹⁸ According to survey data, more than a quarter of South African men reported having raped a woman in the past, and more than four in ten South African men reported having been physically violent toward an intimate partner.¹⁹ One theory posits that apartheid 'took away power from Black men, who then began taking out their feelings of disempowerment on the only people less powerful than themselves, women and children'.²⁰ This contributed to an increase in gender violence and HIV/AIDS transmissions.

Epstein suggests that violent men are enacting a cultural drama that is hundreds of years old, predating colonial Africa, and depends upon their ability to control women.²¹ She notes that women in pre-colonial Africa were responsible for agricultural labor and child rearing and that men negotiated with other clan leaders and cleared the land that they won in order for the women to farm it. Epstein asserts, 'Men measured their wealth in people: wives who could work the land and produce children who would help them form alliances through marriage to other clans. Control over women and their children was thus a vital measure of a man's worth. . . . [W]omen's loyalty and obedience to men was thus a defining social feature of these societies'.²²

Over the past century, social change abounded in South Africa, but the benefits have yet to filter down to all people and instead have caused ripe conditions for both kinds of anomie. Supporting this argument, Epstein shows that extreme social problems have led to an unhealthy regression into post-colonial myths and archetypes. Exploring what makes some South African men engage in violence against women, she speculates that such men find 'temporary relief from the humiliations of living in a society based on the presumption of white superiority' and that these desperate acts are protests against the men's loss of control over women.²³

In addition to the power issues flowing from cultural patriarchy and the deterioration of values, other (universal) psychological factors have played a part in the perpetuation of gender violence in South Africa. One 2009 study showed that 35 to 45 percent of children had witnessed their mother being beaten and that boys who have seen their mother being beaten are at increased risk of engaging in violence as adults.²⁴ Girls who have been sexually victimized are at increased risk for re-victimization, and boys who have been sexually abused as children are at increased risk of becoming sexual abusers.²⁵

Also of note, as a result of western capitalist influence, the lobola (bride price)—a black South African tradition to acknowledge respect and appreciation for a woman—is now commonly paid in cash (as opposed to cows as tradition dictates). This transition might actually strengthen the perception men have of wives as prop-

18. AVERTing HIV and AIDS, 'Gender violence, inequality and HIV in South Africa', www.avert.org/aidsouthafrica.htm, citing research from K. L. Dunkle et al., 'Gender-based violence, relationship power, and risk of HIV infection in women attending antenatal clinics in South Africa', *Lancet*, 363:9419 (2004).

19. AVERT, 'South Africa HIV and AIDS statistics', www.avert.org/safricastats.htm.

20. N. Itano, 'South Africa begins to get tough on rape', *New York Beacon*, 12 March 2003, 10.

21. Epstein, 'AIDS and Africa's hidden war', 35.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*

24. M. Seedat et al., 'Violence and injuries in South Africa: Prioritizing an agenda for prevention', *Lancet*, 374:9694 (2009), 1011–22.

25. *Ibid.*

erty.²⁶ Given the underlying patriarchal dynamics, the threat to men is heightened as women in South Africa join the workforce, obtain educations, and become more empowered. Epstein recounts the following in highlighting the attitude of some males: “When a girl sleeps around”, a young rapist told the anthropologist Katherine Wood in 2004, “you think you should discipline her”. Rape victims deserved their fate, he explained, because they were disrespectful, promiscuous “bitches”.²⁷ Epstein added, [S]ome rapists carry out the worst punishment of all. Rather than raping the women themselves, they rape the children of the women they wish to discipline.²⁸

While the statistics on rape and violence in South Africa can easily be seen as reflecting insurmountable circumstances, there is evidence that empowerment-based, participatory efforts toward social change, essential in healing deep inter- and intra-cultural wounds, might prove to be helpful in South Africa. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1993), according to D. Thomas, Paulo Freire championed the need to join together in dialogue with the masses to combat oppression. Freire also emphasized the importance of active participation of the people in the governing of their affairs, otherwise democracy and freedom could not exist.²⁹ Thomas points out that the African National Congress (ANC) essentially demobilized its movement after apartheid ended, and over the ensuing decades, has instead ‘attempted to “deliver” liberation to the masses’.³⁰ This fundamental shift of the leading political party from a grassroots, bottom-up operation to a top-down ruling party dispensing social change left South Africans without a voice in the development of their ‘new’ country. Thomas charges that since that fundamental shift, the ANC has ‘aligned the South African economy to the interests of domestic and international capital, at the expense of the great majority of South Africans’ and that the country’s current leaders ‘lack of dialogue and communion with the people negates the possibility of stimulating progressive change. [T]his fear of engagement with the people, and not allowing them to participate meaningfully in the formation of their own destinies, represents a fear from freedom itself, and further enshrines the elitist nature of such political leadership’.³¹

It could be argued that the shift of the ANC from a grassroots movement to being a top-down, centralized governing party, delivering what it says are solutions to the masses, is likely (at least partially) at the root of South Africa’s failure to thrive. An alternative to the current top-down model is to embrace an empowerment-based, participatory approach to social change that addresses the anomie affecting South African culture and society. Despite the country’s progressive and empowering constitution and legislation, the infrastructure to make the tenets of the constitution a reality in South Africans’ everyday lives is lacking. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) provide some hope by working with citizens to create structures that they need and to educate them about existing infrastructure in an empowering manner.

26. K. Gillespie, ‘Stories of strength: Breaking the silence about sexual abuse and family violence in rural South Africa’, *Iris: A Journal about Women*, 23 March 2003, 38.

27. Epstein, ‘AIDS and Africa’s hidden war’, 37.

28. *Ibid.*

29. D. Thomas, ‘Revisiting *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: Paulo Freire and contemporary African studies’, *Review of African Political Economy*, 36:120 (2009), 257.

30. *Ibid.*, 258.

31. *Ibid.*, 264.

Current South African law emerged as a result of passionate and participatory activism, so it holds that an approach fueled similarly could be a means for change or reform. Anomie, conceptualized as a need to heal damaged cultural values, necessitates a fostering of unity, a hallmark of empowerment-based, participatory approaches to social change that factor in the importance of joining with the community in their struggle against oppression. Such an approach has effectively been used in Latin America, through liberation psychology, and in Brazil, with liberation education.³²

Empowerment-based approaches to social change stress the importance of assisting communities to develop a conscious understanding of their circumstances.³³ This entails a capacity to cognitively distance oneself from an oppressive situation in order to evaluate that situation objectively; it is a critical element in the process of transformation. The challenge is to 'reflect back to people their own knowledge and experience, their history and their suffering'.³⁴ This process is fundamental to liberation psychology and allows for culture and community to be conceptualized as open systems with not only the capacity to engage in transformation, but also acknowledgment of the necessity of doing so. The community, in its transition toward freedom, must foster and maintain an attitude of opening that allows for growth 'on a plane of equality with neither privileges nor oppressive mechanisms'.³⁵ There is no room in the process for inequity: Dialogue spurs on the formation of truth and allows one to be open to another 'to confront reality in a relationship to and with (but not over) . . . , to unite in solidarity in a struggle in which both will be transformed'.³⁶ Underlying the concept of solidarity, I. Martín-Baró asserts that all members of a community can only be in solidarity when all relate on an equal plane to one another.

Currently there are limited resources for empowerment in South Africa, and those that do exist tend to exclude males. A recent participatory study in the Umkhanyakude district of KwaZulu-Natal focused on strategies for coping based on problems faced by black men. The men identified community problems and placed them in the following order: the socioeconomic issues of crime, poverty, and unemployment; HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, and social breakdown; and a lack of skills training. Abuse of children, women, and youths ranked eighth, followed by lobola, marriage, and boredom and lack of self-respect.³⁷

The Umkhanyakude men also identified four strategies for addressing the problems they identified. The first was to use sports (particularly soccer) as a means to bring together men in the community and to create a forum or entry point for opening discussions. The second concerned the provision of community education for

32. I. Martín-Baró, 'De-ideologizing society' in A. Aron and S. Corne (eds. and trans.), *Writings for a Liberation Psychology* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, President and Fellows of Harvard College, 1994), 169–72; P. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th anniversary ed. (Lexington, New York, Continuum Publishing Company, 1993).

33. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*; Martín-Baró, 'De-ideologizing society'.

34. Martín-Baró, 'De-ideologizing society', 8.

35. *Ibid.*, 183.

36. *Ibid.*

37. G. Setswe et al., 'Strategies for dealing with problems faced by men participating in a men's empowerment project in Umkhanyakude, South Africa', *Gender and Behaviour*, 7:1 (2009), 2202–17.

men through a format that allows and encourages public debate and dialogue. The third concerned the need for training and capacity development. The fourth addressed laying the groundwork for enterprise development in the community. This study offered a much-needed opportunity for men to take a critical and conscientious look at the weaknesses and strengths of their community with particular attention to their own gender and place in it. The men who participated were empowered to seek a path toward healing for their gender and their culture as a whole.

NGOs can assist in creating promising courses for visibly engaging in primary prevention efforts to change gender-based violence and to shape the tradition of male dominance. Such work can be conducted through community-based workshops with men and awareness campaigns and efforts to open dialogue with traditional leaders around issues of gender-based violence and ideas of masculinity.³⁸ Forums that utilize dialogue and the formation of conscious awareness around the impact and ‘misuse’ of traditional cultural practices provide community members with the empowering ability to guide themselves toward healing practices.

Prevention approaches that embrace a participatory approach could be effective in reducing violence in South Africa. Two programs—an IMAGE (Intervention with Micro Finance for Aids and Gender Equity) study and Stepping Stones—using such an approach have shown promising results. The IMAGE study combined an enterprise program for women with a learning and action curriculum based on gender that culminated in community activism against gender-based violence by the participants. Women in the IMAGE intervention group experienced a 55 percent decrease in physical or sexual violence from intimate partners during a twelve-month period assessed two years after the start of the intervention.³⁹ Stepping Stones is an HIV-prevention program that has been introduced in more than forty countries. It is designed to promote sexual health by focusing on building gender equity through critical reflection, role play, and drama. In Eastern Cape province, thirty-eight percent fewer male participants, versus those in a control group, reported perpetrating violence against an intimate partner in a two-year follow-up.⁴⁰

When analyzing how empowerment-based, participatory approaches to social change work, one might conclude that the antidote to anomie is *ubuntu*, the spirit of humanity. According to T. Hanks, ‘Ubuntu is a core value system, a unifying philosophy in Africa. . . . It is a universal doctrine of acceptance promoting the equality and dignity of all people, with an emphasis on humanness and the solidarity of mankind.’⁴¹ The indigenous spiritual value of *ubuntu*—or identity as defined through interconnectedness and caring—is manifested in participatory, empowerment-based approaches to social change. As such, *ubuntu* becomes a force for healing anomie caused by oppression and rapid social change. At their very best, empowerment-based, participatory approaches to social change are in the business of exchanging the pain of anomie for *ubuntu*, the spirit of humanity.

38. Seedat et al., ‘Violence and injuries in South Africa.’

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. T. Hanks, ‘Ubuntu: A theoretical examination of the potentialities of an emergent humanistic paradigm’ (doctoral diss., Saybrook University, 2008), 51.



The Revolution of Internet Collaboration: African Youth versus Poverty

Richard C. Close

INTERNET AND CELLULAR TECHNOLOGIES ARE ARGUABLY the most profound leaps of the human race. Numerous leaders and others benefiting from or comfortable with the paradigms of established hierarchical power structures have been taken by surprise with the potential and real shift of power to the people at the bottom brought about by the online revolution.

While holding digital storytelling workshops in Africa, it became apparent to those of us with the Chrysalis Campaign that the power of today's African youth and their command of a Web subculture were being reflected in the revolutions in the Islamic world, the efforts by multinational corporations to control the opinions of African youth, and attempts by dictators to shut down communication systems. IT and cell collaboration is transforming the hearts and minds of young people everywhere. Youths have started a sub-revolution in which ideas and news flash across social communities and individual cells in minutes. Flash learning is possible, with ideas spreading and transforming cultures in the same way that flash protests and flash groups can come together via collaborative technology. Youths' comfort with the movement of ideas across borders, religions, races, and culture has created a platform for common causes that previously did not exist. African youths armed with the collaborative weapons of cell and internet technology may represent the most significant revolution Africa has yet to experience.

THE BIRTH OF COLLABORATIVE POWER

Throughout history, power has rested at the top of top-down structures and institutions, with a king or chief executive officer controlling the message and the resources of the people. The flow of power was a one-way street, with trickle-down knowledge and resources and people living in fear that if they did not go along with those at the top, they would be ousted or fail. When the internet and email arrived in the 1990s,

Richard C. Close is the founder of the Chrysalis Campaign, Inc., which manages the 'I am Africa. This is my story . . .' a UNESCO Power of Peace-sponsored digital storytelling portal. A developer of the Global Learning Framework, he also builds learning centers and is an author, blogger, and international speaker on IT collaboration and poverty. He has twenty years of experience advising corporations, educational institutions, and nongovernmental organizations about learning strategies.

things began to change. It became harder for those at the top to lie and hide their agendas. In brief, the emperor was exposed.

Lotus Development introduced a product called Lotus Notes in 1994, signaling the birth of database collaboration. More than just sending emails back and forth, it allowed employees and customers to write inside a single relational database, creating a collective workgroup around a project. Today, Facebook operates on this concept. The world has evolved from ‘you and me’ into ‘us’. At the time of the earlier profound shift, critics doubted Lotus Notes technology because they thought people would not share. These experts were clearly wrong.¹

Today’s world has top-down dictatorial governments co-existing concurrently with a bottom-up, collaborative Web world. Empires desperately monitor the internet to try to remain in control, but eventually they are likely to lose this battle. Information cannot be stopped from crossing borders. It can be transported by so many means, from voices on satellite phones to small memory chips swallowed to elude detection.

The Chrysalis Campaign was exploring the corruption of people and goods at African border crossings. Imagine someone using a Twitter hash tag or geographical map to find people who had had to bribe an official in Africa to cross a border or pick up a package? Ushahidi, a tech company, produces software that will do just that.²

YOUTH ARE WRITING THEIR OWN TEXTBOOKS

The world of today’s youth is fluid, whereas for previous generations it had been fixed. These older generations were given textbooks in school in which they were not permitted to write. Information flowed down, from teachers to students, and nothing was debated. In contrast, today students (and others) can debate authors and even include them in their social communities or join theirs. Citizens have access to leaders all over the world, and the walls of classrooms have become global webs. Instead of relying on a traditional magazine to find out what is happening, many people now turn to Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, which have become a type of global magazine that people everywhere can edit and modify individually or collectively.

WE ARE THE MEDIA WE PRODUCE

During the digital storytelling project ‘I am Africa. This is my story . . .’, a generation of African youths has taken the lessons presented and run with them.³ The project involves African youths telling their life stories in under four minutes for uploading as a YouTube video. Teams consisting of three students are formed—the storyteller, an interviewer, and a camera person. To further test the idea of youths’ ease with digital

1. IBM, ‘The History of Notes and Domino’, 14 November 2007, <http://tinyurl.com/2b8wxk>.

2. As the company’s Web site states, Ushahidi is open source software ‘for information collection, visualization, and interactive mapping’. This technology was used in Kenya for mapping voter corruption through civilian cell phones. Visit <http://ushahidi.com>.

3. See Richard Close, ‘Inevitable impact of the internet on African youth and Africa’s economy’, <http://tinyurl.com/3f6qj2a>, a Webinar on ‘I am Africa. This is my story . . .’, a UNESCO Power of Peace Network-sponsored workshop, National University Lesotho, March 2011. For the program itself, visit <http://i-am-the-story.ning.com>.

technology, the students continually swap out the recording devices, alternatively using a Blackberry, cheap digital cameras and my more advanced Canon EOS camera, and movie cameras. The students blaze through the appliance menus as high-functioning teams. In each workshop, the pattern has been repeated, which is remarkable given that only half of the participants have an email address. The youths consistently borrow one another's devices, or as some call them, 'windows to the Web'. For this reason, the number of computers and cell phones in Africa is a false indicator of who has access to cell technology and certainly not an indicator of who knows how to use the Web.

COLLABORATION IS A SHIFTING SEA OF IDEAS

Unlike a political figure, such as a dictator, collaborative ideas are hard to pin down and attack. How does one strike fear into an idea shared by youths in a country? People continue to be surprised by revolutions and societal change, because many of them are not plugged into subcultures. Peace and development nongovernmental organizations need to grasp that youths have established a 'sub-government' of free speech and an educational and news 'bypass community' that is becoming more powerful than established government. However, caution is warranted: Viral TV and Web media can evolve into the democratic and ethical world people dream of, or they can become a greedier, darker place than one can imagine. People must become aggressively involved in educating youth on how to use this technology. The Web is also a weapon of abuse and crime.

To youths, cellular and internet technologies have taken democratic ideals a step further. They can alter society locally and internationally with a single cell phone video clip. During the 25 January Revolution, Egyptians on cells, not CNN or the BBC, controlled the talking points. Ideas delivered through the Web and cell phones now fill the minds and hearts of African youth. They are the potential revolutions within the hearts of youth that no bullet can stop.

WE ARE VIRAL

NGOs need to look for viral sustainability in all their projects. When a drip irrigation program in Zambia is completed, at the end of the day only six farmers might know about it. This is wasteful. If farmers are handed a Blackberry and asked to demonstrate and state in Tonga, Swahili, and English what they have learned, this knowledge can be passed on and used by hundreds of African farmers. Youths expect answers to everything to be a click away, because a lot of answers are just a search away. In the future, if NGO programs cannot go viral across platforms, they may not be so sustainable. Someday assistance programs will be asked to justify the viral sustainability of their proposed grant activities.

A COLLABORATIVE WITH A VOICE

Many people define who they are by their contributions to society. Youths feel that the more a TXT or their YouTube video goes viral, the greater his or her significance or impact on the world. Youths prove their significance with each text message. The days are gone when one had to be silent in school or at work. Texting offers a universal voice that cannot be silenced. Poverty leads many to think that their voices will never

matter or be heard. This is not a possibility in the minds of youths today. Think of the number of times you have seen a minimum-wage worker with a cell phone on silent next to his or her cash register.

EVERYWHERE THERE ARE WINDOWS TO OUR WORLD

Youth collaboration transcends the technological devices used for it. In workshops and meetings conducted by the Chrysalis Campaign, we constantly saw youths borrowing one another's cell phones and asking to use our laptops. Some who could not afford a phone had their own SIM cards and would swap out the program's cards for their own, so they could use the G3 wireless network in my laptop in remote locations. Their attitude seems to say, 'I have a personal identity that sees electronic devices as nothing more than access points to the collective of my friends and the world'. Perhaps the youth of this world will move from one place to another with One SIM Card per Child.⁴

YOUTHS' REVOLUTION IS TO BYPASS AUTHORITY

In a small town in Lesotho, I met with town leaders about community learning centers and discussed how youth could work with weavers to show them how looms throughout the world are constructed, wool produced, dyes made, and patterns used. The excitement in the room was wonderful, but what led to a breakthrough in thinking was a discussion with youth leaders about multinationals controlling the textile industry because they control business logistics. This once was true, but now it is a myth worth busting.

Today weavers in a small village can contact buyers in New York and Paris and use the same logistical services that multinationals employ, such as ebay, FedEx, PayPal, and UPS and the internet in general. These services empower local small businesses in remote areas to become 'multinationals' themselves, shattering the limits of poverty's mental trap. The reaction of youths during the discussions with community elders was met with a strong, positive response from the chiefs, who could then see how town leaders could keep the community together. The chiefs immediately caught on to how this could free their people from multinational wages of one to five dollars a day.

WHEN INDIVIDUALS MAKE A GLOBAL DIFFERENCE

Denial of access to resources for adult learners in poverty settings affects the core of these men and women. Being denied is worse than simply not having access; the feelings it generates are twisted into thoughts that they themselves are not worthy of access. Teaching a homeless woman to surf the Web can have a transformational impact. Showing her that there might be a way out of poverty's isolation and that she can be someone of significance who will have a purpose and impact on the world around her is a deeply moving experience.

The Bridgeport Rescue Mission has set up a learning portal with more than one thousand lessons and access to more than 10,000 free educational Web sites from around the world sorted graphically by category and literacy level. While a homeless

4. Richard. C. Close, 'Colonial industrial training vs. democratic Web education: Our new Global Learning Framework, 2010 Global Education Conference' Webinar, 19 November 2010, <http://tinyurl.com/34fjue8>.

center student is asking me questions about it, we look at a YouTube from Duke University on how to study, then we are off to tour museums of the world. She tears up and says, 'This is an awesome gift. How we grew up, we were denied access to this kind of world'. The state of mind that poverty produces denies an individual access to the world and also convinces them that they are not worthy of it.⁵

Oppression occurs where education, positive values, and access to resources are denied. The key for workers and volunteers in peace and development is to incorporate into their programs, even in the face of hierarchical structures of control, the idea that the internet can, and does, bypass these structures. For this reason, all refugee camps should have community learning centers.

TEACHING UNREALITY

Media can teach 'reverse life skills'. Commercial video games are won by killing, destroying, and breaking rules, with zero consequences. A Microsoft game like Halo does not have mediation for people or peacekeepers or even a medic, only bloodshed. It is won by using lawlessness, tribalism, and revenge. Leaderships and parents need to be trained on the potential impact this has on youths. The world of gaming reveals that the same collaborative media that can create common ground for peace can also be used to glorify war and revenge. Leaders must be proactive in guiding youths on what is right and wrong on the Web the same way they guide them in the physical world. For now, access to gaming is limited in Africa because of the cost involved. A \$100 Nintendo DS is hard to buy when you make only \$365 a year.

The life skills curriculum of the World Health Organization/UNESCO needs to be integrated with the evolving technologies of the internet. Life skills are life-learning habits showing how people collaborate with each other in quests to find the information they need to survive. We must face the fact that cell phones and the Web are new kinds of invasive media whose capabilities extend way beyond those of the TV generation. In the Kenya Rift Valley, one tribe mentioned that another tribe had informed them—via cell phone text—that they were going to attack, so they had time to run.

YOUTHS AS JOB CREATORS, NOT WORKER BEES

If societies do not fully embrace that today's generation of youth is here to 'create' new businesses and farms with global resources, and continue to perpetuate fifteenth-century authoritarian views of graduating worker bees to work in industries that are no longer feasible, then they will raise a generation of youth who will feel betrayed and angry. On the other hand, if societies infuse youths' technical expertise and views of technology into small businesses and farms, an extremely productive and employable generation of Africans can be created. African youths can grab cell phones or digital cameras and rip through menus like a New York taxi in traffic. Technology is not something they have to be taught. It is as if it lives inside of them, like a fish that instinctively knows how to swim. Now is the time to jump in with them. The water is fine.

5. Bridgeport Rescue Mission, Learning Center Ning, <http://bridgeportrescuemission.ning.com> (membership site).

