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 to 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.
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Guest Editor’s Note

This issue of the *Africa Peace and Conflict Journal* is a collection of articles on various subjects written by doctoral fellows at the University for Peace Africa Programme supported by the Canadian International Development Research Centre. The contributions are ‘on all fours’ with UPEACE’s principles and values—based on the multidisciplinary and multicultural foundations of the field of peace and conflict studies. The range of topics include the institutionalization of parliament in Mozambique, power-sharing agreements after disputed elections in Africa, the Zimbabwe crisis, internal displacement in Kenya, the northern Uganda conflict, relations between Sudan and South Sudan, and women’s participation in local government in Anglophone Cameroon. The authors use a variety of methodologies to arrive at their findings.

Carlos Shenga assesses and compares legislative institutionalization in Mozambique. Using statistical analysis and original data, he finds that the Mozambican Assembly is relatively institutionalized in regard to two of three measures. By the first measure, the assembly tends not to be institutionalized—that is, membership tends to be unstable and turnover frequent. By the second and third measures, however, the assembly is moving toward institutionalization. Overall, Shenga finds that while making progress, Mozambique’s emerging democratic legislatures continue to experience low levels of institutionalization.

Jephias Mapuva and Alex Kamwaria address the issues of power sharing and political inclusion following the 2007 and 2008 disputed elections in Kenya and Zimbabwe, respectively. Focusing on the effects of the power-sharing agreements reached in these two countries, they argue that power sharing and political inclusion undermine government’s performance and whatever steps it might take toward democracy. Mapuva and Kamwaria conclude by ruling out power-sharing agreements as efficient alternatives for moving unstable states toward peace and democracy.

Drawing on empirical evidence, Godfrey Maringira, Annemiek Richters, and Diana Gibson explore how Zimbabwean army deserters living in South Africa are dealing with their past and surviving in exile, after having fled the government of President Robert Mugabe. They deserted after 2000, when economic crisis engulfed Zimbabwe and the government intensified repression against those seen as opposed to its rule. Their major finding is that the deserters have formed the equivalent of a military unit, albeit in exile, to manage their pasts, maintain a sense of dignity, and lobby for political amnesty from the Zimbabwean government. A key recommendation is that disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs not avoid fragile political environments and only be tailored for soldiers who have ended their military service in what is officially perceived as an ‘honorable’ way. Instead, these programs should be extended to meet the needs of army deserters and thereby contribute to lasting peace and security in post-colonial Africa.
Kamungi Prisca Mbura examines the issue of internal displacement in Kenya resulting from the post-election violence that engulfed the country following the disputed 2007 vote. Drawing from empirical evidence, she argues that the idea of nativeness and native spaces as expressed in the language of ‘home soil’ links ethnic identity to territory in ways that restrict the rights of persons living outside their place of birth. She establishes that despite constitutional guarantees of equal citizenship, the construction of localized, exclusive identities based on ‘ethnic territory’ undermines the right to live and own property in Kenya.

Shimelis Tsegaye Tesemma looks at cult religions and their role in Ugandan civil wars in the 1980s and 1990s. In particular, she draws on the examples of Alice Lakwena’s Holy Spirit Movement and Joseph Kony’s Lord’s Resistance Army, revealing how Lakwena and Kony effectively manipulated religious symbols and ritual practices to recruit spiritually induced foot soldiers ready to wage a cosmic war for political ends. In the end, Tsegaye concludes that Lakwena and Kony’s rebellions primarily represent political struggles fueled by ethnic solidarity between the warlords and the people they mobilized and were or are sustained through the manipulation of religious and cultic symbols and rituals.

Denis Musinguzi uses John-Paul Lederach’s integrated framework for a peace-building model to argue that four key aspects must be addressed for a conflict such as that in northern Uganda to be successfully resolved: the local context, conflict actors, causes of the conflict, and relationships among the various stakeholders. The adoption of Lederach’s model, Musinguzi concludes, deals not only with the immediate crisis, but also responds to the long-term transformational aspect of the conflict. To resolve the northern Uganda conflict requires inter alia a policy and legal framework that focuses on reconciliation of war-affected local communities and the rehabilitation of victims of sexual violence and children abducted by LRA rebels.

Getachew Zeru Gebrekidan addresses the unresolved issue of Abyei in the context of the failure to hold the referendum for the area envisaged under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and how Abyei affects the normalization of relations between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan. She argues that the two countries need to work on the Abyei issue for their mutual benefit based on the principles in the Abyei Protocol and the recommendations of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel.

Justine Ayuk Fonjock and Joyce Bayande Endeley assess the participation of women in the legislative arm of local government in Anglophone Cameroon. Drawing on the experiences of women councillors, they find a significant relationship between gender relations of women councillors in the household and their corresponding decision-making power in local government. They conclude that women councillors tend to have more influence in a council’s decisions and projects if they exert a high degree of control in their households.

It is my firm belief that readers will find this volume of the APCJ informative and entertaining. Some of the contributors to this volume are just starting to ‘cut their
teeth’ in the field of academic writing, and thus it is our responsibility as readers to support them. Please constructively criticize and encourage them.

I commend this volume to you.

Kasaija Phillip Apuuli
Associate Professor of Political Science
Makerere University, Kampala
Note on This Special Issue

Since 2007 the University for Peace (UPEACE) Africa Programme has partnered with the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC) on two projects to strengthen research and publications capacities in sub-Saharan Africa at the doctoral level in the areas of peace, conflict, development, governance, and security.

The projects involve the granting of academic and financial support through a fellowship program for doctoral students at the initial stage of their studies and for those who have completed their doctoral requirements at university and are ready to embark on fieldwork. Over the past six years, fifty-six doctoral students from twenty-six universities in sub-Saharan Africa have benefitted from these programmes. At the conclusion of their projects, the beneficiaries are expected to go on to complete their doctoral studies and publish an article in the peer-reviewed *Africa Peace and Conflict Journal*, which is published by the Africa Programme with funding from the IDRC.

This issue of the APCJ features articles written solely by UPEACE–IRDC fellows from the project focused on issues of peace, conflict, and development and the programme concerned with governance and security. The contributors first took part in a mentorship programme to enhance their publication capacity and familiarize them with publishing. The programme involved exchanges with the UPEACE Africa Programme research coordinator in a process of feedback and rewriting with the aim of improving the quality of the manuscripts before submission to the journal’s editorial staff. Once the coordinator was satisfied with a paper, it was sent to the APCJ editorial team, which then subjected it to an external, double-blind review process and worked directly with the author or authors to finalize contributions through updating and otherwise taking into consideration the comments of the reviewers. After the manuscripts were finalized, they were sent for copyediting and proofreading before publication.

This special issue is thus the outcome of a rigorous process of mentorship and capacity building, which stand at the core of the UPEACE and IDRC collaboration on sub-Saharan Africa. UPEACE and the IDRC will also partner in April 2014 to organize an international symposium on peace, governance, and security with the aim of bringing together all the programme participants of the past six years to build a platform for future collaboration with other researchers in the field and relevant policymakers on the African continent to help ensure that their research reaches those in charge of policy in their respective fields.

It is our hope that the topics covered in this issue will stimulate lively discussion and debate within the academic community and among policymakers and other stakeholders on how to strengthen peace, governance, and security in sub-Saharan Africa.

—Samuel Kale Ewusi

Assistant Professor and Research Coordinator
UPEACE Africa Programme
Legislative Institutionalization in Mozambique: A Comparative Analysis of Three Legislatures

Carlos Shenga

This study assesses and compares legislative institutionalization by employing statistical analysis and original data from the first three Mozambican democratic legislatures. Two out of three measures used pointed to the Assembly being relatively institutionalized. By the first measure, the Assembly tends not to be institutionalized—that is, membership tends to be unstable, and it experiences frequent turnover. By the second and third measures, however, the Assembly is moving toward institutionalization. First, its leaders tend to be selected at least after having served for a time in office. Second, rather than using particularistic criteria or a discretionary method for conducting its internal business, the Assembly employs universalistic criteria. The procedure for distributing positions of power is based on legislators’ political capital, indicated by formal education, and seniority. The findings also reveal that while Mozambican legislatures are moving toward institutionalization, the current level of institutionalization remains low.

After independence from Portugal on 25 June 1975, Mozambique adopted a Marxist-Leninist, one-party authoritarian government. As the regime did not grant civil liberties and political rights to its citizens, some Mozambicans, with support from South Rhodesia and apartheid South Africa, organized themselves and formed the Mozambican Resistance Movement (Renamo) to fight the regime. From 1976 to 1992, Mozambique experienced a brutal civil war that destroyed social and economic infrastructure and killed at least a million people. External factors (including the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the cold war) and internal factors (civil war) led the regime to change course and adopt a democratic constitution in 1990 that granted civil liberties and political rights to Mozambican citizens.

1. South Rhodesian assistance to Renamo ended in 1980, when it became independent and changed its name to Zimbabwe. The support of South Africa ended in 1984, when the Mozambican and South African governments signed a nonaggression pact, the aim of which was to stop the Mozambican government from supporting the African National Congress in its fight against the apartheid regime and to stop the South African government from supporting Renamo in its fight against the Mozambican regime.

Carlos Shenga is a doctoral candidate in political studies and a researcher for the African Legislatures Project in the Democracy in Africa Research Unit of the Centre for Social Science Research, University of Cape Town.

Africa Peace and Conflict Journal, 6:2 (2013), 1–16. © 2013 University for Peace Africa Programme. All rights reserved. ISSN 1659–3944.

The multiparty legislatures had much more legitimacy and power than their authoritarian predecessors. First, the three previous, one-party legislatures—seated in 1977, 1977–1986, 1987–1994—were directly elected by the people, but through meetings based on residential location and workplace. Multiparty legislatures were directly elected by the people under more liberal and competitive conditions, and with information available through independent and private media as well as nongovernmental organizations.

Second, of the three legislative responsibilities of policy making, oversight, and representation, policy making was the only function performed by the one-party legislatures. Members of these institutions were merely expected to ratify bills emanating from the Frelimo Central Committee on behalf of the executive. After meeting biannually for about two weeks, members would leave to perform extra-parliamentary duties—such as those of governor, minister, deputy minister—as they were not paid a salary, with the exception of steering committee members, who began receiving pay during the Third legislature (1987–1994). The steering committee had the authority to pass bills during the time the plenary was in recess. Responsibility for oversight, which requires members to hold bureaucrats accountable, was nonexistent, as were the principles of the rule of law and transparency for procedures. If policy making was not well performed, and oversight never performed, this suggests similar outcomes for the responsibilities of representation.

In contrast, the multiparty legislatures were given policy-making, oversight, and representation responsibilities. According to its standing order, the Assembly’s standing committees had the authority to hold the executive accountable, and members of parliament (MPs) were charged with representing the public interest. With the democratic constitution, the Assembly emerged as an independent body of government, separate from the executive and judiciary, and with more legitimacy and powers than previously.

2. In 1988 secret contacts were reported between religious leaders and Renamo representatives on the possibility of holding direct meetings with the government to end the civil war. On 9 March 1989 in Washington, D.C., President Joaquim Chissano announced the desire to negotiate with Renamo. See ‘Cronologia: 20 anos do Acordo Geral de Paz em Moçambique’, 3 October 2012, http://noticias.sapo.mz/lusa/artigo/15060184.html.

3. For instance, in 1986 the government closed the Faculty of Law of Eduardo Mondlane University because jurists were monitoring the government’s behavior-enforcing laws. The faculty reopened in 1991, after the adoption of the 1990 democratic constitution.

Eric Shipan has proposed that ‘one reason to study institutional development is the belief that institutions affect member behaviour’. As Adam Przerworski puts it, ‘institutions matter, they influence norms, beliefs and actions; therefore, they shape outcomes’. Alan Rosenthal found that legislative institutional development, indicated by institutional capacity and institutional power, greatly affects committee performance in policy and program formulation. A comparison of Mozambican legislatures reveals that legislative institutional development has played an intervening role in the relationship between legislators’ skill and committee performance in policy making. In short, legislative institutional development is relevant because it affects legislative performance. In addition, as legislatures develop institutionally and begin to perform relatively well, they are more likely to receive public support and contribute toward democratization and democratic consolidation.

This study assesses and compares the Mozambican Assembly’s institutional development by systematically examining personnel differentiation, leadership positions (which require years of service to attain), and operational procedures for the distribution of positions of power over the fifteen years of three legislatures, from 1995 to 2009. The majority of Assembly members are less likely to serve for extended periods than are those in legislative leadership positions. The operational procedure for distributing positions of power tends to be driven by political capital, understood as resources that members bring to institutions, instead of seniority, as the universalistic method in the conduct of internal business.

The majority of Mozambican Assembly members are not as likely to serve for extended periods in the body than their legislative leaders, because service is not particularly rewarding for most ordinary legislators. Rank-and-file legislators receive a salary, a per diem during their attendance at plenary sessions, and a constituency service subsidy. Committee members receive additional per diems for attendance at committee sessions. Legislators holding leadership positions—such as speaker, committee chairs, rapporteurs, steering committee members, and deputy speakers—receive benefits that include fuel, a vehicle for official use, office space, and associated allowances. Service appears to be relatively reward-

9. The Seventh legislature (2010–2014) is not included as it has not yet completed its term.
10. Political capital is also referred to as political skill by Lester Seligman, ‘Elite recruitment and political development’, *Journal of Politics*, 26:3 (1964), 612–26. Political capital is measured by educational abilities, occupational skills, and government experience.
12. The average compensation for Assembly members, including salary and allowances, in the three 1995–2009 Mozambican legislatures was $1,298. See Shenga, ‘Comparing Mozambican and African legislatures’.
ing for legislators in leadership positions, so it benefits them to adapt long-term perspectives and create and maintain organizational schemes for being reappointed.\textsuperscript{13}

That a legislator’s political capital drives the operational procedure for the distribution of positions of power is posited in Seligman,\textsuperscript{14} who asserts that ‘elite recruitment patterns determine avenues for political participation and status’. Essentially, better-educated legislators with higher occupational status and government experiences are more likely to be appointed to leadership, power, or high-status positions and subsequently participate more in drafting of bills and in oversight of executive agencies.

\textbf{METHODODOLOGY AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT}

The majority of legislative studies in the well-respected, peer-reviewed journals have tended to focus on the U.S. Congress or theories generated in American studies.\textsuperscript{15} There has been only a smattering of case studies on African legislatures.\textsuperscript{16} The case studies on Mozambican legislatures have analyzed the Assembly, but none have com-

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{13} Squire explains about the U.S. House of Representatives, ‘because upward mobility is limited and House service is rewarding, members adopt long-term perspectives and create and maintain organizational schemes to meet their career need’: Peverill Squire, ‘The theory of legislative institutionalization and the California Assembly’, \textit{Journal of Politics}, 54:4 (1992), 1026–54.
\textsuperscript{14} Seligman, ‘Elite recruitment and political development’.
\end{flushright}
pared them. This study tests and assesses assumptions by employing original data covering the fifteen-year period corresponding to the first three democratic Mozambican legislatures, as noted above. The data encompass the full population of the legislatures and was assembled from three editions of the legislator directory *Who’s Who in the Assembly of the Republic.* The directory contains data about legislators’ formal education, occupation, government experience, time in office, constituency, and position in the Assembly, among other characteristics.

Data analysis was performed on univariate, bivariate, and multivariate levels. Univariate descriptive analysis was employed to describe the patterns of membership differentiation from its environment, political capital, and distribution of positions of power by calculating the frequencies at which those patterns occur. Bivariate descriptive analysis established connections between one predictor variable (for example, formal education) and an outcome variable (such as distribution of positions of power) by measuring associations between the two. Multivariate explanatory analysis tested the operational procedure that the Assembly used to distribute positions of power among members and to make sure the bivariate associations were not spurious. The effects of political capital considerations on the distribution of positions of power were tested using ordinary least square multiple regression while considering the impact of seniority.

Polsby, in his assessment of the U.S. House of Representatives, conceptualized an institutionalized or developed organization as having three major characteristics. First, the organization is relatively well differentiated from its environment. Polsby defines differentiation based on stability of membership and recruitment of legislative leaders within the legislature. This is based on its membership being stable, with infrequent turnover, and entry being relatively difficult. Its leaders are recruited from within the organization after having established tenure in office. Second, the organization is relatively complex—that is, ‘there is [development] in the autonomy and importance of committees, growth of specialized agencies of party leadership, and the

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17. J. J. Macuane, ‘Instituições e democratização no contexto Africano: Multipartidarismo e organiza-


general increase in provision of various emoluments and auxiliary aids to members in the form of office space, salaries, allowances, staff aid, and committee staffs. Third, in distributing positions of power, the organization operates on a universalistic basis—in this instance, seniority—rather than particularistic criteria, and automatic rather than discretionary methods.

In applying Polsby’s general theory of legislative institutionalization to the California Assembly, Squire found that the universalistic criteria, indicated by seniority, does not apply for the distribution of positions because Assembly members have different career ambitions from those in the House. Squire explains this difference by the place the two legislatures occupy in the hierarchy of the political system. As the House sits at the top of a political hierarchy with limited upward mobility and service is considered to be rewarding, House members tend to adopt long-term perspectives and create and maintain organizational schemes to meet their career needs. Members of state legislatures, however, take a short-term perspective because they have more opportunities and, typically, ambitions to run for higher office. That state legislatures are at an intermediate level in the hierarchy of the political system gives their members more chances for upward mobility. Squire also suggests separating ‘internal complexity’ from institutionalization as he considers the former more meaningfully indicative of the concept of professionalization. J. R. Hibbing defines legislative professionalization ‘as involving changes that deal with the body itself and that can be accomplished by statute or by legislative edict. Included would be session length, member compensation, number of staff, other perquisites, general legislative resources, and committee structure.

Thus, what remains as institutionalization from Polsby’s conceptualization are the characteristics of organizational differentiation and operational procedure for conducting internal business. Alan Rosenthal states, ‘The conceptual core of institutionalization is the notion of boundedness—that is, the separation of the institution from its environment.’ It is indicated by personnel differentiation, or the entrance and exits of members and leaders; the degree to which norms exist and members follow norms that differentiate them from non-members; and the institution’s authority or autonomy to manage its own affairs without substantial control or intervention from outside. Similarly, Hibbing’s measures of institutionalization include norms and standard operational procedures, institutional autonomy, leadership positions that require extensive service in the body itself, and extended careers in the body. Meanwhile, according to Samuel Huntington, ‘Institutionalization is the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability.’

The concept of legislative institutionalization along with those of legislative professionalization and legislative reform are part of the multidimensional concept of legisla-

20. Ibid., 153.
23. Ibid., 186–90.
Rosenthal observes legislative development from three perspectives: reform, professionalization, and institutionalization. Therefore, Rosenthal adds to Polsby’s formulation—that is, legislative development rather than institutionalization—the concept of reform, which ‘describes the development of legislatures, particularly in terms of their capacity and strengths’.

**FINDINGS**

To what extent is the Mozambican Assembly institutionalized? If the Mozambican Assembly underwent relative institutionalization from the Fourth to the Sixth legislature, one would expect to observe high levels of retention of members rather than turnover; parliamentary leaders being recruited from among members with extensive service in the body; and operational procedures for distributing leadership positions based on a universalistic basis rather than discretion.

**Personnel Differentiation**

Personnel differentiation is measured by retention, the number or proportion of members that keep their seat from the previous legislature, and turnover, the number or percentage of new members at the beginning of a legislature. For the Mozambican Assembly, data covering the full population of three legislatures, 750 MPs, collected from *Who’s Who in the Assembly of the Republic*, show an average low membership retention (30.7 percent), thus suggesting frequent turnover. Approximately seven in every ten (69.3 percent) members of the Assembly tended to be novices, with little or no legislative experience (see Table 1).

<table>
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<th>Personnel Differentiation in Mozambican Legislatures, 1995–2009 (percentage)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Retention</td>
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<tr>
<td>From the Fourth legislature</td>
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* Not applicable

27. Ibid., 173.
To learn how the legislatures function, Mozambican legislators receive training concerning their primary responsibilities in the first few days of each legislature. Sometimes the training is directed at specialized committees during a session. For instance, members of the Committee of Planning and Budget will receive training on fiscal policy and the budget. In addition, the relations that the Assembly develops with other legislatures and legislative associations from stable and emerging democracies allow MPs to improve their understanding of the obligations of the legislative institution. Although these trainings and ties make some difference in the knowledge and abilities of Mozambican MPs, they would be much more effective if members presented themselves having already had legislative experience. Of note, the political parties serve as the recruiting agents for future legislators.

In comparing legislatures, one observes that the data vary significantly. In the founding democratic legislature, the Fourth legislature, all the legislators were new to the legislative process, including to their responsibilities, procedures of political participation and competition, rule of law, and vertical and horizontal accountability. No data about retention and turnover were therefore recorded regarding the Fourth legislature. With no handover from the previous one-party legislature, the first task of the first session of the multiparty Assembly was to devise rules of procedure.\textsuperscript{29} In the Fifth Assembly, the level of membership retention (41.9 percent) exceeded the three-legislature average (30.7 percent), but retention then declined in the Sixth legislature (19.6 percent). The percentage of recruited members without substantive tenure rose significantly from the Fifth (58.1 percent) to the Sixth (80.4 percent) legislatures.

The Assembly data were also analysed to determine whether any members of the Sixth legislature had previously served in the Fourth legislature. When doing so, one finds relatively few apprentices. The tenure of MPs in the Sixth legislature, at 19.6 percent when measured vis-à-vis the Fifth legislature, increases to 41.6 percent when compared to the Fourth legislature. The Assembly experienced significant turnover after the Fourth legislature, but a significant number of MPs then returned to the Sixth Assembly.

**Recruitment of Members to Leadership Positions of Power**

To what extent do legislative leaders of the Mozambican Assembly—who are, of course, required to be members—tend to have substantive tenure in office as a leader? The *Who’s Who* data for Table 2 reveal that the average number of years served in the Assembly as speaker or committee chair before (re)election to these positions in the Fifth and Sixth legislatures was 3.5 years. Of all thirteen leaders—that is, speaker and committee chairs—four served seven and a half years in the Assembly as speaker or committee chair before their selection in the Fifth and Sixth legislatures; one served five years; four served two and a half years; and four leaders had never served in a leadership position before their second or third selection in the Fifth or Sixth legislature, respectively.

\textsuperscript{29} Law no. 1/1995 of 8 May, approved by the Assembly on 18 April 1995. On the same day the Assembly also approved the statute on members of parliament.
In comparing legislatures, the *Who’s Who* data show a relative growth in selecting leaders with substantive tenure in office. All leaders—here meaning speaker and committee chairs— in the Fourth legislature had no prior democratic legislative experience, but from the Fifth to Sixth legislatures, however, the leaders recruited had substantive tenure in office. In fact, their ‘apprenticeship period’ lengthened. Of the nine leaders in the Fifth legislature five (55.6 percent) served five years in the Fourth legislature before their second selection as speaker or committee chair, while four (44.4 percent) had never before served as leaders.

In addition, of the nine leaders in the Sixth legislature, five (55.6 percent) served ten years in the Assembly as speaker or committee chair before their second or third selection to these positions and three (33.3 percent) served five years before their first

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30. For the purpose of this variable, the positions of deputy speaker, steering committee member, caucus leader, and deputy caucus leader are excluded because the work of the top two leadership positions, speaker and committee chairs, is more tangible.
selection. Only one leader, the committee chair, had never served in the organization before his first selection as a leader. In sum, the average years served in the Assembly leadership position before selection as speaker or committee chair increased from 2.7 years in the Fifth legislature to 7 years in the Sixth legislature. These findings suggest evidence of a seniority system in the recruitment of members to leadership positions. The seniority system is not, however, independent of party caucus, as the parties with more seats, naturally, appoint more members. Overall, the major party, Frelimo, appointed nine members to leadership positions, while the major opposition, Renamo, appointed four during the period 1995–2009.

**Operational Procedure and Patterns of Distribution of Positions**

This study uses multiple regression statistical analysis to examine whether legislators’ political capital—educational abilities, occupational status, and government experiences—when controlled for seniority, is used as the operational procedure for the distribution of positions of power in the Assembly. It is helpful, first, however, to analyze the extent to which MPs obtain positions of power and, second, how much political capital they possess.

The Mozambican Assembly features the following positions: speaker, deputy speaker, caucus leader, deputy caucus leader, steering committee member, caucus rapporteur, committee chair, committee rapporteur, committee member, and rank-and-file member. The average of the three legislatures in Table 3 shows that almost half (46.9 percent) of the Assembly remains rank and file (or *deputado simples*), with their work limited to the attendance of plenary sessions.

Rank-and-file positions do not vary significantly across the three legislatures, but slight reductions were observed from the Fourth (49.2 percent) to the Fifth (46.8 percent) and to the Sixth (44.8 percent) legislatures. The reason for the reduction, especially in the Fifth legislature, is the establishment of an additional standing committee, the Committee of Petitions, in 2000 to deal with public claims, complaints, and petitions. Thus in the Fifth legislature, fifteen additional rank-and-file members found upward mobility by serving as a standing committee member. Although the Assembly also establishes ad hoc and inquest committees, the likelihood of upward mobility to these committees is very low. The rules for procedures allowed multiple membership of standing committee members to ad hoc or inquest committees. Although rank-and-file members can also be members of ad hoc and inquest committees, standing committee members tend more to occupy positions in ad hoc and inquest committees than do rank-and-file members. Second, as is their nature, ad hoc and inquest committees are temporary, dissolved after achieving their goal. The Fourth and Fifth legislatures established ad hoc and inquest committees, but there were none in the Sixth.

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31. Leopoldo Ernesto was selected committee chair for the first time in the Fourth legislature and then for a second time in the Sixth. In the Fifth legislature, he served as deputy speaker.

32. See Law no. 6/2001 of 30 April.
At the intermediate level of parliamentary positions, one finds those legislators who are standing committee members (39.1 percent). This group is mainly responsible for in-depth reviews and scrutiny of parliamentary bills, which the speaker refers to the committees. Standing committee members are led by committee chairs (3.1 percent) with support of committee rapporteurs (2.9 percent). They are also responsible for amending bills as well as recommending that proponents of bills improve them before consideration of the plenary, meaning that in essence they can ‘kill’ a bill should they find its provisions in some way unsatisfactory.

At the top of parliamentary positions is, of course, the speaker (0.4 percent), who is supported by deputy speakers (0.9). Below them follow caucus leaders (0.9 percent) and their deputies (0.9 percent), steering committee members (4.4 percent), and caucus rapporteurs (0.5 percent). The speaker chairs the plenary sessions and the steering committee, which is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Assembly. The caucuses entail political parties represented in the Assembly.

The parliamentary positions of power vary according to political party representation in the Assembly. For example, there were three caucuses in the Fourth legislature, and therefore three deputy speakers. The same applies regarding caucus leaders. The existence of only one deputy caucus leader in the Fourth legislature instead of three, despite there being three caucuses, may be attributed to omissions in Who’s Who or to two caucuses not establishing the position.

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<td>Primary</td>
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<td>Secondary</td>
<td>141 66.4</td>
<td>166 66.4</td>
<td>143 57.2</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>68 27.2</td>
<td>67 26.8</td>
<td>86 34.4</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3 1.2</td>
<td>3 1.2</td>
<td>6 2.4</td>
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<td><strong>Occupational status</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional, managerial, white-collar</td>
<td>194 77.6</td>
<td>199 79.6</td>
<td>207 82.8</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual worker</td>
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<td>7 2.8</td>
<td>12 4.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>35 14.0</td>
<td>24 9.6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5 2.0</td>
<td>9 3.6</td>
<td>7 2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of government experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>12 4.8</td>
<td>15 6.0</td>
<td>8 3.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>23 9.2</td>
<td>14 5.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
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<td>21 8.4</td>
<td>33 13.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grassroot</td>
<td>4 1.6</td>
<td>2 0.8</td>
<td>10 4.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Patterns of Political Capital in the Assembly. Political capital, or political skill, is understood to include the resources aspirants bring to the process of recruitment.33 As noted, this study measures political capital by educational abilities, occupational skills, and government experiences. Educational ability is measured by a legislator’s level of formal education, occupational status by legislators’ careers held before being elected to office, and government experience by whether a legislator has worked as a minister or deputy minister at the central level of government.34

Table 4 shows that of the three legislatures analyzed, all of them have members with some degree of formal education. Among them 29.5 percent had some tertiary (higher) education, 60 percent secondary, and 8.9 percent primary education. With respect to occupational status, the vast majority (80 percent) were professional, managerial, or white collar. Most did not have government experience before running for the legislature. Those with government experience, at any level, did not exceed one-tenth; the highest (9.2 percent) involved local government.

33. Norris, Passages to Power, 13. Seligman, ‘Elite recruitment and political development’, prefers the term political skill to political capital.
34. Other government experience would be at the provincial (e.g., governor), local (mayor, district administrator, or local councilor), and grassroots (traditional ruler, chief of administrative post, or ward or locality secretary) levels.
When assessing changes over time, one observes a significant increase in legislators with tertiary education from the Fourth legislature (27.2 percent) to the Sixth (34.4 percent). Similarly, in regard to secondary education, one can observe an increase from the Fourth (56.4 percent) to the Fifth (66.4 percent) legislature. Legislators of a professional, managerial, or white-collar occupational status also increased significantly from the Fourth (77.6 percent) to the Sixth (82.8 percent) legislature. Legislators with government experience at the local level changed significantly and positively from the Fourth (6 percent) to the Sixth (13.2 percent) legislature.

Do Political Capital and Seniority Matter? Political capital is a factor of change and legislative development. If political capital and seniority of members of the Mozambican Assembly really matter for the process of institutionalization, then one should be able to observe the association of political capital and seniority indicators with the distribution of positions of power.

Bivariate correlations show associations between political capital and seniority indicators and the distribution of positions of power (see the first column of coefficients, Table 5). Better-educated members, those with managerial, professional, or white-collar occupational backgrounds, and, to some extent, with government at the central government level tend to acquire positions of power more so than others. Former manual workers are less likely to hold positions of power, while those with government experience at the provincial, local or grassroot level are extremely unlikely to do so. The results show positive associations between the two seniority indicators and positions of power. Members with substantial tenure in office tend more often to hold positions of power than do new members.

Although some political capital and seniority considerations appear to be associated with the distribution of positions, it is not clear whether the bivariate associations are spurious or would hold up when testing them against other considerations in the equation. Using a multivariate technique allows one to consider many factors together while holding some constant. Models 1 and 2 present a multivariate perspective of the operational procedure for the distribution of positions of power in the Mozambican Assembly.

In Table 5, the significant impacts and their levels are represented by an asterisk. A positive figure in regression beta coefficients suggests that the distribution of positions of power increase as levels of formal education, membership retention, professional, managerial or white-collar occupational status, and government experience increase. On the other hand, a negative number suggests that it decreases as manual labor increases.

36. The dependent variable—distribution of positions of power—was coded as follows: 1 = rank-and-file member; 2 = deputy caucus leader, caucus rapporteur, committee chair, committee rapporteur, or standing committee member; 3 = speaker, deputy speaker, caucus leader, or steering committee member. The independent variables membership stability (that is, membership retention in the Fifth and Sixth legislatures) were coded as follows: 1 = retention and 0 = turnover. Political skill variables were coded as follows: For education, 0 = no formal education, 2 = primary, 3 = secondary, and 4 = university. For occupational status, two dummy variables were created: professional, managerial, or white collar, coded 1, and the rest coded 0; for the other one, manual workers were coded 1 and the rest 0. Political experience variables were coded as 1 when the MP had experience before joining parliament and 0 when the member had no experience.
The standardized regression coefficients for formal education and membership retentions are statistically significant, suggesting that these factors make a difference in the distribution of positions of power. This suggests that the method of distribution is driven primarily by the levels of formal education of legislators and secondarily by whether someone has served in previous legislatures. Better-educated legislators, followed by those with substantive tenure in office—that is, with some sort of seniority—are more likely to be selected for positions of power. The last finding confirms the earlier finding that leadership position appointments are mainly based on selection from within the organization of members that have substantial tenure in office as leaders. This means that unilateral entry tends to make it difficult to occupy leadership positions.\(^{37}\)

While Model 1, which includes all independent variables considered in this study, contributes to roughly 18 percent of the explained variance for the distribution of positions of power, Model 2 omits considerations that are statistically insignificant, thus producing a more accurate explanatory variance (i.e., adjusted R square) and a more parsimonious model.\(^{38}\) Model 2 explains about 17 percent of variance for the distribution of positions. The strengths of the effect of education and retention before the Fifth legislature increased in the more accurate and parsimonious model.

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\(^{37}\) Polsby, ‘Institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives’.

CONCLUSION

This study investigating legislative development from an institutionalization perspective reveals that the Mozambican Assembly tends to be relatively institutionalized in regard to two out of the three measures of institutionalization employed. By one measure, the Assembly is not moving toward greater institutionalization. That is, membership tends to be unstable, turnover frequent, and entry of outsiders is relatively easy. By the other two measures, however, the Assembly appears to be moving toward greater institutionalization. Leaders typically are selected from within the organization after having established substantial tenure in office in leadership position. In investigating factors in deciding who receives highly placed or lower parliamentary positions of power, this study found that particularistic, or discretionary, methods tend not to be followed. It found that the distribution of positions of power is driven by legislators’ political capital, in particular their formal education, and seniority. In other words, rather than choosing members to leadership roles based on favoritism or nepotism, the Assembly selects those members with a level of formal education and who have served in the Assembly for at least one term.

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings of this study, the method of distribution of positions of power can be used to classify the levels of institutionalization of the legislatures being compared. The four categories of legislatures are institutionalized, amateur, relatively better educated, and membership stability. At one extreme, the top right of Figure 1, one would find an ‘institutionalized legislature’, which is distinguished by having members who are relatively better educated and have substantial tenure in office. At the opposite extreme, the bottom left, would be a so-called amateur legislature, characterized by poorly educated legislators and unstable membership. Such members would not be sufficiently educated to read or understand the policies they might review, monitor, or evaluate. As a consequence, they may perform poorly in their representation role, if one assumes that legislatures and legislators perform policy-making and oversight functions to better represent their constituents and constituencies. As ‘apprentices’, they take longer to understand the legislative process as well as their responsibilities as legislators.

Between the institutionalized legislature and the amateur legislature is the membership stability legislature, which would appear at the top left of Figure 1, and the relatively better-educated legislature, at the bottom right. The former is distinguished by members with substantive tenure in the Assembly, but poor educations. The latter is characterized by relatively better-educated members, but their membership is unstable. Turnover among them is frequent, and their entry relatively easy.

The last type of legislature resembles the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth legislatures assessed in this study. All had low levels of institutionalization, but they tended to be moving toward institutionalization in two of three indicators. Of the three legislatures, the Fourth had the lowest level of institutionalization, because as the first democratic legislature, all its members were first-time officeholders, or ‘apprentices’. While the retention of the Fifth Assembly (41.9 percent) was greater than the Sixth (19.6 percent), retention in the Sixth (41.6 percent) from the Fourth legislature was almost equal to the Fourth to the Fifth (41.9 percent). This suggests that the Fifth and Sixth legislatures were almost at the same level of institutionalization.
In addition to the above indicators, the concept of legislative institutionalization also involves the extent to which an organization enjoys institutional or managerial autonomy and the distinctness of the party machinery within the legislature as opposed to outside it. \(^{39}\) Legislative institutions have independence when they are able to organize their internal workings, approve their own budgets without outside interference, have uncontested authority to pass laws, and can hold the executive accountable. They have enhanced autonomy when, for instance, the party machinery in the legislature is more independent than that outside it. Thus, further investigations in Mozambique should include these aspects to create a more representative picture of its legislative institutionalization. Also, comparative studies are needed to monitor and evaluate trends longitudinally, including future legislatures as well as other African legislatures.

If the Mozambican Assembly is to move forward with the process of institutionalization, it must continue to adhere to the norms of recruiting leaders with substantial tenure in office as well as distributing positions of power based on political capital and seniority. It should also provide more opportunities to a larger number of its members. The Assembly may, therefore, need to consider providing more incentives or benefits to rank-and-file members, for example, providing them with office space, administrative and research staff, and other legislative resources and perquisites.

\(^{39}\) On autonomy, see Rosenthal, ‘State legislative development’; on party machinery, see Squire, ‘Theory of legislative institutionalization and the California assembly’, and Hibbing, ‘Legislative careers’.

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**Figure 1**

**Levels of Institutionalization of Mozambican Legislatures (percentage)**

Note: Formal education includes reported secondary and tertiary education. Membership stability refers to retention from the previous legislature. An ‘institutionalized legislature’ would appear at the top right of the figure; an ‘amateur legislature’ at the bottom left; a ‘relatively better educated legislature’ at the bottom right; and a ‘membership stability legislature’ at the top left.
Power Sharing and Political Inclusion in Post-Accord Democracies: Lessons from Zimbabwe and Kenya

Jephias Mapuva and Alex Kamwarra

Power sharing and political inclusion have long been espoused as solutions for states where ethnic, religious, or racial divides threaten to undermine a democratic transition. This type of resolution is designed to provide all parties and social groups a voice in decision-making processes, ameliorating the effects of the winner-take-all nature of some electoral competition. While the potential benefits of such an approach have been acknowledged, concerns remain that it is merely a stopgap device toward violent conflict rather than a lasting political resolution. The power-sharing and political inclusion agreements adopted in Zimbabwe and Kenya in 2008 offer lessons on the potential effects of such initiatives on democratic transitions and governance, and in some respects, the tragedy of democracies in Africa, where a number of conflict situations emanate from election impasses.

Although democracy builds on the notion of free political competition and uncertain electoral outcomes, power sharing reduces uncertainty by ensuring political power for certain groups. On the other hand, the practice of power sharing presents challenges to the different parties involved. Questions have been raised as to whether power sharing and political inclusion are the best options in the context of flawed elections. Power-sharing institutions have many important consequences, notably facilitating accommodation and cooperation among leadership elites, making them most suitable for states struggling to achieve stable democracy and good governance.


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in divided societies.\(^2\) This is the premise on which this study examines the power-sharing arrangements in Kenya and Zimbabwe instituted after the political turmoil stemming from indecisive elections held in 2007 and 2008, respectively. Kenya managed to pass the coalition phase by holding credible elections on 4 March 2013. Similarly, Zimbabwe held elections on 31 July 2013 with no major incidents of political violence as had been typical in past years.

Power sharing and political inclusion have been widely used in Africa as paths out of conflict situations resulting from flawed elections. Rwanda (1993), Somalia (1997), and Angola (2002), along with Burundi, the Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Liberia (2003) are all such examples. Although power sharing has proved to be an effective technique for conflict resolution, some countries, among them Somalia, Sudan, and Togo, have failed to achieve long-term political stability through it and do not appear to be on the path toward a credible system of multiparty politics.\(^3\)

Anna Jarstad and Desiree Nilsson, in their study on power-sharing pacts in peace accords, found no evidence for the idea that the more power sharing, the greater the likelihood of peace.\(^4\)

Power-sharing pacts, essentially ‘marriages of convenience’, have profound effects on government performance and the democratization process. In Kenya, the disputed 2007 presidential election results plunged the country into violent chaos with devastating consequences spilling into early 2008. Later in 2008, the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) resorted to repression between the first and second rounds of presidential elections as it attempted to cling to power. It took swift mediation efforts by the international community—advocating for power sharing and political inclusion through the multiparty coalitions—to stop the bloody conflicts in both countries.\(^5\)

Such initiatives bring with them inherent challenges, one of which is that power sharing and political inclusion tend to undermine government performance and whatever steps are taken toward democracy. Highlighting the situation in Zimbabwe and Kenya elucidates lessons and implications for post-accord democracies in African countries that may be considering such options today or perhaps in the future.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study is based on literary debates regarding the views, perceptions, expectations, and experiences of governments of national unity, their responsiveness to the challenges of dealing with flawed electoral processes, and such governments’ contribution to peace and democracy. It explores these issues by highlighting what followed the

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flawed elections and subsequent cobbling together of power-sharing agreements in Kenya and Zimbabwe. Explorative design was utilized in identifying the problem and reviewing the related literature. Survey design was employed for mapping the prevalence of power-sharing agreements and patterns of postelection peace, or lack thereof, following postelection violence. Descriptive design was adopted to examine the discourse among independent media sources and other observers on the aftermath of the power-sharing agreements in Kenya and Zimbabwe. Discourse analysis helped in mapping the emphases, patterns, and contradictions that stood out in the power-sharing agreements as experienced by the two countries.

The cases of Kenya and Zimbabwe were selected because of the glaring, flawed nature of their electoral processes as well as the failure of the ruling parties to convince the electorate of peaceful and flawless election. The two cases also offer insight into the changing political fortunes of the countries’ respective ruling parties and the rising popularity of multiparty democracy.

CONCEPTS OF POWER SHARING, POLITICAL INCLUSION, AND DEMOCRACY

The term power sharing refers to a particular type of political inclusion widely considered to be a satisfactory distribution of government posts among the most powerful political parties or groups. The term denotes the concept of two or more political opponents reaching a consensus to ‘bury the hatchet’ and work together in a new coalition government. In a power-sharing political system, decision making ideally takes place by consensus. All major political parties or groups in a country are included in the government and are assured influence in policymaking on sensitive issues. Power-sharing democracy is often contrasted with majoritarian, winner-take-all democracy in which the losers of elections must wait out of power in loyal opposition for a later chance to replace the government of the day.

Political inclusion is defined here as an integrative regime that seeks to build political parties or coalitions to create incentives for their leaders to be moderate on divisive political issues and to enhance the influence of all parties in decision making. The elements of political inclusion include electoral systems that encourage pre-election pacts across party lines, non-partisan federalism that diffuses points of power, and public policies that promote political allegiances that transcend parties.

Democracy references a system by which conflicts in a society are allowed to find expression and be managed in a sustainable way via such institutional outlets as political parties and representative legislatures, rather than suppressed or ignored. It is a

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9. Ibid., 476.
system for managing and processing, rather than resolving conflicts.\(^\text{10}\) Democracy is based on a common conception and adherence to the rule of law, which protects political actors and the broader civil society.

The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) states that any refusal by an incumbent government to relinquish power to the winning party or candidate after free, fair, and regular elections constitutes an unacceptable regime or government.\(^\text{11}\) In effect, this may prompt the member states of ACDEG to ‘draw appropriate sanctions’, such as curtailting trade with an offending member state.\(^\text{12}\) Power sharing and inclusion can be used as quick-fix strategies to end violent conflict related to flawed or otherwise contested elections. The reasoning behind power-sharing and political inclusion arrangements is to prevent aggrieved parties from resorting to violence to advance their interests. One such example is that of South Africa, where post-apartheid political adversaries saw greater benefits in negotiating peace and sharing power than in sustaining a status quo costly to both sides.\(^\text{13}\)

In Rwanda, however, power sharing during the 1993 transition to political decentralization collapsed and descended into genocide and a catastrophic, full-fledged civil war, largely due to the quick-fix nature of the power-sharing regime and the absence of political commitment.\(^\text{14}\)

Pressure exerted by external parties, such as the international community, to implement power-sharing arrangement is another reason countries adopt this quick-fix approach. This is sometimes accompanied by formulas and blueprints for the political structures of the arrangement to curtail postelection violence. International mediators typically seek to induce the political leaders of contending groups to accept their blueprint through a combination of diplomatic carrots and sticks, such as offering aid or threatening sanctions.\(^\text{15}\) For example, the UN Secretariat produced on 31 March 2004 a formula for a bizonal, bifederal arrangement for power sharing between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities on Cyprus. This has been backed by diplomatic initiatives pledging international assistance for the implementation of the power-sharing arrangement if the parties agree to the proposed formula instead of violently confronting each other.\(^\text{16}\) The international community has used linkages to other issues, such as membership in collective security, trade, and other organizations, to persuade African states to adopt power-sharing and political inclusion practices. The European Union has invoked such conditions in its relations with Zimbabwe and


\(^{11}\) African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, 2007, Article 23, para. 4.

\(^{12}\) Ibid.


\(^{14}\) Ibid., 37.


\(^{16}\) UN News Centre, ‘Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders agree to greater UN role in talks’, 7 July 2011.
Kenya to encourage the management of conflicts arising from their flawed elections.\textsuperscript{17} Promoting conflict-regulating strategies in this manner can culminate in power-sharing and inclusive agreements that look good on paper but fail to arrest the escalation of conflict and bring them to an end. Kenya averted further violence, although its power-sharing arrangement created fertile ground for it by opening the door to all manner of political interference, including by politicians using the forum to settle their differences, the parties turning minds against the ideas of the others regardless of their merit, and calls for mass action against others. Zimbabwe also managed to implement a power-sharing arrangement that skirted widespread violence.

BACKGROUND TO POWER SHARING IN KENYA AND ZIMBABWE

The crisis triggered by the 2007 disputed presidential election held 27 December in Kenya brought to the surface deep-seated and long-standing divisions within the society. After incumbent president Mwai Kibaki of the Party of National Unity (PNU) was declared the winner, supporters of his opponent, Raila Odinga of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), alleged that the electoral process had been flawed. This was widely confirmed by local and international observers.\textsuperscript{18}

The election threatened the very existence of Kenya as a unified country. After the announcement and the swearing in of Kibaki, opposition supporters went on a violent rampage in several parts of the country, most noticeably in Odinga's homeland and the slums of Nairobi, part of his constituency. A number of demonstrators were killed, leading to more violence directed at the police and civilians. The violence escalated to targeted, ethnic violence (as opposed to supporter protests), at first directed primarily against the Agikuyu community, of which Kibaki is a member. Those Agikuyu living outside their traditional settlement areas, especially in the Rift Valley and Nyanza Provinces, were targeted. Some of the Agikuyu also engaged in ethnic violence against groups supportive of Odinga, primarily the Luos, of which he is a member, and the Kalenjin community, especially in the Rift Valley areas surrounding Naivasha, Nakuru, and Eldoret. In the coastal city of Mombasa, rival groups took to the streets to protest the electoral manipulations and air their own grievances, though ethnic tensions played much less of a role in these protests.\textsuperscript{19}

The violence continued sporadically for several months, particularly in the Rift Valley and Nyanza provinces. Reports indicated that the casualty list grew to more than a thousand killed and tens of thousands internally displaced.\textsuperscript{20} Throughout the protests, looters struck business premises in an attempt to force the Independent Electoral Commission to release election results. Faced with a humanitarian crisis and


growing international condemnation, the two protagonists, the ruling PNU and the opposition ODM, were forced to make a political compromise negotiated by mediators led by the former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan following the failure of their own negotiation attempts.

On 28 February 2008, Kibaki and Odinga signed a power-sharing agreement called the National Accord and Reconciliation Act, which established the office of prime minister and created a power-sharing coalition government, popularly known as the government of national unity. The power-sharing protagonists also sought to deal with Agenda 4 of the act to examine and address constitutional, legal, and institutional reforms, poverty, and inequality in the country. Under the transitional power-sharing arrangement, Odinga, the opposition leader, became prime minister, while Kibaki continued to hold the presidency. The power-sharing cabinet, headed by Odinga, was sworn in in April 2008, after lengthy negotiations over its composition. The power-sharing agreement underlined that neither side could realistically govern the country without the other. Therefore, power sharing became the best alternative for moving the country forward and beginning the healing and reconciliation process.

After years of flawed elections, the situation in Zimbabwe came to a head in 2008, when closely contested elections saw the former opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) winning against a backdrop of unprecedented levels of politically motivated violence perpetrated by youth militias, war vets, and other rogue elements sympathetic to ZANU-PF. Military elements and other state security agents were also drawn into the furor, leading to causalities, mostly thought to be anti-ZANU-PF. The partisan nature of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, which withheld election results, exacerbated the situation, fueling anxiety among the increasingly restless population and the international community. Tensions then degenerated into lawlessness as marauding youths and the military went about intimidating, beating, and murdering people, resulting in a near–civil war atmosphere.

Preventing Zimbabwe from sliding into chaos required the mediation efforts of South African president Thabo Mbeki to help cobble together a government of national unity. The result was the signing of a power-sharing agreement between the contesting political parties. The new government inherited a deeply scarred nation whose economy had ground to a halt and whose social services were not functioning. Public confidence had been shattered. It was with these enormous challenges that the inclusive government set about rebuilding the social, political, and economic fabric of Zimbabwe. Significant achievements included the dollarization of the economy (and elimination of the multi-currency system stemming from the black market) and the return of relative peace and stability (although pockets of politically motivated vio-
Basic commodities that had disappeared from the shops were once again available, and ZANU-PF and the two MDC factions of Morgan Tsvangirai and Arthur Mutambara held continuous talks to iron out political differences. The disappearance of long queues for fuel and scarce commodities represented a manifestation of the initial successes of the unity government. Regardless, ZANU-PF hardliners continued to challenge for the old dispensation, under which they had enjoyed the fruits of corruption, bad governance, and lawlessness.

**POWER SHARING TO PROMOTE PEACE**

With a power-sharing agreement signed, Kenyans expected the two leaders of the PNU and ODM coalition to ensure that the country avoid plunging into a vicious cycle of violence. The partners committed themselves to working together in good faith through constant consultation and willingness to compromise. The National Accord and Reconciliation Act was crafted to create an environment conducive to such a partnership and to build mutual trust and confidence. Under the act’s Agenda 4, parties to the mediation made a commitment to take on long-term constitutional, legal, and institutional reforms to address the root causes of the conflict. The winner-take-all provision of the Kenyan constitution left losing political parties without a say in the governance of the country. The same was true in the case of Zimbabwe. Both ruling coalitions thus sought, among other things, to draft new constitutional provisions to enable non-victorious political players to have a voice in governance.

At the first anniversary of coalition government in Kenya, there were clear signs the government was swaying in the winds of suspicion and distrust. The people of Kenya began referring to the coalition as *nusu mkate* (half a loaf of bread) government, an expression attributed originally to Odinga, who also complained openly about being undermined by the provincial administration. In a now famous incident in Kwale County, Odinga referred to the *nusu mkake* (half-carpet) reception rolled out for him, exemplifying the ODM being short-changed in the power-sharing deal. Following the incident, the ODM continued to push with fresh demands. Top among them was that state operatives recognize the prime minister as co-principal and that he assumes the position of leader of government business in Parliament, at the time held by the vice president. Meanwhile, residents of the western region felt that public appointments were skewed in favor of the central region and that beneath the veneer of a democratic rule, the hardliners in government were returning Kenya to the draconian rule experienced under former president Daniel arap Moi’s regime.

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27. ‘Stability returns to Zimbabwe’.


In Zimbabwe, the wheels of the new government were set in motion on 11 February 2009, when MDC leader Tsvangirai was inaugurated as executive prime minister. Two months down the line, however, the arrangement continued to face an avalanche of challenges, including resistance from the ZANU-PF hardliners, some of whom have accused President Robert Mugabe of letting them down by agreeing to join the unity government. Some of the resistance to the prime minister undermined the good functioning of the new administration, while confidence among key political actors remained weak. This created additional problems for the ruling coalition, which was dogged by disagreement at every level of governance.

In Kenya, Odinga’s position as prime minister required that he supervise all government ministries to ensure efficient and effective delivery of public services. The government he oversaw became involved in huge corruption scandals, particularly in ministries led by members from his party. Any effort by local and international media to hold some individuals responsible was met with the argument by Odinga that he controlled only half the government. Further efforts to hold him accountable for the half of the government that he controlled were met with the argument and excuses that bureaucracy made his genuine effort to improve delivery of services very difficult.

Critics of the nusu mkate government thought that the ODM leadership was naive or too myopic to see that they were being cheated by the PNU. Some ODM members wanted a rerun of the election, while others wanted to go to court and hold a parallel swearing-in ceremony to install Odinga as president. Yet others were of the view that as long as they got something in the government, then ending the violence was paramount. Does the concept of the nusu mkate explain why, since 2007, Kenya did not experience the massive violence and coups d’état that ravaged many countries in Africa? In other words, does the tendency, as among some ODM members, to go for half a loaf instead of the whole loaf of bread explain how the Kenyan political elite in general has succeeded in quelling violence among their supporters?

In Zimbabwe, critics of unity government referred to it as a “government of national impunity.” The initiative was a quick-fix strategy, with selfish motives for survival but no solutions (or even perhaps desire) to deal with the problems facing ordinary Zimbabweans. Some have also expressed the view that the unity government led to further economic collapse, exacerbated repression of civil society and the opposition, and increased hunger and the death rate for Zimbabweans.

Every general election in Kenya and Zimbabwe has had its issues, though not as serious as those witnessed in 2007 and 2008, respectively. The small-scale ethnic cleansing and controlled mini-massacres in the Rift Valley and Mombasa in Kenya represented political machinations by the political class to consolidate its power. The politicians behind these clashes considered these acts of violence as “necessary” for their and their party’s ascendancy to power. Does power sharing posit that the end justifies the means; that it is more important to be at the political dinner table than to

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be totally absent from it? Scholars of conflict management tended to view power sharing as a tool for short-term peace. The Kenyan and Zimbabwean cases demonstrate, however, that power sharing can be a source of instability and ineffective governance. Such arrangements demand tolerance on the part of political opponents, although disagreements cannot be ruled out. The two cases further demonstrate that even when political power-sharing pacts are implemented after violence, they are still poor tools for lasting peace and political stability, potentially offering only a temporary reprieve.

NEW CONSTITUTIONS AND POST–NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENTS

On 4 August 2010, Kenyans approved a new constitution in a national referendum, with a majority of voters in support of it.33 The constitution stated that the country would hold general elections in March 2013. Kenya would continue to be a republic, with power divided among three branches of government: the executive, under the leadership of a president, deputy president, and cabinet; a bicameral legislature consisting of a forty-seven-member upper house (Senate) and a two hundred ninety-member lower house (National Assembly); and a judiciary, consisting of a Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Judiciary Service Commission, and attorney-general. The general intent of the constitution was to reduce the power of the president, devolve power and resources to the forty-seven county governments, and hold parties more accountable for their actions. New voting regulations required the president to win more than half the national vote and at least 25 percent of the vote in twenty-four of the forty-seven newly established counties. If no candidate is able to obtain a majority, voting continues to a second round.

The first general elections under the new constitution were held on 4 March 2013, after one of the most bruising campaigns in the nation’s history because each contesting political party wanted to show that in 2007 it had been short-changed and was the legitimate ruling party. As many had predicted, the election was close due to the seriousness with which the contesting parties campaigned for votes.34 The violence of the 2007 elections resulted in four prominent politicians being charged with crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court (ICC), including Uhuru Kenyatta, one of the leading contestants in the 2013 elections, and his running mate, William Ruto, of the Jubilee Coalition Party. This is perhaps one reason the 2013 ballot was one of the most closely watched in sub-Saharan Africa since the post-apartheid 1994 elections in South Africa.35

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) formed under the new constitution, was responsible for conducting a free and fair election and institutionalizing a sustainable election process. These elections were Kenya’s most complex, with voters casting ballots for candidates at the national and local levels, including for

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The final results showed that Kenyatta, son of Kenya’s first president, won by garnering 6,173,433 votes (50.07 percent) to Odinga’s 5,340,546 (43.3 percent). More than 12.3 million votes were cast, representing a record turnout of 86 percent of registered voters. After the IEBC declared Kenyatta the president-elect, most people expected that Odinga would send him a congratulatory message and then deliver a concession speech. Odinga, however, rejected the results and vowed to take the matter to court, describing the process as ‘tainted’. He alleged that the IEBC had presided over multiple technological failures that cast doubt on the validity of the results, thus putting Kenya’s democracy on trial. He petitioned the election results in the Supreme Court while calling for calm as Kenyans awaited the outcome. The court ultimately declared the elections free and fair and Kenyatta the victor. He was sworn in as the fourth president of the Republic of Kenya on 9 April 2013. One matter of concern is that Odinga concluded that the process was flawed only after having lost the vote. He noted that the IEBC had presided over multiple technological failures that cast doubt on the validity of the results. One must, however, wonder whether Odinga would have declared the process as flawed and gone to court had he won the election. In this light, his court challenge can be construed as a face-saving venture rather than a legitimate complaint warranting the court’s attention.

In Zimbabwe, a referendum on a new constitution held 16 March 2013 was the first step toward the resolution of that political impasse that had led to the February 2009 formation of a national unity government as a transformational process. Unlike previous elections in Zimbabwe, this referendum was held without significant political violence, because the different political parties agreed that the adoption of the Constitutional Parliamentary Committee (COPAC)’s constitutional draft was necessary as a step toward general elections held on 31 July.

The end of June 2013 was a defining moment for Zimbabwe, as the term of the unity government came to an end, leaving the country to be governed by the cabinet. This meant that President Mugabe was officially in charge of the entire country, with parliament having been dissolved and ministers relieved of their portfolios. After disagreements on when to hold elections, balloting was eventually conducted on 31 July 2013, after President Mugabe unilaterally decided on that date despite a South Africa Development Community (SADC) summit having expressed the view that it did not leave room for the outstanding constitutional, electoral, media, and security sector reforms to be implemented by the coalition partners. The summit instead suggested an extension of two weeks, which would have meant leaving the country at the mercy of Mugabe for close to two months.

Given, however, that various political parties in Zimbabwe had shown resounding support for the COPAC constitution, the climate was ripe for elections. Pursuant to the commitment by SADC, the African Union, and the United Nations as guarantors in the resolution of the political crisis that gave rise to the unity government, it remained to be seen whether these institutions had the clout to assert their authority by

ensuring that the winner of the elections assume administration of the country. It was also an unknown as to whether the SADC was capable of implementing one of its instruments, prohibiting coups, within the framework of the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation and the Mutual Defence Pact.  

It was important for Zimbabwe to take note from the Kenyan experience that the forthcoming elections might generate cut-throat competition between contesting parties for political hegemony. Each party would likely pull out all the stops to win the election. The electorate and politicians alike were, naturally, aware of the decisive nature of the forthcoming elections. What had made most Zimbabweans hold their breath at the prospects of elections was the controversial and indecisive as well as disputed nature of most elections that the country had held since attaining independence in 1980. This is what happened to Kenya when the parliamentary Coalition for Reform and Democracy (CORD) challenged the presidential election results, alleging that the electoral process was flawed. Towards election time in Zimbabwe, all signs pointed to the possibility of yet another unity government, as the MDC and ZANU-PF appeared content with the power-sharing arrangement through which the latter found legitimacy in the eyes of the international community, and the former got a taste of power as part of the government. To both political parties, that political arrangement seemed to augur well, and given the chance, might have been welcomed to continue. There were predictions, however, that the MDC was going to win if it formed a coalition with its splinter factions, namely, the MDC-M (so-called after its leader, Mutambara) and other smaller political parties against ZANU-PF.

The experience of Kenya could have provided a cautionary tale for the MDC formations not to be too confident going into the July elections. In Kenya, Odinga and Ruto had supported each other during most of the unity government, especially during the constitution-making process. On the eve of the elections, however, the two parted ways, resulting in Ruto aligning with Kenyatta. Had Odinga stuck with Ruto, the current deputy president could have helped Odinga secure victory. Odinga going it alone cost him the more than 2 million votes garnered by Ruto. With regards to Zimbabwe, it would have been beneficial for Tsvangirai of the main MDC faction to think along the lines of forming a broad alliance or coalition with other political parties to collectively stand against Mugabe’s ZANU-PF.

On the surface, although the MDC-T might seem to have had a large and solid following, anything can happen in an election. In the case of Kenya, not many people would have predicted that Kenyatta could beat Odinga, especially given the political and ethnic violence that had tainted Kenyatta’s name. It might be that Odinga’s defeat can be attributed to Ruto’s change of heart or the writing was already on the wall. Equally so, the MDC formations should have proceeded with caution because the

37. See Article 11(2) b)(ii).
electoral ground in Zimbabwe had proved to be slippery enough to overturn tables. The different political parties would have benefited therefore by merging their forces against the formidable (and often crafty) ZANU-PF, whose mastery in skewed electoral processes is unprecedented as evidenced by the various disputed electoral results over the years, especially during the 1990s.

LESSONS FOR POST-ACCORD SOCIETIES

While Zimbabwe’s and Kenya’s experiences with power sharing and political inclusion have been relatively brief, some preliminary lessons can be drawn. First, although there is no single, transportable model of power sharing and political inclusion, there is a broad menu of public policies, institutions, and mechanisms to promote democracy in countries with deep-rooted identity conflicts. The actual model of power sharing seems to be less important than the extent to which the agreement to create it and political inclusion is the result of good-faith bargaining and negotiations among the contending social forces. The negotiation process itself must be inclusive and legitimate, without tinctures of coercion or threats.

Second, power-sharing systems work best when they are a temporary measure to build confidence until more customary sometimes win, sometimes lose democracy can be embraced. This is the course that Kenya has taken. Its new constitution is much more majoritarian, while minority rights are closely guarded.

Third, the power-sharing and political inclusion pacts in Kenya and Zimbabwe offer a cautionary tale because they serve as substitutes for political liberalization rather than engines for it. Elections become arbitrary bargaining processes where the rules of the game can be renegotiated to determine the winners and losers. This might occur in a situation where a party, when it senses defeat, can decide to manipulate the outcome of the poll so the incumbent can stay in power. In such a case, all the contestants might have an incentive to sabotage an election as insurance against losing it. This is what Nelson Banya refers to as a ‘dent on democracy’, which could become fashionable in Africa. It is crucial to understand that the whole concept of power sharing and inclusiveness contradicts the very essence of elections, whose sole aim is to give the winner the opportunity to govern the country, and the losers to successfully join forces in cooperation.

Fourth, power-sharing agreements are cumbersome arrangements for conducting government business. James Hamill has portrayed the agreements as initiatives based upon a straightforward denial of the popular will. There is some truth to this perspective, given that some of the people destined to govern are those who lost the election. In Kenya, power sharing and political inclusion have been attributed to slow policy formation since the partners felt that the deal would terminate with the adoption of

constitutional reforms. In Zimbabwe, a threat on 13 April 2009 by the minister of information and communication to resign over actions by President Mugabe to usurp the minister’s powers is also a case that challenges the suitability of power-sharing agreements. In addition, borrowing, inflation, and deficit spending became rampant in both Zimbabwe and Kenya. Bloated cabinets siphoned off more government funds, because everyone with influential portfolios in the various political parties sought to be included in the government. This had nothing to do with improving government performance or efficiency. In fact, the Africa Centre for Open Government noted that Kenya’s ministers were among the highest paid in the world and that many of the ministerial portfolios were pointless.

If the Kenya and Zimbabwe experiences are any indication, power-sharing agreements can provide breathing space for feuding political parties, during which time alternative means of resolving a political impasse can be sought. Although the Kenyan agreement, which lasted from 2008 to 2013 without major incidents of political unrest, was successful, in Zimbabwe, hate speech and intimidation of MDC supporters, including general selective application of the law against them, have characterized the political environment. In both cases, it can therefore be said that although the power-sharing arrangement may not have been perfect or the best option, it at least provided breathing room for the feuding political parties to regroup and adopt new strategies for electoral competition. It should be noted that there is no standard or normative framework for the successful implementation of a power-sharing formation. It cannot be said with certainty that unity governments are or are not the best option, because the political background and political environments of each country are unique.

Fifth, Kenya is an example of a power-sharing government failing to get enough guarantees from the disputing parties to proceed against crucial aspects of the crisis. The negotiated introduction of constitutional reforms to address important issues did not deliver on outstanding reforms. In contrast, the Kenyan experience provided for limited intervention by the international community and civil society to play a watchdog role. The international community and much of the usually vociferous civil society (save for the donor community) did not take much of a proactive role in Kenya, but remained on the terraces while local political players and the people tussled with their political challenges. Many Kenyans placed their hopes in increased donor pressure on the grand coalition government to deliver on constitutional reforms. The heightened pressure from the donor community yielded positive results as indicated by renewed initiatives to pursue constitutional reforms zealously in spite of uncertainties associated with the new constitution.

Sixth, power-sharing agreements can lead to paralysis of democracy as most political actors are more interested in preparing for the next election than in introducing the much-needed reforms envisaged in mediation. In Kenya and Zimbabwe, there have been accusations of sabotage from elements within the coalitions. A case in point

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is the resignation on 6 April 2009 of the minister of constitutional affairs from the
government in Kenya.\footnote{H. Amadi, ‘Kenya’s grand coalition government: Another obstacle to urgent constitutional reform?’ \textit{Africa Spectrum}, 44:3 (2009), 149–64.} In Zimbabwe, the April 2009 threat by the minister of informa-
tion and communication exposed the fragility of the ruling coalition and the sur-

vival of the unity government. Events in Kenya and Zimbabwe demonstrate that
governments of national unity can at times work, but also present challenges. Success
depends on the political environments in a country, which can either exacerbate attri-
tion and political acrimony as in the case of Zimbabwe or result in cohesion as in the
Kenyan case.

Seventh, government of national unity affords opposition political parties the
chance to be in government and grasp how governmental affairs are conducted. It also
enables political parties to understand that politics is not simply about making irre-
sponsible political statements about what might have been, but about how public
policy should be implemented. In the cases of Kenya and Zimbabwe, Odinga and
Tsvangirai’s parties have experienced what it is like to be in power, albeit in a transi-
tional arrangement.

\section*{CONCLUSION}

Although power sharing and inclusiveness are interim transitional processes, the pre-
cedents set in Zimbabwe and Kenya are encouraging. Although the coalition govern-
ment in Kenya registered remarkable progress, it was inundated with disaffection and
dissatisfaction among some partners. In Zimbabwe the coalition government man-
aged to quell the violence and pave the way for voting on a new constitution and
holding fairly peaceful general elections, as planned. The bickering by political leaders,
however, highlighted the weakness of the power-sharing deal.

Power sharing and political inclusion undermine competitive elements of democ-
ratization, disrupt vertical relationships established through voting, and impede the
ability to determine responsibility and therefore hold politicians accountable for their
performance. In addition, they can push a government to commit to unsustainable
budgets and to formulate policy through cumbersome institutions conducive to grid-
lock. In general, the postelection pacts in Zimbabwe and Kenya undermined the
democratic progress because the losers were able to change the rules when they did
not like the outcome. Those advocating power sharing and political inclusion should
take a cue from events in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere where the postelectoral
power-sharing arrangement has been marked by failure.

Although power sharing is a poor device for promoting peace, there is little evi-
dence as to what extent other types of arrangements would better solve conflicts over
political power. There are two major principles for instating just democracy and du-
rable peace without plunging a state into civil war and military coups. The contending
parties decide to share political power or an elected majority governs alone. The cases
of Kenya and Zimbabwe illustrate how power sharing is a school in democracy that
serves to socialize political opponents into compromises and moderation for a short
period of time.
Despite its popularity in some African countries and among incumbent political leaders who lose elections, power sharing seldom solves all the issues being contested. Kenya and Zimbabwe continued to experience political instability, with accusations and counteraccusations of unity government inefficiency coupled with polarization between the parties involved. In short, power sharing is a constraint on peace and democracy, thus rendering power-sharing agreements unsuitable as efficient alternatives in moving unstable states toward peace and democracy.
Zimbabwean Army Deserters in South Africa: Military Bonding and Survival

Godfrey Maringira, Annemiek Richters, and Diana Gibson

Accounts of Zimbabwe’s political crisis have mostly presented soldiers in the army as defenders of President Robert Mugabe’s regime without any mention of the regime’s victimization of its own soldiers. To escape further victimization many of these soldiers deserted and migrated to South Africa. In exile, their military bonds remain a significant aspect of their lives. This article explores how Zimbabwean army deserters in South Africa deal with their past and survive in exile. The exploration is based on qualitative research using life histories, focus group discussions, informal conversations, and observation. It was found that the thirty-nine army deserters surveyed formed the equivalent of a ‘military unit’, albeit in exile, to manage their pasts, maintain their sense of dignity, and lobby for political amnesty from the Zimbabwean government.

I was forced to leave the army. I didn’t quit the army properly because there was no more army. When I joined the army I felt proud to be in combat. But politics took my career away and turned me into a deserter. Because we were seen as supporters of the opposition political party, we were victimized. Why did others remain? Because they are cowards, they are devoid of reasoning.

— Alpha Romeo (pseud.)

The anger and frustration of Alpha Romeo, a soldier who deserted the Zimbabwean army during the post-2000 political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe, are representative of the feelings of other soldiers who abscended from the same army. For them, the crisis in Zimbabwe shattered their careers. While living in exile, these deserters maintained a social and political bond that is military in nature. What, however, does this bond mean to them? How do they keep it alive? How does it support them in their daily existence and their struggle to survive and to live meaningful lives in another country?

Much of what is known about former soldiers in postcolonial Africa has been generated in studies conducted in the context of disarmament, demobilization, and rein-
tegration (DDR) interventions, which, as indicated by the concept’s name, promotes disarming, formal retrenchment, and provision of financial packages to facilitate ex-combatants’ reintegration into civilian life. Such programs target combatants who formally leave the army after a cease-fire and peace agreements, but overlook soldiers who desert.

There is little in the literature on support provided for African deserters or the meaning they give to their experiences of desertion. The only approximate account is that by Jocelyn Alexander, who studied soldiers who deserted the Zimbabwe National Army in 1982. What differentiates Alexander’s study participants from more recent deserters living in South Africa today is that the 1982 soldiers were initially liberation war fighters from the Zimbabwe Peoples’ Revolutionary Army, led by Joshua Nkomo. After integration into the new Zimbabwe National Army, they were motivated to desert by ethnicity-based political tensions in the military and the country at-large. Most of them were Ndebele speakers. Long before and after their desertions, their relations with the government had deteriorated, and their political leaders, among them, Dumiso Dabengwa and Lookout Masuku, had been jailed. These deserters were considered ‘dissidents’, because they took up arms immediately and waged a war against the government of President Robert Mugabe that same year.1

Apart from Alexander’s study, there has not been any other account that explores the experiences of disillusioned Zimbabwean soldiers who left the army. The reasons of those who fled to South Africa as well as the lives they have created in their host country have thus far remained unexamined, but are important to understand so that interventions to support them can be tailored to their needs.

**SOLDIERS AS PERPETRATORS AND VICTIMS**

The participants in this study joined the Zimbabwe National Army between 1986 and 2002, when the government embarked on a mass recruitment of soldiers from 1986 to 1992 to help support the Mozambican government against the rebel Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo). Subsequently, between 1998 and 2002, the Zimbabwean army recruited soldiers to support the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in a war against a rebel group backed by the Rwandan and Ugandan armies. In 2003, after the cessation of the war, Zimbabwean troops returned to their barracks, where they were used in internal deployments. Political controversy and tensions arose between soldiers and the civilian population at this time, primarily because of military violence committed during these domestic operations.2

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The politicization of the Zimbabwean military and militarization of politics began after independence in 1980. Every political action undertaken by the state was in support of President Mugabe and his ruling Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF). As part of what Terence Ranger calls Mugabe-ism, soldiers were deployed in rural and urban areas, for instance during the government’s land reform programs and during election periods. Brian Raftopoulos contends that most of the political violence against civilians was carried out by the Joint Operation Command of the armed forces. Although it once advocated tolerance, ZANU-PF began to approach elections as ‘battles’, and political opponents were viewed as enemies to be annihilated rather than as ideological rivals. In the process, ZANU-PF used the army to intimidate civilians who were considered sell-outs, allegedly subscribing to American and other western ideologies. Ranger refers to this as ‘patriotic history’, which emphasizes ‘the division of the nation not only into races but also into “patriots” and “sell-outs” among [the] African population’. It is in particular the celebrations of Mugabe as the ‘godfather’ of Zimbabwe’s liberation that ‘create and propagate patriotic history’. This strategy can be traced to the 1970s liberation war and political violence immediately after independence, from 1980 to 1985.

Post-2000, the country’s ongoing political violence and economic decline profoundly affected troops in the barracks. Soldiers returning from the DRC did so at a time when Zimbabwe was gravitating toward a triple crisis manifested at the social, economic, and political levels. Many became frustrated with the continued political use of the army, as well as with the hyperinflation that made their salaries last no longer than a day. Jeremy Jones described the Zimbabwean economy at the time as kukiya-kiya, meaning that people were forced to use makeshift strategies to eke out a living. By November 2008, the hyperinflation index rate was close to ninety sextillion

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6. Ibid.; Muzondidya, ‘From buoyancy to crisis’.
percent (sextillion equals 1 followed by 21 zeros). Cash transactions were virtually impossible to make, and the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange stopped trading. President Mugabe tried to control inflation using what Tendai Biti, the current minister of finance, called *ginyanomics* (use of force), namely, arresting industry and commerce leaders and placing price-control monitors in shops. By February 2009, immediately before the Zimbabwean dollar was replaced by the U.S. dollar, an egg cost two trillion Zimbabwean dollars and the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe had printed a single hundred trillion (zim dollar) note. Faced with such an economic crisis and severe political victimization in the barracks, a number of soldiers decided to try to end their contracts or simply deserted and sought refuge in South Africa.

Some of participants in this study explicitly stated that they had deserted the army because of an increase in the persecution and indefinite detention of troops by the Zimbabwe Military Police (ZMP), the Special Investigation Branch (SIB), and Zimbabwe Military Intelligence (ZMI) on suspicion that they supported the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), led by Morgan Tsvangirai. All the deserters interviewed concurred that they had gone absent without leave (AWOL) and then crossed the border into South Africa. While there is no consensus on the exact number of deserters and those who had been able to terminate their contracts, the *Christian Science Monitor* estimated in 2007 that more than a battalion, in excess of 1,200 soldiers, had deserted and sought refuge in South Africa. The deserters were mainly Shona and Ndebele speakers, who constitute the population of this study.

The Zimbabwean deserters living in South Africa as migrants have a dilemma. Although they have faced social, economic, and political problems in their adopted country, they have not been able to return to Zimbabwe because of manhunts for deserters launched by military intelligence, in conjunction with the military police. The Mugabe government has suspected that army deserters within the army’s ranks have worked with the opposition political parties and may use their military experience to topple the regime. Captured army deserters are subjected to interrogation, torture, and indefinite detention before being court-martialed. In academic and media discussions on human rights, all Zimbabwean soldiers are lumped together and labeled as perpetrators of political violence with little attention being paid to them as victims of the government they are supposed to serve.

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15. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
In Zimbabwe, the state media have been silent about army deserters in an effort to convey the impression that ‘all is well’ within the ranks. On the other hand, former soldiers have been reluctant to disclose their military pasts to journalists and scholars doing research on immigrants in South Africa or to speak about their lives as immigrants. Accounts of Zimbabweans, largely assembled by human rights groups, have focused mainly on the experiences of civilians who migrated to South Africa or other Africa states.

Focusing on the experiences of Zimbabwean army deserters in exile allows a reinterpretation of the Zimbabwean political-economic crisis and forced migration as multifaceted, while examining deserters in particular, and soldiers in general, not only as perpetrators, but also as victims and survivors of violence. In Zimbabwe, soldiers are held up as ‘sons of the soil’—a discourse that constructs ‘true Zimbabweans’ as belonging to the Zimbabwean land—who fight for the cause of the nation and have the nationhood at heart. Remarkably, the deserters in South Africa see themselves as true Zimbabweans while legitimizing their desertion from the army and their cross-border migration.

**METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS**

The former soldiers who participated in this study all live in Johannesburg. They were selected through a snowball sampling method. The selection was facilitated by Godfrey Maringira, lead author of this article and a former soldier with experiences that resonate with the men in the sample. Maringira underwent military training in Zimbabwe and was deployed in the DRC war along with some of the men in the study. The first time Maringira met a former Zimbabwean soldier in South Africa was by chance in 2009 at Johannesburg Park station. They reminisced and shared some of their past experiences. Later Maringira asked if there were other former soldiers in the country and was given a few contact numbers. He called the men, and they met and talked and gave Maringira contact information (cellphone numbers) for other former soldiers.

Maringira’s network grew larger as he became interested in obtaining a PhD. The former soldiers expressed an interest in taking part in a study for his degree. They saw it as an opportunity to have their voices heard and for people to learn about the association they had formed as well as their plight. When Maringira told the chair and spokesperson of the association that as part of the research he would be writing articles about his findings, the chairman emphasized that Maringira must print the name of the association—The Affected Military Men of Zimbabwe Association (AMMOZA)—hence it is not a secret that the deserters have organized.18

A life history approach was used to gather data. Interviews were conducted with forty-four former soldiers: thirty-nine who had deserted and five who had been honorably discharged. This study focuses on the former. The fact that the majority of these men are in a similar situation made it relatively easy to meet with them in groups of three to five. In addition to participant observation in these groups, many informal

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conversations were held, and one formal focus group discussion was conducted. All
interviews, the focus group discussion, and informal conversations were conducted in
Johannesburg, during 2009–2013, in Chishona, IsiNdebele, or English. Interviews
were voice recorded and transcribed. Those in a local language were translated into
English. All participants were made aware that the research would be presented for
publication. It was agreed that military code names, such as Alpha Romeo, would be
used to maintain anonymity and confidentiality.

Although a life history approach was used, in many cases the former soldiers talked
primarily about their past military experiences and how they finally left the barracks to
seek refuge in South Africa. It was thus revealed that they had a common story to tell
and retell. When speaking about their wartime experiences, they tended to represent
themselves as heroes; when talking about life in exile, they emphasized their efforts to
reestablish or maintain military ties and to resist becoming civilians. An important
reason for ‘regrouping’ and maintaining bonds between them was to enable them to
lobby about their plight and for amnesty in Zimbabwe. They emphasized their willing­
ness to be reinstated in the army if granted amnesty. Maintaining their bonds also en­
abled them to deal with the emotional fallout of their wartime experiences.19

Community in Exile

The majority of respondents, like other army deserters from Zimbabwe, work and live
in Johannesburg as security guards, hotel chefs, street vendors, and truck drivers. A
few are self-employed. A small number live with their wives and children. Some share
a room with other former soldiers or live with close friends or relatives from
Zimbabwe. Apart from their personal living environment, the men have formed a
‘community in exile’ by virtue of their shared experiences. Some know each other
from their military training and subsequent deployment in the DRC war. Others were
assigned to the same battalion after training in other groupings. What they have in
common is that they are all immigrants in South Africa. Their shared experiences en­
able them to imagine each other’s lives and bind them together.

The former soldiers speak to each other about their pasts, daily events from the
here and now, and their visions of the future. The way they engage with each other
marks them as a ‘community of practice’, which is defined by social and political
boundaries that determine who is included and who is excluded.20 Based on their past
experiences and hopes for the future, the men mobilized among themselves to form
an association with the ultimate aim of presenting their case for amnesty to the
Zimbabwean government, with the hope that they might some day be able to return
to their home country. Charlie Romeo, AMMOZA’s founder, asserted, ‘Upon coming
here in South Africa I started mobilizing soldiers, organizing military men, uniting
military men, until they formed the Affected Military Men of Zimbabwe Association’.

19. Cf. Diana Gibson, ‘“The Balsak in the roof”: Bush war experiences and mediations as related by
white South African conscript’ in L. Kapteijn and A. Richters (eds.), Mediations of Violence in Africa:
Fashioning New Futures from Contested Pasts (Johannesburg, WITS University Press, 2010).
20. E. Wenger, Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity (Cambridge, Cambridge
The men view coming together in an association as the first stage for dealing with their desertion-related problems. In talking to each other, they have created an atmosphere of social intimacy among themselves in addition to sharing social resources. The talking and sharing in such an atmosphere has helped them regain dignity lost from being victimized in the barracks in Zimbabwe. Their social intimacy is strengthened by their drinking and socializing together.

The study participants portrayed being with other former soldiers as something both symbolic and material. Their companionship grounded in their wartime experiences. The men’s trust in one another and ‘hanging out’ together reinforces their need to maintain the ethos of being soldiers. In accordance, being a soldier is not only an individual matter but a collective decision as well. It is experienced in being in the company of other trained men and being part of a group of like-minded peers. The men emphasize teamwork in achieving their collective goals, a strategy commonly used in the military. Their social cohesion keeps the unit going. The former soldiers also look out for each other outside their association. Having been trained in concealment and blending in (for example, through camouflage) and to always be alert, the former soldiers have carried this conduct into public spaces, including drinking establishments. As Delta Charlie revealed,

If I go into a pub, I look for a chair and sit isolated to view the people in the pub. I will be looking for military men to check which people have been in the army. What I will be doing, I will be checking the way they move, drink, and talk. If I am convinced by my observation, . . . I will ask you what your force number was. He would reply, ‘Hey, who are you?’ I will tell him I was in so-and-so brigade. I cannot sit with you here and not see that you are a military man. If you have a conversation with a soldier, he will be referring to his experiences, like a medical doctor [who] more often than not always refers to penicillin and antibiotics [and] a teacher thinks about his chalks.

Being a soldier is reinforced through self-presentation and actions, both of which invoke the skills learned by well-trained soldiers. The former involves soldiers’ particular ways of presenting themselves, which any other soldier would recognize. The participants also accordingly act in specific ways that they conceive as soldierly. Observing and looking out for other soldiers in public spaces represent expressions of being part of a collective, as well as sensitivity toward being different from other people. The desire to physically reach out to and be alert to the presence of other soldiers reinforces the need and efforts of participants to build and maintain social networks, which typically exclude civilian immigrants. It is among their ‘in-group’ that the participants share their military experiences. They are unable to fully share their pasts with civilian migrants for fear of retaliation or revenge.

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**Soldiers versus Civilians**

As a community of practice, the former soldiers have positioned themselves specifically in opposition to civilians. They see themselves as a unique group, in which each member has experiences and memories particular to soldiers.\(^{23}\) Thus, only former soldiers can join their association. As expressed by Bravo Charlie, ‘So, as such we said, “No, gentlemen, let us now form our own organization that is totally military, no civilian, no policeman, no what[ever],” because the policeman, he has got his own way of being dealt with’.

By perceiving civilians and other categories of immigrants as people of a different social and political status, the former soldiers reinforced the boundaries of their group as a community of experience and practice. While they do occasionally tap into the networks of civilian immigrants, they continue to separate themselves as people with distinct kinds of problems. Charlie Romeo spoke about joining AMMOZA, which, as he noted, had been formed by soldiers for soldiers: ‘The motivation was that we realized that unlike the civilians, teachers, nurses, and everyone, those people, they have their problems, [they’re] not like ours. Ours is totally military. So I helped to form AMMOZA’.

The way they were socialized as military men informed the way in which the participants think of themselves as a distinct group. Charlie Romeo offered, ‘I told the civilians from the Zimbabwe Exiles Forum who asked us to join their group—because, as they said, “You guys, you are doing something different from everyone” — “Yes, we are doing something different because we are very different from you. We are soldiers with military agendas”. When one is talking in our group, all other soldiers will be listening, but civilians they just [interrupt] each other’.

The idea of former soldiers who have their own association was also driven and shaped by the men’s marginalization by civilian immigrants and human rights organizations. According to Papa Oscar, ‘You find that most organizations, they concentrate on the civilian aspect, even marginalizing the military man’. For soldiers, civilian associations are for civilians, and their problems are civilian in nature.

The perceptions and attitudes the men have toward civilians were originally embedded in them through the ideology molding their military lives.\(^{24}\) In their lives in exile, the men defined civilians as the ‘other’ in a way that Pierre Bourdieu would call symbolic domination.\(^{25}\) This is illustrated by something that India Papa said:

> Let us avoid uniting with the civilians because these people, they suffer from being infiltrated by intelligence people; they suffer from having issues that are totally different and alien to ours because as military men we have never paraded with the civilians. You will find that civilians parade all by themselves, mostly remain by themselves, so why should we now be parading with the civilians? We have nothing in common; our problems are totally different. We are a unique group, a totally unique group that requires a very specific attention, which is totally directed [at] people like us.

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India Papa used the word *infiltrated* to depict civilian weakness and the inability to deal with an enemy, unlike soldiers. This is an illustration of a tactic used by former soldiers to set themselves apart from civilians by comparing the skills or perceived qualities of soldiers to them.\(^\text{26}\) Study participants attributed to themselves the ability to ‘sniff out’ intelligence officers suspected of spying among immigrants and on their organizations in South Africa. The possibility of being infiltrated by such spies is seen somehow as a civilian problem, since soldiers have been trained in counterintelligence.

As noted, in their narratives, participants intently sought to maintain their distinction from civilians. They regard their problems as military in nature, while civilian problems are seen as rooted in non-military experiences. Civilians are thought incapable of comprehending soldiers’ past experiences.\(^\text{27}\) Such a distinction between soldiers and civilians strengthens already existing ideological differences between these groups. Seeing themselves as different from civilians fosters among the former soldiers a particular kind of identity military in nature. Having suffered similar ordeals creates a space of commonality, whereby participants draw on past experiences that continue to dwell in their psyches. India Papa emphasized hanging out together: ‘I don’t drink beer with civilians. You know I spend my leisure time with other soldiers; I am not comfortable if I spend my time with civilians. What do we talk about? I am a soldier’.

The participants also found it difficult to work with civilians, as Papa Juliet explained in regard to his first day of work at a construction company in Johannesburg:

> I could not understand working with a civilian. I felt I was being used. I never expected in my life that I would ever work with a civilian and do the same thing together with the civilian. My mind was never civilian. I find it difficult to adjust to today. I am comfortable moving in the company of military men. With them you can find me joking. I can even leave my beer with the military men because I trust that they [will not] poison me. With them I am home and dry. I know they are my men.

Working in the civilian sector is presented as individualistic, while in the army soldiers depend on operating as a collective. What also is apparent from the quote above is the idea of interdependence and trust, which are perceived as unique to soldiers. Trust and the ability to depend on each other originates from war, during which soldiers have to provide cover for each other as ‘soldiers-in-exile’. This practice and its related sentiments continue into the postcombat period. The way in which soldiers act as a collective sets them, in their opinion, apart from civilians.

The participants consciously reproduce and maintain their ‘military-ness’ through shared jokes and humor. Tango Papa proclaimed, ‘I don’t want jokes from civilians. I become angry. I want jokes from military men. If a civilian jokes about my job, I could kill him because you are touching at the heart of my life. I can justify it. A military man, if he jokes, he has his own way of joking. There is no coward in the army’.

The expression of shared military experiences through jokes and humor reinforces solidarity among the men and reaffirms boundaries between them as former soldiers.


and the other.²⁸ Tango Papa confirmed that the participants reaffirm their past in their current lives and perpetuate a military culture that constitutes them as soldiers. In the barracks, jokes and humor provided a release from the boredom and tedium that marked their daily lives.²⁹

Because the former soldiers value what they learned in the army, they perceive themselves as a distinct, competent group able to lead civilians. Alpha Romeo asserted, ‘If I get a job, I will lose that job because I don’t want to be told what to do by a civilian. I don’t think a civilian can teach me to do that and that. I believe he is not mentally capable of commanding a soldier. To me, it’s like a civilian is saying you are my person. A civilian’s power is a power of a woman. I don’t accept civilian power’. Here Alpha Romeo obviously positions himself as a soldier, contending that civilians are not capable of doing what soldiers can do. The participants’ training in the use of weapons and being familiar with weaponry reinforces their understanding of themselves as different from civilians. As Papa Whisky said, ‘We are trained in guns. We don’t know anything else’.

**Determination to Fight and Attachment to the Zimbabwean State**

All the participants indicated that their desertion had been politically motivated, rather than a simple matter of personal choice. They therefore see themselves as soldiers waiting to return to Zimbabwe, where, they hope, they will be reinstated in the army once the political situation changes. They are ready to fight to achieve what they desire. Charlie Romeo said, ‘Personally, . . . I’m sorry to say this, but I could have gone to any length if there were people ready to assist. I could have gone to any type of fighting, any type of fighting because my life had been destroyed over politics’. Being a soldier is, of course, closely associated with fighting. The men believe that their grievances and concerns are not being attended to by the government, hence, for them, fighting is the ultimate and alternative solution for dealing with their predicament. Fighting for change is borne out by their testimonies and reflects soldiers as fighters.

The army trains soldiers to be professionals at violence.³⁰ As John Hockey argues, ‘Fighting practices are initially demanded by the military instructors and subsequently maintained by the soldiers themselves.’³¹ For Alpha Bravo, fighting is the only way for him to possibly regain what he has lost—his career. It would appear that the idea of fighting the government is borne out of frustration and the condition of exile rather than planned thought and action.³²

Apart from having participated in wars and seeing themselves as soldiers for life, the participants also regard themselves as ‘true Zimbabweans’. As Oscar Papa said, ‘I only salute the Zimbabwean flag. I pledged my military service in and outside

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²⁸. Ben-Ari and Sion, ‘‘Hungry, weary and horny’’.
²⁹. Ibid.
Zimbabwe. I don’t salute the South African flag. Like many soldiers around the world, there is a connection between military service and citizenship that creates an attachment and a right to belong to the state. The participants represented themselves as good and disciplined citizens. 33 Tango Papa offered,

I never live outside my life. I never told people that I am living with the teacher I once was, inside me. The moment I talk to them, I tell them that I am a soldier. I make sure lines are drawn, so that you know you are talking to a person who carries the country, the national flag on his shoulder; that you are talking to a person who has distinguished himself in a certain area. Even though I deserted the army, I still owe my salute to a democratic Zimbabwean flag, and when I salute, the Zimbabwean flag salutes back. None will take away this soldier in me.

For Tango Papa, being a soldier is his life. It is something that exists within him. He draws a boundary between himself and civilians and represents other migrants as people who do not ‘carry the country . . . on their shoulder’. Unlike soldiers, other immigrants, in their eyes, do not show or feel an allegiance to Zimbabwe as a country or a nation. For the study participants, the flag in its materiality represents the state that they have sworn to defend.

Many participants expressed nostalgia for the army and for their country. Charlie Whisky shared, ‘My body is here but my mind is in Zimbabwe. I am still in the military. I am still a soldier,’ and Alpha Romeo explained, ‘I always think about my days in uniform because not a day goes by without using my military training somewhere in my life. To me, those days in uniform were the best days of my life. They shaped what I am today’.

CONCLUSION

The focus here is on why and how Zimbabwean army deserters maintained or rebuilt military bonds in exile. The disruption of the men’s military careers heightened their desire to maintain the bonds forged in war and the barracks. This they did through establishing contact with each other, even literally looking for each other in public spaces. The network initially simply involved connecting with each other, but it later became a strong military-like bond in which the deserters sought to lobby the Zimbabwean government for political amnesty. In their social and political bonding, the former soldiers respected each other’s former rank in the army. Such bonds are symbolic in the sense that they represent past experiences. Rebuilding and maintaining such bonds requires both a personal and a collective effort. Most important here, the bonds were established and reinforced by the soldiers viewing themselves as different from civilians, as a ‘special’ group, with its own particular problems and values. The study participants believed that they are the ‘true’ citizens, who have been willing to sacrifice their lives in war. This is reinforced through the military language that they use to mock and berate civilians. Doing so reaffirms their past bonds in the present.

33. R. Woodward, ‘“Not for Queen and country or any of that shit . . .”: Reflection on citizenship and military participation in contemporary British soldier narratives’ in E. Gilbert and D. Cowan (eds.), War, Citizenship, Territory (London, Routledge, 2008).
All aspects of their military past can be considered resources that reinvigorate and sustain military bonds. In such groups, the military world is unsurprisingly seen as more important than that of civilians.

The most important agenda item for the study participants is to be granted amnesty and to be able to go home without being prosecuted. To meet their needs, regional and international political negotiators, including the Southern African Development Community, the African Union, and the United Nations, could attempt to assist the army deserters obtain amnesty and subsequently help with their reintegration in Zimbabwe. In doing so, they would become part of a national reconciliation and nation-building effort. Thus far, however, the Zimbabwean government continues to harass deserters, arrest them, and indefinitely detain them. DDR programs should not avoid fragile political environments or be tailored only for soldiers who have ended their military service in what is officially perceived as an 'honorable' way. Instead, these programs should be extended to meet the needs of army deserters and thereby contribute to lasting peace and security in postcolonial Africa.
Go Back Home? Autochthony, Territoriality, and Solutions to Internal Displacement in Kenya

Kamungi Prisca Mbura

Humanitarian policy and practice tend to promote the return of internally displaced persons to their place of origin as the most desirable and sustainable solution to their situation. While the end of violence can promote resolution, the assertion of autochthony by indigenous groups can prevent the sustainable return of displaced outsiders, whose home is associated with another geographical space. An examination of the situation of internally displaced persons in Kenya reveals that nativist notions of belonging narrow the available options for ending displacement. Claims to space on the basis of the broader conceptions of national citizenship and legal rights, as opposed to indigeneity, attach multiple meanings to the notion of place of origin with implications for durable solutions.

Following Kenya’s December 2007 elections, a dispute arose over the presidential results, leading to violent conflict and the death of more than a thousand people and the displacement of more than 660,000 from ethnically heterogeneous parts of the country.¹ The violence was directed at communities perceived to be supporters of the incumbent Party of National Unity (PNU), while retaliatory attacks targeted members of communities perceived to be supporters of the opposition Orange Democratic Movement (ODM).² As in previous elections, in 1992 and 1997, grievances over perceived unfair landownership and domination of the local economy by migrants fuelled the 2007 post-election violence, particularly in the multi-ethnic Rift Valley province.

Following international mediation led by former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, PNU and ODM signed the National Accord and Reconciliation Act (NARA)


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in February 2008, ending the violence. Through the Agreement on the Principles of Partnership of the Coalition Government, the parties agreed to work together ‘to secure sustainable peace, stability and justice in Kenya through the rule of law and respect for human rights’. They also agreed on a four-point agenda to disband ethnic militias, address the humanitarian crisis, share power, and resolve the underlying causes of violence. Agenda item 2 outlines specific measures to assist internally displaced persons (IDPs) in finding durable resettlement solutions.

Beginning in March 2008, the government of Kenya, through the Ministry of State for Special Programs, undertook numerous initiatives and operations to return IDPs to the places from which they had been forced or fled. Through Operation Rudi Nyumbani (Go Back Home), which started in May 2008, the government facilitated the physical return of displaced households to their former homes, and those not willing to return were given safe passage to other parts of the country. The government also provided ex-gratia payments to allow those leaving camps to replace basic household items and rebuild destroyed homes. In collaboration with non-governmental organizations, traumatised persons were given psychological counselling, and programmes to promote reconciliation were started. Two independent commissions—the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) and the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC)—were established to investigate the causes of disharmony and promote reconciliation to induce return. Despite such efforts, however, people were not leaving the IDP camps. Investigations found that landless people, including squatters, and persons with non-farming livelihoods could not return home because they were no longer accepted in their communities of origin, or the towns and market centres where they operated businesses had ceased to exist. Some had lost their work tools and lacked the capital to restart their livelihoods.

In 2009, the government began to allocate plots to landless IDPs, notably those who had formed ‘self-help’ groups to collectively buy land. The government also supported programmes to restore livelihoods and rehabilitate economic sectors adversely affected by the crisis. In each annual budget since 2008, the Ministry of Finance allocated funds to support IDP programmes. Despite the huge humanitarian intervention and multi-pronged approach to finding solutions, thousands of IDPs remained unable to return to their former homes or settle in new areas due to the challenges of resolving displacement in ethnically mixed societies.

BELONGING AND RIGHTS IN CONTESTED TERRITORIAL SPACES

One of the biggest hindrances to ending displacement is that local community leaders and residents object to the return or settlement of ‘foreigners’ on what they consider to be exclusive ancestral land. Political leaders of ethnic groups that claim to be ‘indigenous’ to a given geographical region contend that displaced people should go back to their own ancestral lands, where they really belong. These assertions are typically accompanied by overt efforts to block return to former homes or force resettlement in a different part of the country. For instance, in the Molo area, the government’s Operation Rudi Nyumbani was countered with a covert slogan, Operation Zuia Madoadoa (Block the Return of Stains), which mobilised locals to repulse returning IDPs through destroying reconstructed houses, grazing cattle on their farms, and deliberately poisoning water sources. Similarly, government efforts to buy plots for landless IDPs in Mau Narok were resisted by local Maasai who lodged an exclusive claim to the land and blocked the settlement of ‘strangers’ on Maasai territory. Elsewhere, locals attempted, with varying degrees of success, to block the settlement of people from ‘other soils’ on land in Chemusian, Molo, and Transzoia (Endebbes) in the Rift Valley; Kyuso, Mwingi district in Eastern province; and in Taita Taveta and Lamu in the Coast province. Political leaders and community members in these areas ‘told the government to allocate IDPs land in their own motherland’.

The assertion of autochthony and nativist notions on belonging—as espoused by Peter Geschiere and Francis Nyamnjoh—narrows the options that the government and IDPs can pursue to end displacement. The idea of nativeness and native spaces as expressed in the language of ‘home soil’ links ethnic identity to territory in ways that restrict the rights of persons living outside their home territory. It prevents IDPs from finding a home, and, in this case, enjoying their rights anywhere they want in Kenya, as stipulated in the constitution. Although government efforts endeavour to promote coexistence and enforce equal rights, the claim of indigeneity as the overarching criteria of social membership excludes persons from ‘other soils’, suggesting that an individual can belong and enjoy full rights in only one geographical place—the place that ‘belongs’ to his or her community. Despite constitutional guarantees of equal citizenship, the construction of localised, exclusive identities based on ‘ethnic territory’ undermines the right to live and own property in the place of one’s choosing. The insider–outsider categories obstruct solutions for displaced migrants because they cannot effectively return to contested territories. In ethnically mixed regions, local people’s perception and treatment of migrants as ‘foreigners’ thwart return, reintegration, or resettlement. It is important for policy makers to understand this insider–outsider dynamic because great effort is put into returning IDPs

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to their former homes and buying them land, only for them to be displaced again a few years later.

**Theoretical Considerations: The Politics of Belonging**

Autochthony, or ‘the politics of belonging’ is the claim that one is an original inhabitant of a given soil and therefore ‘belongs’ to that soil. Autochthons claim to be the true ‘sons of the soil’, as opposed to migrants who arrive later from another place. Autochthony defines membership of a community by determining who ‘belongs’ to a geographical space, and by inference, who does not. Being a son of the soil provides a framework for the conception and articulation of a relationship between citizenship and identity. Groups establish their identity by defining the characteristics of membership, which allows them to exclude non-members. Although the notion of the ‘global village’ encourages migration across boundaries, recent studies show that migrants encounter barriers at the local level: ‘strangers’ are unwelcome in local spaces ‘owned’ by those already settled. Insider–outsider categories constructed around the notion of belonging to a geographical place are used to declare various kinds of identity and to make exclusive claims to power and resources in a place.

A common criterion for defining belonging is ethnicity because ethnic identity is rooted in the soil. Usually, people define who they are by stating where they come from. Often, the name of a people is the same as the name of ‘their’ homeland. From this perspective, those who ‘come from’ a given place claim to have a ‘natural’ right to resources and opportunities in that place on the basis of belonging. Their sense of natural privilege or entitlement compared to ‘outsiders’ motivates perceptions of difference and exclusionary behaviour. Autochthony links identity to ‘soil’ and demarcates boundaries of belonging. People who claim to be ‘indigenous’ to a territory position themselves as the natural owners of the land and its resources, and therefore ‘hosts’ to migrants from other soils. No matter how long migrants live among the indigenous people, they continue to be perceived as guests whose rights and freedoms cannot, and should not, be the same as those enjoyed by the locals.

While some migrants may endeavour to integrate, everyday practices of exclusion hinder their social membership and ability to participate fully in the cultural or political life of the community. Furthermore, their claims to land and property are

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contested through evocation of myths of origin that seek to prove their foreignness. Historicism of settlement, chronologies of earlier and later arrivals, and maps showing boundaries of ‘ethnic territory’ concretise exclusive categories of ‘host’ and ‘foreigner’.

The politics of belonging distinguish between the two, and by inference, whose claims to land and rights are legitimate or bogus. Autochthons claim full citizenship rights while persons from ‘elsewhere’ face restrictions in their claims. Ever-decreasing boundaries of belonging, however, exclude ‘others’ in increasingly smaller units.

The boundaries of belonging engender discourses and practices that establish and maintain discursive and material limits that correspond to the imagined geographies of a polity and to the spaces that normatively embody a polity. The spatial understanding of society informs struggles over belonging by groups that fall outside bounded places, for example, by persons living along border areas or migrants who cross boundaries and attempt to live on other communities’ lands. In spite of the freedoms enjoyed by the modern migrant, the notion of native and native places continues to fix identity to spatial and geopolitical places. Contested claims over who has the most legitimate and original ties to land and locality have come to shape perceptions of citizenship and rights. Achille Mbembe observes that citizenship is defined by ‘the combination of the ideological categories of origins and belonging and the spatial categories of territory and locality’. Spatially constructed notions of citizenship define, essentially, the possibility of benefiting from a home, the possibility of excluding strangers from it, the right to protection of and access to a range of collective goods and resources situated in a designated space. Thus, struggles over power and resources are made through idioms of filiation, genealogy and heritage.

Migrants’ self-identification as locals by virtue of longstanding residence is therefore untenable. Yet, connection to their ethnic homeland is weak or nonexistent due to protracted absence. As one man stated, ‘My great-grandparents were born here. I do

18. Autochthony and indigeneity are related concepts but mean different things in Francophone and Anglophone Africa. In Anglophone East Africa and Southern Africa, the term indigenous people refers to hunters and gatherers or people with a special dependency on land. In Francophone Africa, autochthony refers to ‘those who arrived at a place first’. See Kevin Dunn, ‘“Sons of the Soil” and contemporary state making: Autochthony, uncertainty and political violence in Africa’, Third World Quarterly, 30:1 (2009), 113–27. Derogative colonial usage, however, characterises such peoples as the most backward. The use of indigeneity and autochthony interchangeably, even in UN contexts, can blur the difference. Geschiere’s view of autochthony is adopted here, in which autochthons are people who are dominant in a given area but fear future marginalisation. Put another way, ‘[T]hey oppose the membership of some and promote the exclusion of others.’ See Quentin Gausset, Justin Kenrick, and Robert Gibb, ‘Indigeneity and autochthony: A couple of false twins?’ Social Anthropology, 19:2 (2011), 138.
not know any other home’. The forced displacement of third- and fourth-generation immigrants to send them back to their ancestral origins thus raises a profound dilemma about belonging and to where people should return after displacement. Policy measures to secure solutions by returning IDPs to contested regions and protecting their rights inherently means taking sides with people perceived to be outsiders. It inadvertently politicizes humanitarian and security programmes, which was expressed by a man from Uasin Gishu who lamented, ‘We chased these people away, but the government has brought them back and even built police stations to protect them!’

Migration and the Conflation of Rooted Citizenship

The permanent spatial disconnection of migrants from their ancestral land is the framing context within which autochthony discourses are shaped and contested. People whose ancestral lands have long been lost to them and whose claims to new lands are contested by natives, who also continually expel them, face a difficult dilemma regarding where they belong and what the ideal solution to their displacement ought to be. Displaced migrants therefore fall between the cracks of the territorial boundaries of their ancestral land and place of habitual residence. This raises theoretical questions about return as a durable solution and policy questions about rights protection in contested territories.

The case of the Kikuyu, who migrated from Central province to the Rift Valley province in the 1920s and 1960s, illustrates the peculiarity of permanent disconnection from an ancestral homeland. Colonial land alienation resulted in loss of ancestral land among some Kikuyu in Central province and Kalenjin and other indigenous groups in the Rift Valley. Due to food insecurity and population pressure in ‘native reserves’, thousands of Kikuyu migrated to the Rift Valley in the 1920s and settled in the White Highlands as squatters and wage labourers. While a majority of those thus displaced repossessed their lands at the end of colonial rule, others could not. Through the 1960s land redistribution programme, even more Kikuyu legally purchased land from departing colonial settlers and occupied what was originally Kalenjin and Maasai land. The legal land transfers resulted in the permanent dispossession and spatial disconnection of Kalenjin and Maasai from their ancestral lands, which were occupied by persons, primarily Kikuyu, from other parts of Kenya. This land transfer perpetuates the grievance commonly referred to as historical land injustices, which have become a potent organising and mobilisation theme during political contests.

Politicians mobilise support among locals by claiming that foreigners have grabbed their land and dominate the local economy. This domination, they argue, can be reversed by chasing away the foreigners and repossessing the ‘stolen’ lands. Threats of violence induce displacement and prevent many ‘outsiders’ from casting their ballots.

22. Interview with an eighteen-year-old man in the Njoro area, March 2011.
23. Interview with a male member of a host community, Uasin Gishu county, December 2011.
Some scholars view such violence and displacement as strategies to disenfranchise hostile voters and predetermine electoral outcomes.\(^{26}\) Nonetheless, the question of who really owns the land has generated a class conflict in Central Kenya and strong anti-Kikuyu sentiments in the Rift Valley. In Central province, the tensions have culminated in chilling forms of violence between the descendants of the landless ahoi (beggars) and dispossessed Mau-Mau freedom fighters on the one hand, and those of colonial warrant chiefs and alleged collaborators on the other.\(^{27}\) In the Rift Valley, tensions between native Kalenjin and Maasai on the one hand and migrants (mostly Kikuyu) on the other have resulted in recurrent displacement. The perception that landownership by those viewed as collaborators in Central Kenya and outsiders in the Rift Valley is illegitimate has implications for how internal displacement and durable solutions are understood. Several perceptions make this so.

First is the view that Kikuyu occupying other communities’ ancestral lands should return to their native homeland in Central province. Second is the view that all displaced persons should be assisted to return to places from which they were displaced and their legal rights to land and property protected. A third view concerns which soil fourth-generation, landless migrants displaced outside their homeland can claim to belong. Where is their home? Where should they be returned? These questions pose profound complexities about belonging and solutions because the displaced migrants no longer have viable ties to their ancestral motherland and are seen as outsiders where they live. Some see themselves as foreigners in any part of the country. According to one IDP, ‘Everybody rejects us and tells us to go back to our motherland, but we have nothing and nobody there to go back to.’\(^{28}\)

The displacement of landless, long-term migrants confounds efforts to return IDPs home from camps and other settlements because they have no rooted home of their own. Furthermore, a particular challenge arises from a government practice to weed out imposters by demanding that genuine IDPs should provide evidence of landownership at the location from which they were displaced.\(^{29}\) Focus on land-owning IDPs obscures the magnitude of landlessness and its effects on attaining durable solutions. Whereas land allocation can offer solutions to landlessness and displacement, the settlement of displaced landless on other communities’ lands despite local people’s


\(^{27}\) Colonial era measures to individualise landownership in accordance with English property law saw parcels belonging to freedom fighters grabbed by African collaborators and members of the educated middle class, while unoccupied land was set aside for economic development projects and state institutions. The collaboration of warrant chiefs with the colonial government in violent suppression divided the Kikuyu community. Suffice it to note that intra-Kikuyu conflict and terror left the community traumatised and deeply divided between the chiefs, landed wealthy collaborators on the one hand, and the landless peasants and MauMau on the other. The polarisation was deepened by Christian converts and the educated, westernised middle class, the majority of whom were conservative or moderate. At the national level, the sympathies of the top Kikuyu political leadership in Central province lay with the collaborators. See among others Githu Muigai, ‘The rise of the ethno-nationalist state in Kenya’, in Bruce Berman, Dickson Eyoh, and Will Kymlicka (eds.), *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa* (Athens, Ohio University Press, 2004).

\(^{28}\) Interview with a member of the IDP Network, a self-advocacy network of IDPs from different parts of Kenya, Nakuru, January 2012.

\(^{29}\) Interview with an official at the Department of Mitigation and Resettlement, Ministry of State for Special Programmes, Nairobi, July 2010.
protests fails to recognise the impermanence of such settlement due to recurrent tensions over belonging. Repeated displacement suggests that even though all citizens may claim legal rights in all parts of Kenya, different identity groups can enjoy full rights only in limited geographical spaces within the state.

**Political Participation in Others’ Ancestral Land and Displacement**

An examination of the patterns of violence to ‘remove stains’ indicates that outsider-ness is sometimes determined by considerations of who is voting for whom rather than landownership patterns. In electoral contests, political mobilisation of ethnic voting blocs engenders a process of constituting insiders and outsiders on the basis of politicalleanings. Given ethnic voting patterns, powerful elites form ethno-political alliances to consolidate a winning formula. This process presumes that all members of a given tribe will vote for a particular candidate, and pressure mounts on alliance partners to deliver registered votes from their home regions. As a consequence, voters who go against the grain by supporting rivals are characterised as outsiders and harassed, regardless of their ethnic identity or ancestral origins. In particular, migrants who vote in opposition to the sons of the soil are declared foreigners and chased away. As one politician noted, ‘If they refuse to support our own, we tell them go to their homeland to support whoever they please’. Opposition supporters are therefore declared enemies and disenfranchised or harassed after elections because of their vote.

Ethno-political alliances driven by transient political interests, however, are inherently unstable, impermanent, and unpredictable. Tribes considered outsiders in one electoral cycle might become insiders during the following election in an unpredictable pattern of political arithmetic and recalculation. A cursory look at Kenya’s five general elections since the return to multi-party democracy in 1991 indicates that the label outsider shifts from one migrant group to another in the Rift Valley (Table 1).

Uncertainty about who bears the ‘foreigner’ label means autochthony discourse can be used for defining the self against the other at different levels and in all sorts of ways. Shifting labels, transient political alliances, and uncertainty make it difficult for IDPs to pursue solutions to their predicament. Offered one IDP, ‘It is difficult to plan to return or rebuild our homes because even if we are together this time round, we were the main targets in 2007. You never know what might happen after 2013 if the leaders disagree’.

Despite measures to promote democracy, sons of the soil find it difficult to tolerate migrants’ support for rival political parties. Studies in Cameroon and Côte d’Ivoire show that such support or vying for political office is perceived as lack of appreciation.

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30. Interview with a local politician, Burnt Forest area, Uasin Gishu county, June 2010.
31. Those listed in the table are the largest ethnic groups in Kenya. Since smaller groups align with bigger groups, their members are also considered insiders or outsiders depending on their leaning relative to the sons of the soil. For instance, the Kisii and Kamba have been expelled from the Rift Valley because of their perceived political alignment with the Kikuyu.
32. Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, ‘Capitalism and autochthony’.
33. Interview with a Kikuyu IDP living in Burnt Forest town, 12 January 2013.
While such claims could be motivated by fear that a group of strangers can illegitimately outvote locals in their own areas, Kenya’s situation obtains from migrants’ capacity to assist presidential candidates garner the requisite percentage of votes in electoral units to win. A candidate must get more than half the total number of votes cast in at least half of the electoral units. Support for rival candidates is therefore viewed as aiding the enemy. Said one local politician, ‘Elections are like a war. Your preferred candidate can either win or lose. If you have a guest who supports your enemies, you cannot continue to host him’.

The expectation that migrants have an obligation to support local candidates and abstain from running for office contravenes the concept of democratic participation. It suggests that legal citizenship—the criterion used to determine access to rights in local spaces—does not guarantee social or political membership. Political instrumentalisation of hosts and guests restricts political behaviour and territorialises identity such that members of a group, regardless of individual voting decisions, are believed to support a particular political opinion. This reinforces existential political identities. As one Kikuyu woman stated, ‘I may as well vote with my people because even if I do not, nobody will believe me’.

Collectivised ethno-political identities therefore predispose migrants to forced displacement because their political choices are associated with the voting pattern of their ethnic kin in their ancestral land. For instance, in the 2007 general elections, all Kikuyu in all parts of the country were believed to have voted for Mwai Kibaki’s party and similarly, all Luo for Raila Odinga’s party. Violence and retaliatory attacks on in-

### Table 1

**Shifting Insider-Outsider Labels in Kenyan Elections, Rift Valley, 1993–2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Year</th>
<th>Insider</th>
<th>Outsider</th>
<th>Winner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Kalenjin, Kikuyu, Maasai</td>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Kamungi Prisca Mbura, based on observation of ethno-political ethnic alliances during Kenya’s multi-party era.

* Mwai Kibaki, a Kikuyu, was declared winner against Raila Odinga, a Luo, in the disputed presidential election results, which triggered the 2007 post-election violence.

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36. Interview with a local politician, Wareng, January 2013.

37. Interview with a Kikuyu woman before the 2010 referendum on the new constituency, Nakuru, August 2010.
dividends were premised on this association. Politicians encouraged community members to vote for one of their own, thus mobilising people to advance or defend their own group’s rights and interests. These ‘census-type’ elections are a rational response to citizenship demands within ethnic communities. This nexus between ethnic and political identity forms the basis upon which citizenship is formed and sustained.

Claims to land and democratic rights in multi-ethnic areas reflect dilemmas encountered in the everyday exercise of national and ethnic citizenship. Whereas sons of the soil claim natural landownership on the basis of ancestral heritage, migrants claim land rights on the basis of legal purchase, which is based on the right to live and own property in any part of the country. There are two competing spheres of citizen formation: the nation-state and the sub-national level. Legal citizenship guarantees equality and uniformity of rights of all citizens of a state, but loyalty to a sub-national identity generates inequality. Understandings of citizenship provide the moral and temporal underpinnings of the process that lend authority and legitimacy to ethnicity.

**IDP RIGHTS AMID COMPETING LOYALTIES TO NATIONAL AND ETHNIC CITIZENSHIP**

The post-independence nationalist ideal of ‘one Kenya, one people’ elevated national identity at the expense of particularistic identities, such as ethnicity and ethnic lands. At the national level, leaders preached patriotism, national homogeneity, and peace, realisable through constitutional principles allowing any legal citizen to live anywhere in the country, regardless of ethnic origins. The ideal of legal equality of all citizens, however, was in practice met with an extraordinary ambivalence: While politicians stigmatized the notion of ‘native territory’ to pave way for Kenyans to live anywhere, they relied on ethnicity and exclusion of ethnic others as the main mobilising ingredient in elite competition for power. This promoted ethnic voting.

Electoral processes draw sharp scrutiny of voting patterns at the local level, with villagers wanting to know who among them is likely to vote for which candidate. In many instances, migrants tend to vote for politicians supported by their ethnic kin in their ancestral homelands, who often happen to be rivals of those supported by sons of the soil. Geschiere, Marshall-Fratani, and others offer compelling examples of how the politics of belonging is deployed to generate a narrative of foreign domination and therefore justify the murder, violence against, or expulsion of outsiders who support opposing candidates.

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40. See Berman, Eyob, and Kymlicka, *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa*.
In Kenya, political mobilisation of local citizens to chase away those viewed as foreigners and to ‘kill the vote’ has resulted in recurrent internal displacement of voters from other soils. While some see the relationship between elections and violence as the link between political power and land as an economic resource, others argue that landownership claims are only a way to identify non-natives, isolate them, and disenfranchise them to influence election results. While various theoretical explanations of anti-outsider violence in Kenya are valid, deeper understanding of the nexus between identity, territory, and political power offers a clearer understanding of why it is difficult to find durable solutions for displaced persons. The expectation of political subordination and acquiescence is considered reciprocity for hospitality extended to migrants, and supporting one’s rivals symbolizes lack of gratitude toward the host. Such views suggest that outsiders are likely to be displaced during every multi-party election cycle. The notion of a privileged and natural right of autochthons further implies that only ‘legitimate children of the land’ may enjoy unfettered access to power and resources within a given ethnic motherland. To enjoy similar rights, foreigners are required to obviate difference by assimilating fully into the social, cultural, and political life of the native community.

The ubiquitous obsession with nativity and home soil suggests that people can be included or excluded at multiple levels, for example, by tribe and within the tribe or clan. According to Stephen Jackson, a person belongs to territory at ‘ever diminishing scales’ as an individual member (or non-member) of a family, clan, ethnic group, nation, linguistic group, or race. One is included or excluded from socio-political life at these levels. Foreigners are ‘unmasked’ at the village level each election year when community members choose their political representatives at different electoral units. Those who present themselves to the people to be elected are vetted and accepted or rejected on the basis of belonging. At each level of inclusion or exclusion, vying for political office by outsiders is seen as an attempt to impose foreign rule on the natives and is therefore vigorously resisted. Such resistance is often accompanied by even greater intolerance of any son of the soil who purports to support the foreigner. The alleged betrayal of a community’s collective agenda motivates intra-group exclusion.

43. K. Kanyinga, ‘The legacy of the White Highlands: Land rights and the 2007 post-election violence in Kenya’, Journal of Contemporary African Studies, 27:3 (2009); many scholars on the relationship between land and violent conflict contend that those who control the land and its resources also control political power, and land can be given as a prize for political support or redistributed to address inequality and perceived domination.
46. In Côte d’Ivoire, cycles of violence revolve around the question of nativity of persons seeking election to political office and the claim that they are foreigners. Elsewhere, Barack Obama faced challenges in his presidential bid stemming from the claim that he was not a ‘true’ (or actual) American. Former president Frederick Chiluba of Zambia attempted to deport his predecessor, Kenneth Kaunda, on the claim that he was a Malawian.
47. Interviews with five Kalenjin community elders in Eldoret, Rift Valley province, March 2012.
48. Jackson, ‘Sons of which soil?’
of moderates on either side of the divide.\textsuperscript{49} In Kenya, political deployment of insider–outsider categories is most endemic at the ethnic group level because ethnic identity is the main tool for political mobilisation. Besides, ethnic boundaries are contiguous with administrative and electoral boundaries, which enable politicians to demarcate their support base.

The implication, therefore, is that outsiders may co-exist peacefully with so-called hosts by supporting their political views. As noted above, the outsider label shifts only to those supporting rival parties. In addition, outsiders may assimilate culturally and politically to diminish perception of difference and consequent risk of violence of displacement every election cycle. A majority of migrants in the Rift Valley, however, retain their cultural specificity and routinely support political opinions held by their ethnic kin. Elections in the Rift Valley tend to be peaceful and free of displacement only when rival communities support the same presidential candidate, as in 2002 and 2013.

After recurrent displacement, Kikuyu migrants responded to belligerent demands that they return to their ancestral lands by maintaining a relationship with Kalenjin and Maasai that is characterised by self-exclusion and assertion of difference and superiority.\textsuperscript{50} The most common response involved recycling and reinforcing colonial stereotypes that applaud their supposedly hard-working and entrepreneurial nature while deplored the alleged jealousy and laziness of the local people. They also laid legal claim to protection of property and democratic rights on the basis of constitutional guarantees to live and own property wherever they liked in Kenya. Some attribute recurrent attacks to impunity and a failure to enforce the law. Groups of IDPs have sued the state for failing to protect them from arbitrary displacement and for failing to resettle or compensate them for losses incurred.\textsuperscript{51}

Some outsiders recount migration, settlement, and land acquisition history to contradict the dominant narrative, for instance by questioning who really were the original occupants of land in the Rift Valley. Some absolve migrants of blame, observing that local community leaders facilitated the settlement of the foreigners on contested lands.\textsuperscript{52}

\begin{center}
\textsc{Autochthony Sentiments and Durable Solutions: Policy Implications}
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Contemporary scholarship on forced displacement posits that return, local integration, and settlement in another part of the country are the main strategies for ending internal displacement. While in many contexts these are viable solutions, the discus-

\textsuperscript{49} For further elaboration on intra-group exclusion, see Prisca Kamungi, 'Municipal authorities and IDPs outside of camps: The case of Kenya’s “integrated” displaced persons', Brookings Institution and London School of Economics Project on Internal Displacement, Washington, D.C., 2013.

\textsuperscript{50} For further discussion on self-exclusion, see Loren Landau, 'Loving the alien: Citizenship, law and the future of South Africa’s demonic society’, \textit{African Affairs}, 109:435 (2005), 213–30.


\textsuperscript{52} Interviews with four Kikuyu community members in different parts of the Rift Valley, March 2013.
sion above shows that the political fixation with territorialised ethnicity hinders effective settlement of outsiders outside spaces associated with their own communities. This has direct implications for the return of IDPs or resettlement in another part of the country, particularly if land for such resettlement is to be procured from regions believed to belong to another community. Autochthony sentiments therefore contradict policy strategies to end displacement by their inherent implication that people can be truly at home only in their ancestral homelands. This perception affects rights protection, the sense of national citizenship, and the feasibility of humanitarian programmes to assist IDPs to return to their former homes.

Since Kenya’s transition to democracy in 1991, multi-party elections have been violent and characterised by population displacement. Some IDPs interviewed about ways to end displacement thought that it was high time they assimilated in the Rift Valley and broke ties with their ancestral lands because, after all, they had no other home outside the valley, and their livelihoods were rooted to their place of residence. One Kikuyu returnee offered, ‘Every time we vote in solidarity with our ethnic kin, many of us are killed and our property and investments are destroyed. Those we vote for do not feel it because they are in another constituency and cannot protect us. Everything we own is here. There is nothing in Central. It is not possible to go back there. We are beginning to think we must support the locals politically if it will help us co-exist peacefully before and beyond elections.’

In response to such self-reflection among many Kikuyu following the violence and perceived need to foster better ‘host-guest’ relations, some religious leaders and peace-building NGOs began to organise meetings with Kalenjin and Kikuyu community elders to prevent recurrent displacement. The Ministry of Justice established the Committee of National Elders Conference on Cohesion and Integration to bring community elders and leaders together to talk and institute alternative means of dispute resolution. Persons interviewed noted that at peace meetings, Kalenjin expressed displeasure at Kikuyu migrants’ tendency to rename territory with ‘foreign names’, their ‘refusal’ to integrate, and ‘thirst for leadership’, while Kikuyu asserted their legal right to own property and participate in democratic processes. Lack of mutual understanding was seen to have perpetuated differences and mobilisation of violence.

Recurrent displacement and mistrust have encouraged IDPs to find ways to complement government efforts to find solutions to displacement. Interviews revealed that many migrated to ethnically homogenous regions or multi-ethnic areas with high concentrations of their own ethnic group. For instance, many displaced Kikuyu migrated to Nakuru and Naivasha, where large numbers of Kikuyu reside, or further into Nyandarua and Kiambu, inside Central province, their ancestral homeland. At the same time, many Luo living in these areas returned to their own ancestral lands in Nyanza province, while Kalenjin who initially resided in such Kikuyu-dominated districts as Nakuru and Subukia moved back to Kalenjin-dominated Kericho, Uasin Gishu, and other parts of the Rift Valley. The influx of Kikuyu IDPs to Nakuru after

53. Interview with a Kikuyu returnee in the Kiambaa area, Eldoret, July 2010.
54. Introspection forums facilitated by the NGO Kikuyus for Change sought to understand why most Kenyans do not like Kikuyus and what they, Kikuyus, could do about it. Interview with forum convener, Nairobi, December 2011.
55. Interviews with elders from both communities in different parts of the Rift Valley, 2010.
2007 gradually tilted the ethnic distribution such that the Kikuyu became the dominant tribe. Although the government discouraged deliberate separation, displaced persons embraced it because it reduced the risk of future displacement of minorities on the wrong side of the boundary.

IDPs also formed self-help groups, through which they collected money and jointly bought land in ethnically homogenous areas in Naivasha, Nakuru, Nyandarua, and Molo districts. The government assisted some groups in purchasing larger parcels of land and building houses ‘in order to avoid creating slums in rural areas’. Although the government tried to make such settlements as ethnically heterogeneous as possible, most beneficiaries preferred to establish new homes ‘among our own people’. Some IDPs displaced numerous times, and whose homes and farms were repeatedly ravaged, expressed reluctance to rebuild their homes, terming reconstruction a waste of time and money. Some preferred to live a ‘homeless life’, in rented accommodation or with relatives. Many moved into urban areas or self-settlements near police stations, from where they could commute to farms or markets to pursue their livelihoods. The government and NGOs reconstructed houses to promote return, but many rehabilitated homes remain unoccupied because IDPs were unwilling to return to sites of recurrent violence. In some places, including Kamuyu, some IDPs pulled down houses reconstructed for them, sold the building materials, and used the money to pay rent or meet other needs.

Most of those interviewed said they preferred to live invisibly in urban and peri-urban areas because even without open conflict, trauma and persistent mistrust perpetuated a climate of mutual hostility among natives and outsiders. In their view, confidence-building measures by the government are inadequate to heal the wounds and restore trust.

Some IDPs have established multiple homes in places from which they were displaced and in safer areas, moving back and forth in response to changing political circumstances. Whereas durable solutions are realised when displaced people return to pre-displacement areas, integrate locally, or settle elsewhere, most IDPs in Kenya tend to pursue the three solutions simultaneously. Some have built temporary houses on land from which they were displaced and to which they return occasionally to till their farms and harvest crops. In other cases, some members of the household stay in the temporary houses for prolonged periods, producing food to send to other family members living elsewhere. In extreme cases, parents rent rooms for their children in urban areas where they attend school while they, the parents, return to the farm and check on the children occasionally. Some wives and younger children live in rural areas, in the ancestral homeland, while husbands and older children live in urban

56. Interview with the regional commissioner for North Rift in Eldoret, March 2011.
58. Interview with IDPs at Pipeline IDP Camp, Nakuru, November 2011.
59. Interview with an integrated IDP living in a rented room in the Burnt Forest area, March 2012.
60. Interviews with IDPs in Burnt Forest and members of the indigenous community in the Kamuyu area, May 2011.
areas near former homes, from which they commute to the farm and occasionally visit other family members. Multiple homes in different parts of the country is a common coping strategy that helps members of the household meet their security needs while pursuing livelihoods in multiple sites. Those interviewed noted that even though such arrangements result in deliberate family separation, it responds to the changing political environment and associated security risks. As one man explained, ‘The children know where they come from, and grow in a stable environment without interruption of their education. In case of violence, we save our harvest because we transport it out of here and minimize the risk of having the whole family wiped out’.61

Some IDPs migrate away from ‘hot spots’ during an election year. Such pre-emptive migration by minorities in multi-ethnic settings minimises their exposure to violence. Thus, some areas are ethnically homogenous during elections because the outsiders migrate with their families and assets to rural areas or urban residential sections with high concentrations of their own ethnic group. Some migrate permanently. It is therefore difficult to know if an electoral process is truly peaceful or if the lack of violence results from the absence of outsiders who possibly would have been attacked had they remained in place. Migration during periods of heightened tension is increasingly being adopted as a way of reducing vulnerability to violence, displacement, and loss of assets.

CONCLUSION

The tendency to label the ‘other’ and discriminate against migrants is not new. Migrants are often negatively associated with social ills, such as crime and shortfalls in the delivery of social services. Migrants are also often accused of driving up prices and dominating the local economy by accessing land and opportunities belonging to local people. Politicians tend to blame migrants for poverty, unemployment, and lack of development in society. They claim that only sons of the soil are entitled to power. In many multi-ethnic settings, resources in their territory are used to mobilise violence and the expulsion of outsiders. The politics of belonging is a major cause of internal displacement across Africa.

In Kenya, politicians consolidate ethnic voting blocs by mobilising violence and expulsion of outsiders from their strongholds. The political deployment of an autochthonous discourse results in recurrent population displacement. The ‘foreigners’ counter local people’s exclusive claims to land and power by asserting their legal rights guaranteed to all national citizens. Mutually incompatible claims to land on the basis of cultural heritage and legal property rights lead to the hardening of boundaries and self-perpetuating cycles of violence and displacement. Everyday life in societies fractured by host–guest relations is characterized by ethnicisation of individual behaviour, while political statements by leaders are ascribed to all members of his or her ethnic group. The ascription of political opinion to the collective consolidates existential political identities; members of a group are associated with particular political opinions regardless of individual preference. Constituting insider–outsider categories

61. Interview with a man who had returned to a Kiambaa farm in Eldoret while the rest of his family lived in a settlement in Nyandarua district, March 2011.
ignores intra-group variation, exposing all members to the threat of violence or displacement.

Insider–outsider categories are not permanent. They shift with changing political interests. Unpredictable shifts in elite alliances and resulting political uncertainty has implications for the resolution of internal displacement. Today’s insiders may be tomorrow’s outsiders. The uncertainty makes it difficult for IDPs to plan for and pursue durable solutions. Some return and reconstruct their homes, but are later displaced again.

Government efforts to end displacement have focused on traditional solutions—return, local integration, and resettlement in another part of the country. These solutions fail to recognize the salience of the politics of belonging and its impact on durability of solutions. To cope with the uncertainty, IDPs adopt pragmatic strategies, such as pre-emptive migration, voluntary family separation, and self-settlement in urban areas. Pursued from a bottom-up perspective, the strategies respond to fluid political contexts, meet the security and livelihood needs of outsiders in multi-ethnic contexts, and assure their access to rights in contested spaces. While outside the established formal humanitarian programmes, these strategies are not only pragmatic, but also truly durable.
In Africa, as elsewhere, religion has played a role in triggering and sustaining conflict. There are many instances where cultist religion has been employed to promote an ethnic or political agenda. In the majority of such civil wars, political emancipation and spiritual redemption have operated hand in hand, with religious symbols and ritual practices manipulated, often mingled with extraordinary myths and creative practices, to recruit spiritually induced foot soldiers ready to wage a cosmic war for political ends. Despite this, cultist religion is often peripheral in analysing conflict as well as peacemaking. Drawing its methodological perspectives from constructivism and instrumentalism, this article contextually examines how religion and cults have affected the Ugandan civil wars waged under the banners of the Holy Spirit Movement and the Lord's Resistance Army. It presents a generic conceptual framework for the socio-religious and political triggers of the wars, assesses how religion played an instrumental role in sustaining them, and makes suggestions for averting similar future conflicts while ensuring reintegration, recovery, and the execution of justice.

Religion is said to be characterised by a paradoxical dualism, or Janus face. It is a source of reconciliation and harmony, and of spiritual illumination and ecstasy, on the one hand, but on the other is a source of violence that can degrade humans toward animistic monstrosity. In other words, religion can prompt people to phenomenal creativity and imagination for aesthetic good and for vicious evil. If religions have legitimated certain acts of violence, they have also attempted to restrain unlimited...
religious fervour and intolerance by instilling social discipline among followers.3 These apparently contradictory orientations reflect a continuing struggle within religions over the meaning and character of the power encountered in the sacred and its relationship to coercive force and violence.4

Elaborating on this paradoxical quality of religion, R. Scott Appleby wrote, ‘Rather than a direct translation of the “mind of God” into human action, religion is a far more ambiguous enterprise, containing within itself the authority to kill and to heal, to unleash savagery, or to bless humankind with healing and wholeness’. The violent face of religion becomes frighteningly vivid at times of tension, when people dedicate themselves to a ‘sacred cause’ and offer their lives in the defence of interests endorsed by faith and stamped with a religious seal of approval. Sacred writings often teach the love of peace and compassion, but in times of war, religious adherents are often adept at finding other scriptural references that they claim to prove God’s wishes and thus justify bloody confrontation with people of other faiths or even with those of a different perspective within their own religion.6 It is striking, as J. P. Larsson notes, that in virtually all of the nearly 500 major wars fought since 1700, ‘each side has imagined itself to be exclusively on the side of God’ by whatever name.7 This is often achieved by adapting the sacred stories, laws, and rituals of the host tradition to serve specific purposes. This approach allows religious actors thereby to deviate from the strictures of the host religion, even though they inherited specific spiritual practices from that religion and consider themselves to be acting on its behalf.8

Further, as the exclusionary narratives inherent in religious conflicts often demonise or dehumanise the opponent, the danger of ‘genocidal slaughter’ or its approximation is often imminent.9 In such circumstances, military strategy, distinct from the state-centric strategy to eliminate a clearly defined (state) enemy or threat, deliberately includes ‘conspicuous atrocity, systematic rape, hostage-taking, forced starvation and siege, destruction of religious and historic monuments, the use of shells and rockets against civilian targets, especially homes, hospitals or crowded places like markets or water sources’.10 In the context of Uganda’s wars, one must ask, how are religious ideas and cultic practices used to make sense of and justify civil war, providing it an instrumental role among cultist religion in mobilising disenfranchised youth for war?11 How does a newfound sense of cultic fellowship among combatants ensure the continuity of war?

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5. Ibid., 29.
10. Ibid., 13.
RELIGIOUS FIGURES AND JUSTIFYING VIOLENCE THROUGH RELIGION

In most instances where religion has been used for mobilising the pious for war-related causes, central figures with religious credentials have been looked up to and revered. Such figures lend the cause a cosmic aura, portraying the cause as non-negotiable and death in its service a path to martyrdom. Two types of personalities are typically observed in these situations. The first is the religious figure who incites his or her religious followers to war, sometimes without being involved in actual combat. Abune Petros from Ethiopia and Desmond Tutu of South Africa are two examples of this type of figure. In Ethiopia, Petros, a pope and bishop of the northern province of Wollo, has been immortalised through a monument in the middle of the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa. As this author earlier observed,

I was gazing at the huge sculpture of the hallowed face of a man in chains—a man who defied the oppressive and dehumanising exploits of Fascists—who, he thought, are the bodily incarnates of the devil. The piercing contrast in the sculpture hardly eludes the keen observer: a Coptic cross dangling from his neck and his snowy and smooth robe flowing out onto the ground in holistic elegance, to be intercepted by the grisly figure of a machine gun. This was no ordinary man: He was doing his papal duties excommunicating the Italian invaders and giving his generous benediction to his compatriots fighting for freedom, when he was martyred—succumbing as he did to a dignified death torn apart by Fascist bullets.12

Nobel Peace Prize winner and South African Anglican bishop Desmond Tutu stands in as the second example of the first personality type. Tutu reluctantly accepted the selective use of revolutionary violence by his fellow Christians in their struggle against apartheid. He asserted that the treatment of people as sub-human with the aim to oppress them, to trample their dignity underfoot, is not only evil but ‘positively blasphemous, for it is tantamount to spitting on the face of God. That is why we are so passionate in our opposition to the evil of Apartheid’.13 He remarked that the hallmark of any people of faith is passionate opposition to evil. In fact, for believers to stand aloof in the face of injustice and oppression is tantamount to disobedience to God.14

Concerning the second type, one finds religious or cultic figures who not only spur their followers to combat, but also manipulate and use cultic religious symbols in propaganda and tactics. The distinctive attribute of such figures is that they may also be personally involved in battle, hence wearing the cloak of a religious leader and the fatigues of a combat soldier. Such people are often highly selective in choosing which

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12. Excerpts from S. Tsegaye, ‘The Gad’l of Abune Petros and the discourse of war and peace’, unpublished paper, 2011. In the Ethiopian liturgy, such stories are referred to as gädl. In a rather coincidental twist, the term gädl in Ge’ez, the language of the Ethiopian orthodox liturgy, refers to the acts, or life, of a saint. The term derives from the root gädlä, which means to ‘strive, wrestle, struggle, fight, combat’. W. Laslau, Comparative Dictionary of Ge’ez (Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz, 1978), 182. The term conveys the image of an ascetic monk being implicitly associated with the ‘fighter, combatant, wrestler’. Moreover, the closely related second form of the root gädlä means to ‘kill, slaughter, immolate’. Ibid., 182. Here is a good example of the discourse of holiness being readily mingled with that of violence.
sub-traditions to embrace and honour to better serve their violent ends. Instead of resorting to the peaceful edicts of the host religion of which they might claim leadership, such as ‘pray for your enemy’ and ‘turn the other cheek’, they subscribe to practices or verses that make oblique allusions to (but are not necessarily pertinent to) violence, such as ‘those who use the sword will die by the sword’. By so doing, they sanctify slaughter and surrender followers to the ‘cult of arms’.

Both types of personalities have attributes in common. Both find refuge in religious justifications and lean on sanctified rationale for their cause. Violence against their enemies (however defined) is a sacred duty. Both transform violence into a spiritual imperative in the quest for justice. They tend to gain fellowship among disfranchised youth who are willing to fearlessly march into battle and fight until death on the path to martyrdom.

**CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVES**

Ostensibly, there are three dominant conceptual perspectives used in analysing the role of religion in violent conflicts: primordialism, constructivism, and instrumentalism (see Figure 1). The first perspective sees religion as the main or sole cause of conflict. It regards religion as a constant, natural feature of conflict due to the incompatibility of religious traditions and truths. The second perspective, constructivism, recognises that rather than being a natural outcome of religion, conflict is a social construct, for example, evolving from a competition for raw materials and other economic resources or for political power. Whatever the original cause of the conflict, religion serves as a fuel that sustains, prolongs, and often worsens a conflict’s intensity. The third perspective, instrumentalism, does not recognise genuine religion as playing even a contributory role or being a sui generis phenomenon. Rather, religion is always used as an instrument, or a tool, in armed conflict to mobilise support, justify a particular course of action, or offer another dimension to political conflict.

This study borrows elements from instrumentalism and constructivism in looking at the two successive Ugandan cult wars. It elucidates how local cultic practices were deliberately fused with religious symbols, language, and heritage and exploited to sustain wars that rocked Uganda for more than two decades. Employing instrumentalism, by donning religious apparel and capitalising on the strictures of a mother religion, namely, Catholicism, spiritual leaders turned warlords channelled the spiritual (and later physical) energies of disenfranchised youths for a political cause. In both cult wars, religion proved to be the most potent and the least expensive means of persuasion and justification for political mobilisation. Through constructivism, these

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conflicts invoked religious symbols and rituals that made the conflict more intractable, lending it continuity and reinvention.

**African Examples of Civil Wars Influenced by Cultist Religion**

Appleby maintains that violence is a temptation for all religious militants, in that all seek or claim to seek justice, as they understand it, and consider themselves (or are indeed) besieged by powerful enemies, including states, and thus do not hesitate to employ deadly force in their cause. The temptation becomes irresistible for some religious leaders, who sacrifice their autonomy to ethno-nationalist or sectarian forces needing culturally resonant symbolic legitimation for their narrow political agendas. In such cases, religion’s prophetic power as an independent or disinterested critic of political culture falls victim to nationalist and irredentist ploys. In this light, some African civil wars, such as those in Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Uganda, have provoked questions about the role of religion in them, each being unique but all sharing a common trait in that religion was exploited and manipulated for ethno-political ends. In each of these examples, both the official expressions (supported by theological and philosophical reasoning) of a mass or popular religion and the enduring

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powerful influence of the religion (often mingled with cultic traditions) came into play. Although they relied heavily on the ‘mother religion’, the examples above subscribe more to ‘superstition, racial prejudice, half-forgotten bits of sacred scripture and local custom, as well as (rather than) the formal traditions of an officially maintained religious culture’.23

In the spirit cult wars of Uganda in the 1980s and 1990s—involving the Holy Spirit Movement of Alice Lakwena and the Lord’s Resistance Army of Joseph Kony—established religious traditions were applied to new social conditions in ways that resulted in new forms of religious variants being created on the basis of the existing order.24 In both cases, the pressure of religion was reflected in a dominantly theological lexicon that communicated values of spirituality, community, and faith. It also invoked figures of aberrant resurrection and archaic remnants of traditional religions, figures from familial and ethnic traditions preserved and resuscitated as cultic movements.25 Religious words, figures, scripts and themes of Catholicism were ‘recycled, appealed to, exploited, and banalised’.26 Thus, God’s might was taken to be manipulable through magical acts, objects, and substances, such as water, stones, and oil.27 The recycling was made possible by the existence of a fertile and easily adaptable cultic environment. The recognition in the Acholi religion of the existence of a force similar to the Holy Spirit allowed this adaptability and enabled these spiritual movements to garner the support of both traditional believers and Catholics. Traditional Acholi religion included a belief in jogi (jok, sing.), translated as ‘power’. Using the power of jok for personal gain in private matters and for destruction constituted witchcraft, while the same power used in a public milieu for legitimate ends belonged to the chief and the priest.28

The Acholi incorporated jok into non-indigenous religions, including Christianity and Islam. Hence, there evolved Jok Allah and Jok Jesus. Christian jogi became known as tipu, the Acholi term for the ghost of a dead relative. The Holy Spirit was translated into Tipu Maleng. Someone possessed of the Tipu Maleng was considered a healer and a prophet, mostly with a large number of followers. No wonder then that these two Ugandan movements claimed and convinced people to believe that the Holy Spirit lies at the centre of their cultic practices and rituals. Although there is a clear and strong desire to relate these traditional beliefs with the established churches, the Holy Spirit being the unifying factor, much about the movements’ practices owed little to modern Christian doctrine.29 It is, however, fair to argue that following the penetration of Catholicism into Acholiland, the Acholi religion was not only

28. Ibid., 173.
29. Ibid., 175–76.
Christianised, but Christian teachings were also Acholicised. For instance, both movements promulgated and applied what are referred to as 'Holy Spirit safety precautions' and 'Holy Spirit tactics', or ways of warfare in which modern techniques were combined with magical practices. These movements epitomised the melding of spiritual redemption and political opposition. Their soldiers were considered to be more than warriors incarnate, but warrior spirits forming the spiritual force of the movements.

Each movement emerged from years of military rule, ethnic conflict, and social turmoil, and both were perceived by their leaders and followers as prophetic spirit movements, as armies of God fighting the evils of this world. Both were also rooted in local religious traditions renewed in the face of war and upheaval. Many observers acknowledge that Kony’s LRA grew directly from Alice Lakwena’s Holy Spirit Movement, in which thousands of Acholi rebels met their deaths by walking into government bullets, believing Lakwena’s assurance that the shea butter oil anointing their chests would fend off bullets.

It seems that the Ugandan movements adapted the tactics used by the Maji Maji Movement that waged a political and military struggle to liberate East Africa from German invaders in the early twentieth century. The leaders of the movement relied on religion and belief in the power of a supernatural faith and the powers of their consecrated holy water to fully armour them and protect them against the deadly effects of the German bullets and artillery fire. The Maji Maji believed they were God’s holy warriors and invincible because they were supernaturally armed with their deep religious faith, reinforced by ritual baths in holy oil (moya), baptisms in consecrated holy water (Maji), and the practice of magic. All this, however, proved to be tragically inadequate in the face of the better-armed German troops.

Both Ugandan movements had an internal, spiritual calling to purify the souls of its Acholi compatriots and the broader agenda of their political emancipation. These agendas, however, changed continuously. Alice Lakwena first sought to save Uganda, but after that she wanted to save the rest of the world from corrupt governance with the pope presiding. Joseph Kony sought to do the same, but he wanted to accomplish this divine theocracy, based on the strict observance of the Ten Commandments of God, through a holy war waged by the Lord’s Resistance Army.

Both Lakwena and Kony attracted large followings because they were recognised by a cross-section of marginalised communities as symbols of their plight and their aspirations as well as the vehicles through which to vent the social discontent wide-
spread in northern Uganda at the time. Both leaders apparently consulted spirits in making decisions, a useful mechanism eliminating any personal accountability and also making it difficult for others to use it. It has been reported that attempts to negotiate with Kony’s group ‘proved impossible, since so many issues had to be referred back to the spirits’. 

THE HOLY SPIRIT MOVEMENT

Sir, here before you are your soldiers. Bless them so that all bad things in them remain under this big tree. Cast out all demons that may want to possess them.

The Holy Spirit movement emerged in northern Uganda in the 1980s to challenge the national government, along with at least five other such movements with similar names. Their prevalence had been attributed by some as possible reactions to the tribal biases of Ugandan leader Idi Amin, who had filled positions of authority with members of his own tribe. The fact that he was an active Muslim in a predominantly Christian society was an important indicator of how his actions would be interpreted. Alice Auma, who later adopted the surname Lakwena, meaning messiah or saviour, was a Roman Catholic and ‘the self-proclaimed divinely called “prophetess of God”’. She believed herself to be God’s supernaturally commissioned messiah for the Acholi people and a saviour against the domination of evil spirits and oppression of the devil.

Lakwena’s movement was both aimed at fighting internal evil (in the form of soldiers), witchcraft and sorcery, and external evil (in the form of the National Resistance Army of Uganda). The Holy Spirit Movement was both an Acholi and supra-ethnic regional cult that served as an effective (politico-religious) basis for armed resistance by northern Ugandans against the state. To defeat external sin required armed force, and to defeat internal sin demanded spiritual purification. Once attaining the latter, movement soldiers should have no fear of enemy bullets, allowing them to stand in line singing psalms while their spirits deflect the government’s bullets. Defeat was considered a consequence of the individual’s moral backsliding, not of the superior military strength of the enemy.

The battle was a crusade against the demonic powers of the devil, of which President Yoweri Museveni and his troops were believed to be the physical manifestations and
evil incarnations in the world. Therefore, these forces of the devil had to be eliminated from the region to cleanse the land of defilement and ritual pollution. Both Lakwena and Kony engaged in religious and magical rituals designed to cleanse Acholi land of the moral, political, and military evil and pollution caused by the occupation of ‘foreign’ troops from the south and the shedding of innocent blood.\(^{43}\) Indoctrination involving these ideals and beliefs was done through elaborate initiation rites. According to Heike Behrend, initiates were made to burn their old clothes and any magic charms they possessed and swear by the Bible that they would no longer practice any forms of sorcery or witchcraft. They were then anointed with shea oil and made holy, which was believed to have made them immune to harm from bullets. Once they cleansed themselves, the soldiers were called upon to cleanse the land from evil.\(^{44}\)

During 1986–1987, Lakwena’s forces at times made swift advances and subsequently managed to get within sixty miles of the capital, Kampala. In late summer 1987, however, Ugandan government forces unleashed their heavy artillery, resulting in the merciless slaughter of the holy warriors as self-sacrificial Christian martyrs.\(^{45}\) Some of the military gains made by the Holy Spirit Movement are attributed to their belief in magic and witchcraft. Even some government forces believed this, as some of them turned and fled at the first sight of the Holy Spirit warriors.\(^{46}\) The defeated Lakwena fled to Kenya, where she lived in political exile. She fell sick, allegedly due to hardship, distress, and unhygienic living conditions, and died in a refugee camp on 27 January 2007.\(^{47}\)

Religious actors are often not ‘rational’, a characteristic that also pertains to the philosophical foundations of ethno-religious conflict. As the justifications of conflict often have long histories and are based on mythologies, metaphors, historical memories, or mere rhetoric, irrationality is often inevitable. Such justifications play to individuals’ emotions, not their rational minds.\(^{48}\) The involvement of some cult leaders in cannibalistic practices is telling of their irrationality and deviation from the precepts of their mother religion. The *New Vision*, a Ugandan daily loyal to the government, reported about an alleged act of cannibalism by Lakwena: ‘Alice murdered a child in a ghastly ritual sacrifice after the second attack on Lira 21 March [1987]. Lakwena found a woman who had twins and took one of them. The child was then killed and its liver eaten by the rebel soldier. The sacrifice was intended to strengthen rebels through witchcraft’.\(^{49}\)

**THE LORD’S RESISTANCE ARMY**

Lakwena was, after her own defeat, succeeded by Kony, a former Catholic catechist who formed the infamous, armed, and violent Lord’s Resistance Army, originally the

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44. Behrend, ‘Is Alice Lakwena a witch?’, 167.
Uganda Christian Democratic Army. Kony claims to be following the commands of the Holy Spirit, but in practice his movement performs an eclectic mix of rituals, with bits drawn from Christianity, the indigenous Acholi tribal religion, and Islam. A relative of Lakwena, Kony claimed to have inherited her spiritual powers and mobilised her remaining troops. He revamped her military and religious ideologies and decided to use conventional guerrilla tactics. The prevailing social and political circumstances lend credence to Colin Campbell’s observation that ‘a generally supportive cultic milieu continually gives birth to new cults, absorbing the debris of the dead ones and creating new generations of cult-prone individuals to maintain the high level of membership turnover’.

Some have called Kony’s movement a ‘mystical rebellion’, while others view it as ‘a Christian cult . . . led by a former Catholic’. The LRA began as a movement aimed at bringing about political change (instrumental motivation), but soon transformed itself into a group driven by existential motivations with a focus on self-perpetuation and self-protection. Not only did the group’s motivations change, but so did its tactics. Once the ‘de facto representative of the Acholi ethnic community,’ it later turned against its own people, in part, due to their lack of support from the group.

Kony’s advocacy of ethnic cleansing led to the torture, maiming, and killing of thousands of innocent Acholi people, especially those who allegedly co-operated with the ‘foreign’ invaders. Kony planned and sought to replace them with what he perceived as a new ‘ethically purer’ generation of proud, strong, and ‘ethically patriotic Acholi people’, the majority of whom would be his own descendants. As a consequence, he raided areas in northern Uganda and kidnapped hundreds of young schoolgirls who were forced into being his wives. Kony’s attempt to be the ‘Adam’ of the next generation of the people of Acholiland is noteworthy.

According to Joseph Wasonga, all LRA members were required to be ritually initiated and cleansed, which involved clubbing, stamping, and beating to death their friends and relatives. ‘Some initiates have had to lick brains, drink blood, and eat flesh of their dead relatives as part of the indoctrination process’. Kony kept a number of animals around him, such as snakes, turtles, and chameleons, through which he supposedly communicated with the spirits. In the camps, LRA members engaged in such
practices as pouring water over one’s head before crossing a river or sewing a stone and wearing it around one’s wrist to keep bullets at bay.\textsuperscript{58}

Kony’s movement has strong similarities to the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone. The camp culture of the LRA was clearly based on a charismatic, prophetic authority, a strong millenarian eschatological vision, and strict maintenance of symbolic boundaries upheld through initiation rites and commensality.\textsuperscript{59} Kony’s followers believed that the Holy Spirit spoke to him and heard Kony speaking in what appeared to be ‘divine tongues’, a semblance of the famous linguistic expression of Holy Spirit baptism in Pentecostal Christianity. There have also been reports of abducted children being anointed as a form of ritual cleansing and purification, applying shea oil in the sign of the cross, on their foreheads, chest, and their guns, apparently for protection from bullets. Rebels sang prayer songs and Catholic hymns when marching into battle. Death would only result from a failure to observe cultic injunctions or to obey the Holy Spirit as Kony understood it. They were led to believe that once dead, they would enter God’s kingdom.\textsuperscript{60} This is an example of how religious symbols were employed to give a Christian face to purely cultic initiation rites.

The LRA was combated and forced out of Uganda by the superior fire power of the Ugandan army in 2006. Some rogue elements of the rebel movement still roam parts of the interlocking rainforest jungle of the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Sudan. The International Criminal Court had in 2005 issued an arrest warrant for Kony, who remains at-large. In October 2011, the U.S. administration of President Barack Obama approved the deployment of approximately 100 combat-equipped Special Operations troops to lead the search for Kony in the deep jungles of central Africa.\textsuperscript{61} After the first year of the deployment, Washington issued a reward of $5 million for information leading to the arrest or capture of the fugitive warlord.\textsuperscript{62}

**FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The history of a number of African civil wars in the postcolonial era have been associated with an overt or covert religious agenda. While some have been cloaked as a quest for a cosmic order or a theocracy, others have primarily been politically motivated but cloaked in a religious credo that feeds on traditional cults to sustain the wars. The Ugandan cultic wars are part of this infamous history. The two cultic movements implicated in the conflicts in northern Uganda, the Holy Spirit Movement and the Lord’s Resistance Army, have primarily been political struggles fuelled by ethnic solidarity between the warlords and the people they mobilised for war and sustained through the manipulation of religious and cultic symbols and rituals. There was a clear evolution between the tactics used by Lakwena and those used by Kony. The

\textsuperscript{58} Human Rights Watch, *Scars of Death*, 34–35.
\textsuperscript{60} Human Rights Watch, *Scars of Death*, 35.
\textsuperscript{62} ‘US offers reward for Uganda warlord Kony’, Al Jazeera, 4 April 2013.
creation of the LRA was a rhetorical tactic to lend a cosmic dimension to the war. It seems that the name was a deliberate choice to create a semblance to the Salvation Army and the Crusades. Although the cult was the organizing notion that bonded members, ethnicity and a desire for a nation of one’s own contributed immensely in creating a semblance of unity of purpose among members.

The conflicts instigated by both movements have had a number of socio-religious triggers, which include a political pretext: an undercurrent of ethnic and political resentment—which soon took a religious dimension—in the form of an oppressive political system and a government of the devil and his followers. While the political dimension was reinforced by the void in leadership for organized political opposition, which was readily filled by ‘spiritual’ leaders with their own supposed political ambitions, the religious dimension was further embellished by the prevalent fertile cultic milieu. These movements thus combined the twin objectives of spiritual redemption and political opposition, both intricately intertwined.

The religious dimension was doubled-edged. It served the purpose of the quest for political change—creating a theocratic Acholiland—sought by those disenfranchised and at the same time gave them a sense of redemption, dignity, and empowerment. The politico-religious justifications offered by the warlords were appealing to both the devout seeking a theocratic state and the politically disenfranchised seeking a change towards more democratic political administration. These justifications ensured continuity of leadership and membership in the cultic movements. Hence, the gun—sacralised through religious and cultic initiations—offered an alternative voice for the voiceless and for rectifying humiliation suffered in politics through cultist religious de-humiliation and fellowship.

Furthermore, the two cultist religion warlord figures had a central place in the mobilisation of soldiers to fearless combat. The newfound religious fellowship among a politically disenfranchised populace, especially youth, facilitated the recruitment drive (not forgetting that abduction was an important means of recruitment) and the mobilisation of fearless combatants.

The two leaders not only claimed miraculous powers and eschatological calling, leading to their creating personality cults, but also promised a future in an ethnically cohesive and prosperous theocratic Acholiland. Members were not just religious warriors but members of a sect or a religion and soldiers of the Holy Spirit. Religion was thus innovatively fused with cult, which, coupled with the charisma of the warlords, ensured the ongoing recruitment of soldiers as well as their defiance in the face of death. The employment of spiritual tactics, or so-called Holy Spirit tactics, in conjunction with conventional guerrilla warfare techniques helped create a strange genre of combat and combatants who hurled stones in lieu of grenades and used shea oil as bulletproof vests. Under those circumstances, death in combat was considered the result of religious backsliding or of impiety on the part of the soldier, but until that moment arrived, death of the true ‘Holy Spirit soldier’ was given a different name—martyrdom.

The movements have had only limited success, for various reasons, in bringing about political change. First, in the big picture, both movements challenged the status quo and opposed the political system, but for the LRA in particular, and the Holy Spirit Movement less so, there was no real clarity about the nature of the theocracy
being sought. They challenged the state’s legitimacy by promoting a vision of an alternative order that would take the form of ‘a state within a state’ or a transnational organization that supersedes the state. Both approaches constitute a direct challenge to state primacy. Such movements seek to reverse the process of secularisation and to move religion to the centre stage of the social order as the primary source of authorisation for social relations.63

Second, these movements aimed not just to replace one political system with another but sought to transform the essence of that system. The basis of their authority was spiritual revelation, their mission, a transcendental mandate, and their organizations, representatives of ultimate reality.64 This radical detachment from the established socio-political order, which is characteristic of prophetic movements, puts individuals in a moral dilemma. Both adherents and the movement as a whole are placed in a liminal position between the phenomenal and the transcendent realms.65 Unlike the vital institutional processes and rituals for sustaining the socio-political order, such as voting and jury trials, which empower individuals within that order, the rituals of prophetic movements detach individuals from the existing order. That is, these rituals seek to maintain a constant connection with the transcendental.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The foregoing discussions help shed light on how to potentially avert similar conflicts and ensure reintegration, redress, justice, and recovery. First, at the level of community and nation building, infrastructure devastated by Uganda’s civil wars must be rebuilt. Post-war reconstruction and reintegration efforts should be intensified for the simple reason that a good majority of the Acholi people have been forced to live as internally displaced persons (IDPs). Their rural agricultural lifestyle has been disrupted, if not destroyed, and their cultural practices interrupted because of protracted displacements and prolonged stay in IDP camps. A restoration of their proud cultural traditions and livelihoods should be the first priority. Creating income-generating opportunities, coupled with vocational training, for returnees would facilitate economic integration and economic stability. This is crucial because youth unemployment has been a trigger of disenfranchisement. It should not be forgotten that it was the untapped pool of unemployed youth who fell under Lakwena and Kony’s spells.

Reintegration services should provide trauma counseling and psycho-social support services to victims and perpetrators. The latter were mostly involved in committing brutal atrocities under duress, hence can also be considered victims. Though it might be extremely difficult, educational reintegration of such children can facilitate societal integration and the provision of support services. The school is the ideal place for children to integrate and for bringing victims and perpetrators together under the same roof.

64. Ibid.,14.
65. Ibid., 15.
Second, efforts should be made to pursue inclusive national negotiations towards building a cohesive national identity and sense of statehood, where political participation, inclusion, equitable distribution of resources, and social integration are the norms. Issues of political and economic disenfranchisement have to be tackled head-on. Historical policy mistakes that polarised ethnic groups and weakened unity within diversity have to be rectified in earnest. National unity and political inclusiveness must override tendencies toward ethnicisation of politics and politicisation of ethnicity.

Third, once peace and the resettlement of the displaced have been achieved, justice and accountability should follow. The application of justice for those responsible for gruesome atrocities should be an important priority. It is often the case that justice is sacrificed or deferred for the sake of peace, allowing people who committed horrific acts to walk away. What Moses Chrispus Okello has called the ‘false polarization of peace and justice’ should be avoided.66 Simplistic compromises made for the sake of peace trivialise crimes against humanity and create more Konys and more victims. Condemnation of such atrocities in the strongest of cultural and local religious terms should, therefore, accompany formal justice.

As rightly noted in regard to the 2007 agreement between the Ugandan government and the LRA, it is important to promote traditional justice mechanisms, as practiced in communities affected by a conflict, ‘with necessary modifications, as a central part of the framework for accountability and reconciliation’. The recognition of accountability within reconciliation is noteworthy.67 A good starting point might be the celebrated mato oput, the Acholi ritual performed to bring about reconciliation and justice after conflict (despite it being criticised by some for its potential to undermine accountability and justice).68 The ritual involves the perpetrator pleading guilty, repenting, asking for forgiveness, and paying compensation to his or her victims.

Fourth, given the gendered dimension of the conflicts, it is crucial to deconstruct and de-legitimise, mainly through traditional methods, the prevailing negative attitude towards female victims of war-related sexual violations and children born in captivity to ensure full integration. This can be attempted through public sensitisation and mass media campaigns as well as adult education programmes involving the general public, victims, and former combatants.

Fifth, it is important to invert the very spiritual, cultural, and religious values and symbols that triggered and sustained the conflicts and use them for reconciliation and post-conflict reconstruction. Besides its effect as an antidote to neutralize the tendency of exploiting cultist religion for war purposes, invoking cults or religion in conflict resolution and peacemaking would deprive ill-advised warlords of the fertile

cultic milieu in which to thrive, thereby deterring similar, potential atrocities being committed, under the guise of cultist religion, in the future.

Sixth, and equally important, the ethnic underpinnings of the conflicts must be addressed, in addition to the religious and cultist drivers, if permanent peace is to be achieved. Religions and cults cannot and do not operate within a vacuum. The important social, cultural, and political factors that create the fertile ground in which they thrive, and the pretext for manipulating religion and cult for war purposes, also need to be addressed. Among these factors, the role of ethnicity stands out. Therefore, any effort at ensuring permanent peace in Uganda, and similar contexts elsewhere, must also look into the role of ethnicity in conflict. While a cult (coloured with religion) might serve as the transcendental bond holding members together, ethnicity provides them their earthly identity and fellowship. Both play an instrumental role in mobilising members to violence. These dual identity markers allow actors to constantly change positions between ethnic allegiance and cultic faithfulness, at times rendering efforts at peace intractable. The dual attempt in Uganda’s cultist wars to create an ethnically cohesive Acholiland and a spiritually pure Acholi community is evidence of how ethnicity and cult can at times create an extraordinary melange.
A wide consensus has emerged in recent years that successful policymaking and programming in conflict situations must start with an accurate understanding of local context, conflict actors, causes, and the dynamic relationships among them.

— Lawrence Woocher¹

UNTIL 2006 NORTHERN UGANDA HAD BEEN THE ‘HEARTLAND’ OF A ‘SORTED THEATRE OF WAR’ for some twenty-five years.² The northern Uganda conflict—fought between the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and the Uganda People’s Defense Forces (UPDF)—has devastated the area for nearly three decades, claiming hundreds of lives and displacing and condemning more than 1.6 million people to life in refugee camps under appalling conditions. In addition, more than 20,000 children were abducted and conscripted into the ranks of the LRA, where they faced being brutally killed should they attempt to escape.³ Civilians were attacked ferociously.

While military confrontation ceased in 2006, the LRA conflict has continued to elude resolution. Four main approaches have been unsuccessfully tried: military crackdown, amnesty, litigation, and negotiation. The military approach, focused on an elimination effect, proved incapable of ushering in durable peace, and amnesty efforts bogged down over power struggles; litigation, through indictment by the International Criminal Court (ICC), was dubbed a ‘peace spoiler’ because it complicated implementation of the agreement reached through the Juba peace process.

Negotiation is regarded as the most viable approach for ending the conflict and achieving sustainable peace, especially if based on the participation of local stakeholders and if it addresses the root causes of the conflict.

The 2006 peace talks held in Juba between the government of Uganda and the LRA, with the leadership of southern Sudan playing a mediating role, is credited with having initiated a period of unprecedented Sudan playing a mediating role, is credited with having initiated a period of unprecedented peace and stability in northern Uganda, allowing some one million internally displaced persons (IDPs) to return to their homes.\(^4\) A fundamental setback to the peace process occurred in December 2008, when a combined force of the UPDF, the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA), and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo launched Operation Lightening Thunder against LRA rebels operating from and in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The objective was to decisively defeat the LRA, which had intensified its activities in southern Sudan, northeastern DRC, and southern parts of the Central African Republic (CAR). This joint military operation, like those before it, failed to achieve its purpose.

The failure to peacefully resolve the LRA conflict and build sustainable peace stems in part from the lack of a clear strategy and from the failure to distinguish and manage variations between the approaches used and the overall strategies employed. The analysis here is based on John-Paul Lederach’s integrated framework for peacebuilding while also drawing lessons from other related approaches.\(^5\) A strategy for approaching the LRA should address the four key aspects highlighted in the opening epithet by Lawrence Woocher, namely, the local context, conflict actors, causes of the conflict, and relationships among the various stakeholders.

**PROGRESSION AND FAILURE OF PEACE PROCESSES IN NORTHERN UGANDA**

The northern Uganda conflict is the most protracted and devastating conflict in the history of post-independence Uganda. It is regularly misconceived, incorrectly portrayed, or simply ignored.\(^6\) The conflict broke out in August 1986 and raged for more than two decades. Its causes are attributed to a constellation of factors, but largely to the mistreatment of former soldiers of the defeated Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) and civilians in northern Uganda by the National Resistance Army (NRA) in addition to attacks by the SPLA on refugee camps in southern Sudan where UNLA soldiers had taken refuge.\(^7\) UNLA fighters crossed back into Uganda from Sudan, where they had been exiled after defeat by the NRA in January 1986, to attack NRA


\(^5\) John-Paul Lederach, Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies (Washington, D.C., United States Institute of Peace, 1997).


detachments in the Gulu district. The conflict disrupted the area while other parts of Uganda moved forward with economic and political development.

The LRA conflict is typically assessed through six phases characterizing its progression. These phases differ according to the timing and focus of various analysts, but each ends in a failed attempt at peace. This article considers a seventh phase covering the exportation of the conflict to the Republic of South Sudan, northern DRC, and CAR, a development that has complicated the conflict in terms of its depth, effect, and possibility of a durable solution.


The first phase of the Ugandan conflict, 1986 and 1988, involved remnants of the UNLA regrouping as the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA) in southern Sudan to attack northern Uganda. Although the invaders were eventually repulsed, they managed to reach Apac, Gulu, Kitgum, and Lira districts, attacking NRA units and committing atrocities against civilians. This first phase of the conflict ended with two peace initiatives: the presidential pardon and amnesty of 1987 and the NRA-UPDA agreement of June 1988, referred to as the Peace Peace Accord.

Paul Omach, Christopher Dolan, and Caroline Lamwaka contend that the majority of UPDA soldiers were brought out of the bush by the 1988 deal. Contacts with the armed groups were facilitated by local elders, religious and cultural leaders, and the civilian population. The agreement failed to bring about lasting peace reportedly because the government only perceived it as an instrument for obtaining the surrender of the UPDA and thus did not implement the agreement as it continued pursuing a military approach.

The LRA and the 1993–1994 Bigombe Peace Talks

The second phase of the conflict lasted from 1988 to 1994. The UPDA’s operations in northern Uganda got the attention of Joseph Kony, a young man with spiritual inclinations, who apparently joined the rebel group, operating in Pader district. The UPDA, however, was initially attracted more to Alice Lakwena, a charismatic medium and leader of the Holy Spirit Movement who led a swift and spectacular run at capturing power before being defeated in an attempt to enter Jinja in 1987. Kony, therefore,
formed his own group, the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). This second phase of the conflict is characterized by the LRA as the main rebel group.\textsuperscript{14}

Cultural and religious leaders and local elders maintained their role as peace advocates and intermediaries during this second phase. The LRA’s prominence and atrocities, however, prompted the government to pursue an active self-defense policy by mobilizing residents to create ‘bow and arrow’ groups for civilian self-defense.\textsuperscript{15} The government intensified its military efforts against rebel activities and in 1991 launched a major military counterinsurgency codenamed Operation North. Despite the robust and brutal tactics employed, they did not succeed in defeating the insurgents. Instead, the rebels unleashed more terror against civilian populations.\textsuperscript{16}

Appearing to recommit itself to peaceful means, the Uganda government in 1993 established the Ministry for Pacification of the North. It was headed by Betty Bigombe, an Acholi from northern Uganda, who quickly made contact and initiated talks with the LRA.\textsuperscript{17} Her considerable efforts included identifying and working with the military, civilians, and religious and traditional leaders who had the trust of the LRA. Nonetheless, her initiative lost steam close to the scheduled signing of an agreement in February 1994. Whereas the government favored a quick resolution of the situation, the LRA demanded more time, which the government claimed the rebels wanted for relocating to Sudan. President Yoweri Museveni issued a seven-day ultimatum for the LRA to disarm or face retribution. The ultimatum was the last blow to the Bigombe peace effort, prompting the LRA to abandon negotiations and resort to the bush.\textsuperscript{18}

**Conflict Escalation and the Acholi Diaspora**

The third phase, from 1994 to 1999, saw a considerable escalation through intensification of military activity on both sides following the failure of Bigombe’s effort.\textsuperscript{19} In addition, the Sudanese government increased support for the LRA in retaliation for Uganda’s support of the SPLA. Internal displacements grew with the government’s institutionalization of so-called protected villages, which evolved into little more than refugee camps for internally displaced persons. Concerned by the worsening situation, especially following the abduction of 139 girls from St. Mary’s College in Aboke in October 1996, the international community and, more particularly, the Acholi diaspora recommitted to a peaceful settlement. This led to the creation of Kacoke Madit (lit., ‘big meeting’) by the Acholi diaspora in 1997 to promote a negotiated approach to resolving the conflict. The initiative brought together representatives of the


\textsuperscript{15} Afako, ‘Pursuing peace in northern Uganda’.

\textsuperscript{16} Dolan, ‘Understanding war and its continuation’.

\textsuperscript{17} Afako, ‘Pursuing peace in northern Uganda’; Dolan, ‘Understanding war and its continuation’.


\textsuperscript{19} ACCORD, ‘Protracted conflict, elusive peace’; Dolan and Hovil, ‘Humanitarian protection in Uganda’.
Ugandan government and LRA at various meetings, but peace remained elusive. By the end of the period, however, the level of violence had declined as a result of it.20

The December 1999 Nairobi Peace Accord

The fourth phase of the conflict, 2000 to 2002, is characterized primarily by the December 1999 Nairobi peace accord and its failure. The deal, between the Sudanese and Ugandan governments, was intended to pave the way for the normalization of relations and cessation of hostilities in regard to Khartoum’s support of the LRA and Kampala’s backing of the SPLA.21 The meeting was brokered by former U.S. president Jimmy Carter and chaired by Kenyan president Daniel arap Moi. As with most agreements, the Nairobi accord faltered at implementation. In July 2000, under the Lome Non-Paper, both governments, through meditation by Libya and Egypt, agreed to push ahead in the search for regional peace.22 The effort did not last long, and military offensives continued unabated.

Operation Iron Fist of 2002 and Heightened Insecurity

The fifth phase of the conflict emerged during 2002–2003. Dolan notes that this phase brought the launch of Operation Iron Fist in 2002, a counterinsurgency across southern Sudan designed to crush the LRA once and for all.23 The operation failed, and instead resulted in a boomerang effect, as the LRA reentered Uganda in June and spread to regions hitherto unaffected, in particular, Langi and Teso in the north and northeast. Heightened insecurity in the region became commonplace, characterized by horrific incidents of abductions, the killing of civilians, and LRA raids on IDP camps.24

International Interest and the 2006 Juba Peace Process

The sixth phase of the conflict, between 2004 and 2008, was characterized by two episodes: increased international interest in its peaceful resolution by the United Nations and ICC and the 2006 Juba peace process. The LRA was referred to the ICC in 2004 by the Ugandan government, with the top LRA leaders charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity. The court issued sealed warrants for their arrests.25 To some observers, the ICC’s actions made it a ‘peace spoiler’, because the indictments complicated the implementation of an amnesty and the 2006 Juba peace agreement.26 As R. C. Johansen wrote, ‘The first phase of judicial influence provided

20. ACCORD, Protracted conflict, elusive peace.
24. Ibid.
an incentive for LRA leaders to decide to seek a cease-­fire agreement, but in a second
phase, the indictments slowed progress in finding terms for an agreement that would
be accepted by all.’27 He also noted that the ‘ICC was not ready to quash the indict­ments, and the LRA indictees would not accept the ceasefire without amnesty.’28 In
addition, the ICC was viewed by local actors as undermining traditional mechanisms
of reconciliation and reintegration.29 Once involved, the UN Security Council roundly
rejected the Ugandan government’s insistence on a military solution and consequently
launched protection activities through its agencies along with nongovernmental organi­
izations.30

The Juba peace process, launched in June 2006, restarted talks between the govern­
ment and the LRA under the mediation of the SPLM provisional government in
southern Sudan. As recounted by John Baptist Odama, the negotiations began well,
and by September a partial accord on the secession of hostilities had been signed.31
The final peace agreement was developed by the negotiators at the beginning of 2008,
but was never signed by the LRA leadership. Regardless, with the inauguration of the
Juba peace process, northern Uganda witnessed an unprecedented period of peace
and stability and an era of homecoming for most displaced persons.32

According to Odama, as the LRA leadership sought more time to understand the
implications of the ICC’s indictment before signing the peace accord, the government
of Uganda reverted to military action. In December 2008, it launched Operation
Lightening Thunder in an attempt aimed at capturing or killing Kony and decimating
the LRA rebels.

Post-Juba and Escalation into Neighboring States

The seventh phase encompasses the post-Juba peace efforts to date.33 The failure
of the Juba peace process led to the exportation of the LRA conflict to the DRC, southern
Sudan, and the CAR. Trepidation came to surround how to resolve this complex and
internationalized conflict because of tilts in relations and associated impacts.

The government in Kampala vowed never to allow a return of the LRA conflict to
Ugandan soil, as neighboring countries nursed the wounds inflicted on them by a
problem that was not of their making. This vow seemed not unreasonable given that

28. Ibid.
29. Interview with Okema Lazech Santo, program coordinator, Ker Kwoar Acholi, Gulu, 19 April 2011.
31. Interview with Archbishop John Baptist Odama, Acholi Religious Peace Initiative, Archbishop’s
residence, Gulu, 21 April 2011. Odama was a member of the team that met with Kony in the Garamba for­
est in the DRC during the Juba process.
32. Erin Baines and J. Hopwood, ‘With or without peace: Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegra­
tion in northern Uganda,’ Field Notes no. 6, Justice and Reconciliation Project, Gulu, 2008.
the LRA had been substantially decimated, if not vanquished. The remaining LRA rebels are believed to number less than 200 and reduced to eking out a miserable existence in forests. The situation in northern Uganda remains delicate, however, despite half a decade of security advances and negative peace. There is some concern that interested groups might take advantage of the volatile situation to join or support the conflict to advance their own interests, especially given the weak nature of the national governments where the LRA currently operates.34

As such, the persistent failure to resolve the conflict calls for a strategy that addresses not only its root causes but also the interests of conflicting parties, bearing in mind the local contexts, actors, causes, and relationships.35 In short, it requires the integrated peacebuilding framework to inform and complement conflict resolution and peacebuilding strategies.

**THE INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING: AN OVERVIEW**

Several peacebuilding approaches to the LRA conflict have been suggested by peace scholars and practitioners. According to H. Culbertson, ‘Those developing an intervention strategy must consider whether to emphasize prioritization or integration’.36 One example of the prioritization model is provided by S. Stedman’s work on ending civil wars that divides peacebuilding into predetermined subgoals: demobilization and reintegration of combatants, disarmament, elections, human rights, and refugee repatriation.37 This method typifies the interventionist approach of traditional statist diplomacy that the integrated framework supplants.

The integrated framework for peacebuilding draws its justification from the nature of contemporary conflicts and the failures of international statist diplomacy to effectively and sustainably resolve them. Reflecting the reality of the northern Uganda conflict, Lederach observed, ‘[M]ost wars are located in settings on the margins of the world community that are struggling with poverty, inequalities, and underdevelopment’ and where communities ‘seem to be locked in a vicious cycle of confrontation and negotiation, where sporadic rounds of peace talks collapse, restart, and collapse again’.38 Besides, it is often only when a war or crisis has captured the attention of the international media, what A. Sitkowsk calls the ‘CNN syndrome’, that the international community responds with a crisis management approach and an urgency to implement a cease-fire and contain the ensuing pressures.39

Lederach argues that the crisis management approach is limited by the lack of long-term vision, myopic focus on crisis negotiation, and failure to appreciate the multiplicity and interdependence of peacebuilding roles and activities. Daniel Philpott

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34. Interview with Col. Felix M. Kulayigye, spokesperson for the Uganda People’s Defence Force, Ministry of Defence, Mbuya, Kampala, 21 September 2012.
35. Woocher, ‘Conflict assessment and intelligence analysis’.
38. Lederach, Building Peace, 17 and 73.
also advocates a comprehensive approach, asserting that ‘peacebuilding is far wider, deeper, and more encompassing and involves a far greater array of factors, activities, levels of society, links between societies and wider horizons than the dominant thinking recognizes’.40

To resolve conflicts and build sustainable peace, Lederach advances the integrated approach as a holistic strategy capable of bringing together efforts by the various levels of stakeholders to generate the synergies requisite for resolving the conflict and sustaining peace processes from short-term through medium- and long-term horizons. The integrated framework combines Marie Dugan’s nested paradigm of conflict foci, which considers levels of response in conflict resolution, and Lederach’s own model of the time frames perspective of peacebuilding activity.41 The two axes featuring the levels of response and time frame of activity represent distinct thoughts, issues, and actions in the broader process of peacebuilding and intersect at five points: root causes of the conflict, crisis management, vision for a peaceful future, conflict prevention, and transformation of relations from conflict to peaceful relationships. The integrated framework follows a systems approach to conflict analysis and syncs well with the actual business of conflict resolution and peacebuilding in conflict situations.

Summarizing the rationale and focus of the integrated framework, Lederach observed, ‘The nature and characteristics of contemporary conflict suggest the need for a set of concepts that go beyond traditional statist diplomacy. Building peace in today’s conflicts calls for long-term commitment to establishing an infrastructure across the levels of society, an infrastructure that empowers the resources for reconciliation from within that society and maximizes the contribution from outside. Building the house of peace relies on a foundation of multiple actors and activities aimed at achieving and sustaining reconciliation’.42 Lederach’s observation points to a line of thought that goes well beyond the narrow perspective of traditional diplomacy—which emphasizes top-level leaders and short-term objectives—to advocating a holistic approach that seeks to address the structural causes of conflict through the multiplicity of stakeholders across all levels of society in a sustainable manner. Indeed, addressing the structural contradictions at the root of a conflict is vital and has become a dominant approach in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.43 Johann Galtung contends similarly through the diagnosis-prognosis-therapy triangle that every peace researcher must look for causes (diagnosis), conditions and contexts within which conflicts occur (prognosis), and the deliberate efforts to move the system back to the well state (therapy). Galtung’s approach also goes beyond root causes to address local context and presupposes actors and underlying relations as proposed under the integrated framework.44

The integrated approach articulated by P. Okoth and B. A. Ogot holds that to establish durable peace, parties must analyze the structural causes of conflict and initiate

42. Lederach, Building Peace, xvi.
structural social change through institution building and strengthening of civil society.\textsuperscript{45} In accordance, peacebuilding initiatives should seek to fix the core problems underlying conflict and alter the pattern of interaction of the involved parties, to move them from a condition of extreme vulnerability and dependency to self-sufficiency and well-being. The analyses of the peace processes in northern Uganda reveals a dearth of attempts among the parties to address the structural causes of the conflict.

The integrated framework suggests a structural approach recognizing ‘the need to think comprehensively about the affected population and systematically about the issues’ and a procedural approach that considers ‘the necessity of thinking creatively about the progression of conflict and the sustainability of its transformation by linking roles, functions, and activities in an integrated manner.’\textsuperscript{46} Explicit in this trajectory is a peacebuilding paradigm that transcends the arcane and often ritualistic, one-dimensional interventionist approach through traditional mediation viewed by some as unlikely to produce comprehensive or lasting conflict resolution.\textsuperscript{47} The new paradigm seeks not only to resolve conflict, but to transform them into peaceful relations. In fact, some observers contend that peacebuilding activities—which include conflict prevention, management, and resolution, as well as social reconstruction and healing in the post-conflict environment—run the gamut of conflict transformation.\textsuperscript{48}

Writing about the integrated framework for peacebuilding, John Prendergast isolated four frameworks with which it is associated: actors and approaches to peacebuilding, the nested paradigm of conflict foci, the time dimension in peacebuilding, and transformative approaches to training.\textsuperscript{49} These four aspects closely correspond to Woocher’s view that appropriate consideration of the local context, conflict actors, causes of conflict, and the dynamic nature of relationships underlie effective policy making and programming in peacebuilding, by which the search for a viable strategy is hypothesized. These should not be seen as separate processes, because in reality they intersect and mutually reinforce each other.

**THE INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK AND THE NORTHERN UGANDA CONFLICT**

As noted above, the integrated framework for peacebuilding is defined by two axes: the levels of response and the time frame of activity. These two elements underscore the centrality of the actors and the full range of activities that characterize and guide the peace process, as well as the time frames within which they are accomplished. The peaceful resolution of the northern Uganda conflict depends, to a significant extent, on the actors and the approaches to peace used. In his integrated framework, Lederach

\textsuperscript{45.} P. Okoth and B. A. Ogot (eds.), *Conflict in Contemporary Africa* (Nairobi, Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, 2009).

\textsuperscript{46.} Lederach, *Building Peace*, 79.


identifies three levels of actors: the top-level, middle-range, and grassroots actors. Top leadership includes military, political, and religious leaders with high visibility. They focus on high-level negotiations, emphasize cease-fires, and are often led by a famous mediator. The middle-range leadership consists of ethnic and religious leaders and respected members of academia and civil society. They focus on problem-solving initiatives, such as trainings, workshops, and peace commissions. The grassroots actors are composed of local or community leaders and promote peace through local peace commissions, grassroots training, prejudice reduction, psycho-social work, and post-war trauma counseling. All such actors, albeit not as distinctly as presented in the integrated framework, are identifiable during the course of the northern Uganda conflict.

As hypothesized in the integrated framework for peacebuilding, top-level actors have dominated the conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes in northern Uganda. While the available evidence shows that the early phases of the conflict witnessed active involvement by middle-range and grassroots actors, they were always accorded low political leverage and lack of goodwill on behalf of the state. The disinterest by government in pursuing a non-military approach to the conflict, notwithstanding its involvement in several peace initiatives, reveals much about the persistence of the conflict.50 The unsatisfactory performance of the top-down approach in the Ugandan conflict suggests that priority be given to the integrated framework’s perspective that seeks to integrate top-down and bottom-up approaches for effective peacebuilding.

In recounting the 1988 Peace agreement, Paul Rubangkene credited the active participation of grassroots actors and middle-range religious and cultural leaders in persuading the LRA to assemble at the Peace memorial grounds in Gulu for peace talks.51 He noted that because of the high level of confidence generated through mass participation, rebels stayed in lodges in Gulu without fear of the army or community members. Rubangkene argues that if the government had been truly committed to peace, the conflict would have been resolved at that time. The government’s lack of commitment is also underscored by Lamwaka,52 who notes that while the UPDA was lobbying for an end to the fighting under a peace agreement responsive to the interests of all parties, the government and its allies were proposing surrender. The government’s failure to implement the agreement sealed its futility.53

Even in the second phase of the conflict, efforts by local actors to initiate contacts with the rebels and mobilize for peace were frustrated by the government’s intensification of its military approach, including mobilization of communities in self-defense paramilitary outfits.54 Only the intense violence resulting from atrocious rebel activities forced the government to craft an infrastructure for a coordinated response through peaceful means in the early 1990s.55 This resulted in the creation of the

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52. Lamwaka, ‘The peace process in northern Uganda’.
53. Omach, ‘Understanding obstacles to peace in the Great Lakes region’.
54. Afako, ‘Pursuing peace in northern Uganda’.
Ministry for Pacification of Northern Uganda. By working with community leaders and other local stakeholders, Bigombe's efforts through the ministry were bearing fruit before they were frustrated by the government's ultimatum ahead of the signing of the peace agreement.\textsuperscript{56}

The influence of grassroots actors was reduced with the increasing resort to militarism by government forces and rebels and the coming into play of external actors.\textsuperscript{57} The earliest involvement of international actors was the formation of Kacoke Madit by the Acholi diaspora in 1997 and the resulting blanket amnesty of January 2000. Similar efforts were registered with the December 1999 Nairobi peace talks and the July 2000 Lome Non-Paper, in which mediation by the Kenyan and U.S. governments was crucial, albeit ultimately unsuccessful.\textsuperscript{58} More incisive international participation took place in 2004, when the LRA was referred to the ICC and the 2006 Juba peace process.

The main reason for the failure of the Juba process was the LRA's reluctance to sign the comprehensive peace agreement, the cause of which is attributed to the government not according LRA leaders enough time to understand the terms of the ICC indictment against them prior to ratifying the agreement.\textsuperscript{59} Also important to note is that while local efforts yielded commendable results despite frustration with government actions and decisions, external efforts did not yield much in terms of positive results. Perhaps more critical is that they were pursued as separate efforts, lacking integration to yield synergies for sustainable peace.

Building on the role and approaches of conflict actors, the nested paradigm of conflict foci analyzes the immediate issues in a conflict, the relationships involved, the subsystems in which the problem is directly situated, and the broader concerns and responses at each level of actor. For the northern Uganda conflict, the paradigm suggests the need to assess not only the root causes of the conflict, but also the factors and issues that characterized its progression, as well as the nature of relationships among the actors underlying the entire process. Mindful that the nested paradigm aims at fusing actors with peacebuilding activities, caution must be exercised in searching for a lasting solution by going beyond the complacency in government circles that the LRA has been defeated and engage various actors in pursuit of durable peace.

Caution must also be taken to overcome the limitations of the failed past. Based on the integrated framework, to be effective and sustainable the complementary strategy for peace in northern Uganda should aim at engaging the principal parties in a dialogue that involves all actors at varying levels in an integrated and accountable manner. An effective strategy is marked by 'all process and structure oriented initiatives undertaken by actors involved in grassroots training, reconciliation initiatives, capacity-

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56. Dolan, 'Understanding war and its continuation'.
57. Lamwaka, 'The peace process in northern Uganda'.
58. Finnstrom, 'Living with bad surroundings'.
59. This view was presented during interviews with Odama, 21 April 2011, and with Nobert Mao, a former two-term member of parliament for Gulu municipality and former Gulu district chairperson, Kitgum, 21 March 2013. Mao was also a member of the team that met with Kony in in the DRC during the Juba process. Mao has been consistently critical of the government with regard to its lukewarm willingness to talk peace with the LRA.
Due to the conflict extending beyond Uganda’s borders, the role of external actors is critical. The representation of actors at all levels from all affected countries, as well as other interested international parties, must be sought. The integrated paradigm dictates, however, that their participation go beyond crisis response to constructively engage local stakeholders and generate unified efforts in the push for peace. The motive of the international actors must be beyond reproach. As observed by Andrew Mwenda, ‘As democracies subject to popular pressure, their response to humanitarian crises tends to be driven by emotions rather than sober deliberation. Thus, when images of barbaric massacres hit Western television screens, the knee jerk reaction of citizens is that their governments should intervene ‘to save lives’. Although most Western intervention is often initiated by obvious (and overt) humanitarian consideration, the underlying driver is often geostrategic and economic. This is largely because a purely humanitarian intervention cannot be sustained through the rough waters of conflict.’

Rubangkene shares the fear that interventions by external actors, largely in the form of humanitarian food aid, creation and facilitation of reception centers, and provision of psycho-social support, respond only to the symptoms of the conflict, not its root causes. This is in line with Galtung’s warning that interventions from outside should not be identified with therapy, because it might in the end make the situation worse. Hence, efforts by local actors must be possessed of genuine motives and the active participation of international actors for a peace process to be effective and sustainable. Implicit in this analysis is the need to harmonize the political motivations and humanitarian incentives that drive peace processes. Policy and legal leverage at the top must resonate with the legitimacy of the peace process at the bottom.

On time frames, Lederach asserts that peacebuilding involves a wide range of activities and functions that precede and follow cease-fires and formal peace accords. These aim at transforming a given conflict toward more peaceful relationships. While he proposes that building sustainable peace is a dynamic process that often requires decades of successive stages of peacebuilding, Peter Wallensteen believes that peacebuilding is a novel activity, and thus it is difficult to determine appropriate time frames. The inevitable corollary is that peacebuilding in terms of timing may vary from one situation to another, but what is indisputable is that it requires time to gestate properly.

Ronald Fisher, who views peacebuilding as a lengthy process, observed, ‘Peacebuilding is an associative approach that attempts to create a structure of peace . . . that removes the causes of war and provides the alternatives to war. This structure involves relations among a large domain of several parties that are equitable, interdependent, include a variety of people and types of exchange, and have a supportive superstruc-

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ture. Peacebuilding thus requires a process of nonviolent social change toward equality.⁶⁴

The integrated framework also recognizes the centrality of culture and seeks to transform cultural patterns in a conflict situation and the way people understand and respond to conflict. Since culture holds significant influence in northern Uganda, cultural resources must be constructively employed in handling the conflict. In fact, the Beyond Juba Project reported that traditional justice in northern Uganda has both local and national relevance and thus could contribute immensely toward addressing the legacies of the major conflicts in the region and day-to-day social infractions.⁶⁵ Interestingly, traditional justice is also associated with reconciliation and healing at the personal level. This process of healing is considered by H. van der Merwe as critical in reparation and dealing with the past traumas at all levels.⁶⁶ Thus, the strategy for peace in northern Uganda should actively engage traditional mechanisms for peace and reconciliation.

The transformative approaches to training, which are consistent with the shift from a conflict resolution perspective to one of conflict transformation, are more about the ‘creation of a dynamic process involving key people who together focus on the realities of the conflict in their context’ than ‘the transfer of content’.⁶⁷ Prendergast commends the efforts of the Swedish Life and Peace Institute in encouraging the formation of district councils in Somalia following the 1993 Addis Ababa agreement and training members to shape them as a mechanism for long-term institutional transformation.⁶⁸ Although their early implementation was hindered by parallel subclan structures and the fact that they were viewed as a foreign entity, they empowered councilors to analyze their political, economic, and social environment and explore the kinds of alternatives that might strengthen conflict prevention and management in their areas and recognize their role in implementing desired change.

While such efforts characterize an approach used by various civil society organizations in northern Uganda, transformative training by the Community Outreach Peace Program under the Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies, at Gulu University, deserves particular mention. The program manager outlined three pillars for their activities: outreach and peacebuilding, research and documentation, and advocacy and networking. Capacity-building training in the area of peace education forms the lynchpin of the outreach and peacebuilding pillar. Through the use of local and partly international expertise in peace education, the program has trained nursery and secondary school teachers on the role of indigenous knowledge and practices in peacebuilding. The Alternatives to Violence Program is being prepared for university staff, students, and student leaders before it will be rolled out at the community level.

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⁶⁸. Prendergrast, ‘Applying concepts to cases’.
Training in Do No Harm, which targets community-based peace activists and non-governmental organizations, and mediation trainings, aimed at local leaders at the community, civil society, and government levels, have also been conducted. All these provide an elaborate framework for deeper analysis of not only the causes of conflict, but also of the peacebuilding approaches that address these causes. As such, they constitute a critical part of an enduring conflict resolution and peacebuilding strategy for northern Uganda.

Due to its rich exposition on the protracted nature of contemporary conflicts, the integrated framework for peacebuilding offers useful parameters for understanding and dealing with the LRA conflict. The framework, however, would work better in a conflict in which the actors share a symmetric relationship. The northern Uganda conflict features a dominant actor, the government of Uganda, which may limit the usefulness of the framework unless the government is willing to leverage a level playing field. The framework is also limited in that it does not discuss the dynamics of conflict escalation and the challenges involved in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, which offer concrete lessons when applied to dealing with a particular conflict.

The integrated framework is silent about the contestations between peacebuilding as a political activity and humanitarian efforts as a moral imperative, which bogged down the peace process. The failed peace processes in Uganda were also characterized by contestation between traditional justice and the international justice system, which is not addressed by the integrated framework for peacebuilding. The framework pays due attention to addressing the root causes of conflict but does not address the contrasting and evolving needs and interests of the actors, which are as critical to conflict escalation as the root causes. These limitations represent critical gaps for augmenting the integrated framework for peacebuilding, given the constructive lessons it offers in understanding and responding to protracted conflicts, such as that involving the LRA. Overall, the integrated framework for peacebuilding is relevant in offering a lens through which to better understand and respond to the LRA conflict.

CONCLUSION

The integrated framework for peacebuilding as analyzed above provides vital lessons in informing strategies for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in northern Uganda and attaining sustainable peace. The centrality of the root causes, local context, conflict actors (including their roles and interests), and the dynamic relationships embedded therein constitute central parameters for an effective strategy. Such a strategy should deal not only with immediate crisis needs, but also respond to aspects related to long-term transformation, a perspective buttressed by the observation that achieving sustainable peace in Africa requires the continent to build robust mechanisms that go beyond resolving conflicts and addressing their consequences to tackling the root and structural causes.

An effective strategy for durable peace in northern Uganda must commit to the root causes of the conflict and address the interests of the different actors that have

sustained it. The strategy must espouse a policy and legal framework that refocuses on reconciliation of war-affected local communities and the rehabilitation of victims of sexual violence and children abducted by LRA rebels, most of whom are now young adults. The policy and legal framework must also create room for representation of northern Uganda in the central government and the related issue of revenue distribution, utilization, and management. Coordination of stakeholder relations and intervention efforts is vital. While dealing with immediate crisis issues, such as cessation of hostilities, was critical during the war, this must be supplanted post-war by long-term interventions for sustainable peace.
Sudan versus South Sudan: The Conflict over Abyei

Getachew Zeru Gebrekidan

The conflict over ownership of Abyei’s renewable and nonrenewable resources has evolved as a contentious issue between Sudan and South Sudan. The situation was complicated by the relationships of the Humr Misseriya pastoralists and Ngok Dinka agrarians with these governments, respectively. Moreover, lack of agreement about who should be considered a resident of Abyei derailed a referendum on the territory’s status as either part of Sudan or possibly South Sudan. The government in Khartoum and the Humr Misseriya have thus far rejected all proposals and agreements for resolving the conflict. To rectify this situation, the Sudanese and South Sudanese governments need to work toward actualizing mutual benefits based on the agreed principles and proposals put forward in the Abyei protocol of 2004/5 and by the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel of 2012. Proceeding along these lines could lead to building durable peace in Abyei and other contested areas along the border of Sudan and South Sudan.

The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) represented the culmination of more than two decades of civil war between Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). Notwithstanding the independence of the Republic of South Sudan from the Republic of Sudan on July 9, 2011, disputes over borders, resources, and unsettled territories, including resource-rich Abyei, continue to plague relations between the two countries.

Abyei is home to the Ngok Dinka, a subsect of a predominantly agrarian and animist Christian group from South Sudan. Humr Misseriya pastoralists are part of the al-Baggara, an Arab Muslim group in Sudan. Despite some hostilities, the Ngok Dinka and Humr Misseriya had coexisted in the Abyei territory for centuries. The nomadic Misseriya spend part of the year in Abyei herding their cattle for grazing and access to water. The relationship between the two peoples became tense and


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conflictual after Sudanese independence in 1956, with the Humr Misseriya increasingly recruited into government militias and the Ngok Dinka joining rebel movements in the south.

The unresolved impasse between Sudan and South Sudan resulting from their failure to implement the CPA’s Abyei protocol negatively affects the durability of the peace in both countries and threatens to spark renewed conflict between them, despite a successful referendum in January 2011 in the south that endorsed secession from the north. A number of challenges related to potential oil wealth and attachment to the land and its use hinder resolution of the Abyei impasse and prospects for peace.

**CONCEPTUAL ISSUES**

Scholars and policy makers acknowledge that the presence of such natural resources as minerals, oil, timber, productive pastures, and farm land can cause, escalate, and extend conflict, but it is usually not the only goal of the hostility. Philippe Le Billon asserts that resources have specific historic, geographic, and social qualities that play a role in shaping patterns of conflict and violence. The discursive construction and materiality of oil and diamonds, for example, entail distinct social practices, stakes, and potential conflicts associated with their territorial control, exploitation, commercialization, and consumption. In this regard, given resources’ strategic importance to foreign and domestic economic and political concerns, their access and exploitation can become highly contested, and their territorialization can generate higher stakes than in many other economic sectors. This situation often occurs in extremely resource-dependent and conflict-ridden developing countries. Although history, political culture, institutions, leadership personality, and availability of weapons intervene at least as much as the political economy of natural resources in these conflicts and their violent escalation, the securing and exploitation of this material represent a source of power and conflict that should not be ignored.

According to Massimo Morelli, the probability of violent conflict is high when the presence of an ethnic group coincides with natural resource abundance in its region but a similar abundance is lacking in the area of nearby groups’ settlements. In contrast, if natural resources are absent, or if natural resources are evenly dispersed among neighboring areas, there are typically few incentives for conflict. In other words, it becomes harder to maintain peace when the natural resources of a given location are viewed as highly valuable and thus desirable. This idea is supported by Le Billon, who argues that contrary to the widely held belief that abundant resources aid economic growth and are thus positive for political stability, most empirical evidence suggests that countries economically dependent on the export of primary

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commodities are at high risk for political instability and armed conflict. The availability in nature of any resource is not in itself a predictive indicator of conflict. Rather, the desires sparked by this availability, as well as people’s needs and the practices shaping the political economy of any resource, can prove conflictual.

Political economy assesses causes of conflicts from the perspectives of resource scarcity (renewable resources) and resource abundance (non-renewable resources). According to advocates of the scarce resource hypothesis, people or nations will fight each other to secure access to the resources necessary for their survival; the more scarce the resource, the more bitter the fight. On the other hand, proponents of the abundant resource argument emphasize that primary commodities are easily and heavily taxable and are therefore attractive to all conflicting parties. The availability of abundant resources would therefore be prized for state or territorial control, thereby increasing the risk of armed conflict. Yet low levels of renewable resource endowment are not associated with a risk of armed conflict, while abundant renewable resources in otherwise poor countries and non-renewable resources in all countries increase the likelihood of armed conflict.

**DYNAMICS OF THE ABYEI CONFLICT**

The government of Sudan and the SPLA/M signed the CPA on 9 January 2005 in Nairobi. The protocol on the resolution of conflict in Abyei, signed in Naivasha, Kenya, on 26 May 2004, was incorporated into the agreement as chapter four. It delineates the territory of Abyei as the area of the nine Ngok Dinka chiefdoms transferred from Bahr al-Ghazal to Kordofan by the Anglo-Egyptian condominium in 1905. The protocol stipulates that the residents of Abyei were to have cast a ballot—simultaneously with the referendum scheduled for January 2011 on the independence of South Sudan—to determine whether Abyei remain in Southern Kordofan in Sudan or join Bahr al-Ghazal in South Sudan.

The Abyei protocol affirms that the Humr Misseriya and other nomadic peoples should retain their traditional rights to graze cattle in Abyei and move across the territory. Moreover, it stipulates that during an interim period, Abyei should be accorded special administrative status, to be managed by a local executive council elected by the

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7. Ibid., 564.
residents of Abyei. It was also agreed that net oil revenues from Abyei should be divided among six parties during the interim period.\(^\text{10}\)

Some aspects of the Abyei protocol were reminiscent of the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement on the Problem of South Sudan, which ended the first north-south Sudan war. It also included a referendum provision for Abyei, entitling the Ngok Dinka to vote on whether to remain in the north or to be integrated into the territory of the newly formed Southern Sudan Region. During that time, Abyei was granted special administrative status under the office of the president. The Sudanese government, however, unilaterally abrogated the entire agreement because of resource and political motives, which would set the scene for the resumption of war in the south.\(^\text{11}\)

The Abyei protocol also called for the establishment of the Abyei Boundaries Commission (ABC) to demarcate the territory’s geographic limits and thus the ownership of Abyei and its resources. Security was to be jointly administered by forces from the Khartoum government, SPLA, and the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). The ABC, which presented its report to the government on 14 July 2005, set Abyei’s northern boundary 87 kilometers north of Abyei, thus encompassing the Heglig, Diffra, and Bamboo oil fields. All villages recently inhabited by Ngok Dinka, as well as the areas from which historically the Ngok Dinka had been forced to flee and then occupied by the Humr Misseriya, were placed in a zone of shared rights.\(^\text{12}\) The government of Sudan and the Humr Misseriya immediately rejected the report.

The government’s objection stemmed from the ABC finding of the three oil fields within Abyei, rather than in Sudan proper. The Humr Misseriya refused to recognize the ABC’s work because they felt they had not been properly consulted, and they feared that they would permanently lose their rights to grazing and access to water in Abyei.\(^\text{13}\) Meanwhile, the SPLM and the Ngok Dinka viewed the ABC decision as fair and thought it should be accepted and implemented.\(^\text{14}\)

In 2008, Abyei became the site of direct clashes between the SPLA and Ngok Dinka on one side and the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and Humr Misseriya militia on the

\(^{10}\) The national government, 50 percent; the government of southern Sudan, 42 percent; Bahr al-Ghazal, 2 percent; Western Kordofan, 2 percent; the Ngok Dinka, 2 percent; and the Misseriya people, 2 percent. See Protocol between the Government of the Sudan (Gos) and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) on the Resolution of Abyei Conflict, http://www.usip.org/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements/abyei_05262004.pdf.

\(^{11}\) The abrogation of the agreement was directly related to the discovery of oil within and around Abyei in 1979 as well as pressure from the Humr Misseriya. The government then used Humr Misseriya militias in northern Abyei to dislocate Ngok Dinka inhabitants and open the way to the exploitation of the area’s oil reserves. In addition to securing the oil fields from possible guerrilla attack, the government also used the Humr Misseriya militias as part of its national policy of Arabization. See Concordis International, More Than a Line: Sudan’s North–South Border (Washington, D.C., United States Institute for Peace, 2010), and Craze, ‘Creating facts on the ground.’ The failure to implement the referendum clause in the Addis Ababa agreement and the government’s strong support of the actions by the Humr Misseriya were determinant factors leading the Ngok Dinka to form Anyanya II as a guerrilla group and was instrumental in the formation of the SPLA in 1983. See Douglas H. Johnson, ‘The road back from Abyei’, Sudan North-South Border Initiative, 14 January 2011.

\(^{12}\) Sansculotte-Greenidge, ‘Abyei’.

\(^{13}\) Craze, ‘Creating facts on the ground’.

other. The violence led to the razing of Abyei town and the displacement of more than 60,000 people. Similar clashes had been frequent following Sudanese independence. During the first Sudanese civil war (1955–1972) deep divisions emerged between the Humr Misseriya and the Ngok Dinka, as the Humr Misseriya were increasingly recruited into government militias, and the Ngok Dinka joined their southern compatriots in the first Anyanya rebel movement. This division was exacerbated in 1965, when seventy-two Ngok Dinka were burned alive in Babanusa. A year later, the Humr Misseriya for the first time claimed parts of Abyei, up to the river Ngol, as their exclusive territory, leading some among them to begin permanently settling in the area.

Subsequent to the 2008 violence, leaders in northern and southern Sudan produced the Abyei Road Map Agreement, through which the two conflicting parties agreed to refer the case of Abyei to the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague for a final and binding decision. The PCA announced its decision in 2009. It reduced the size of the area as designated by the ABC, and in doing so, left only one oil field, Diffra, in Abyei, assigning the other two, Heglig and Bamboo, to Southern Kordofan. Like the ABC report, the PCA decision accorded Humr Misseriya the right to use Abyei for grazing cattle. Regardless, the Humr Misseriya and the Sudanese government rejected the PCA’s ruling and declared that they would prevent the physical demarcation of the border unless the Humr Misseriya are allowed to vote in the referendum on Abyei’s final status. In contrast, the South Sudanese government and the Ngok Dinka are still united in support of the PCA ruling and rejected the idea of Humr Misseriya participating in the referendum.

The SAF and Humr Misseriya militia launched attacks in Abyei in May 2011, resulting in the displacement of more than 110,000 civilians into Warrap, Northern Bahr al-Ghazal, and Unity states. The operations claimed the lives of more than 1,500 people. The South Sudanese did not respond militarily, largely because their focus was on the formal declaration of independence on 9 July 2011. A month after the invasion, on 20 June 2011, the governments of Sudan and South Sudan signed an agreement in Addis Ababa brokered by the African Union (AU) committing both sides to the total withdrawal of their military forces from Abyei and the reestablishment of a local administration. In support of the agreement, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1990 on 27 June 2011, establishing the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and authorizing the deployment of 4,200 Ethiopian peacekeepers to Abyei to precede a full military withdrawal by the SAF and SPLA in order

18. Craze, ‘Creating facts on the ground’.
to enable the Ngok Dinka to return to their territory. Currently UNISFA is the sole body responsible for security in Abyei.

The African Union High-level Implementation Panel (AUHIP), chaired by former South African president Thabo Mbeki, has been mediating on Abyei and other post-referendum issues and has put forward a number of compromise proposals to end the crisis there. On 21 September 2012, the AUHIP presented a proposal aimed at providing mechanisms for resolving Abyei’s final status. It advocates that the Abyei referendum would be voted on by members of the Ngok Dinka community as well as ‘other Sudanese residents’ of the territory in October 2013. It defined residents as those ‘having a permanent abode within the Abyei Area’. It also proposed that a referendum commission include two representatives from the two countries and a chairperson appointed by the AU. It further recommended the establishment of the Abyei Referendum Facilitation Panel (ARFP), consisting of three ‘individuals of international stature’, to mediate any disagreement within the referendum commission as well as provide advice. Regardless of the outcome of the referendum, the proposal guarantees Humr Misseriya’s migratory rights and creates a common economic development zone to help transform the conflict between the two Sudanese states. It would appear that Abyei and its oil reserves would go to South Sudan.

On 24 October 2012, the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) accepted the AUHIP plan, expressing appreciation of its ‘fair, equitable and workable solution to the dispute’, and requested that Sudan and South Sudan negotiate on the basis of the proposal with the help of the panel. Progress since has not been remarkable.

MAJOR CHALLENGES

Despite several efforts by the conflicting parties and other stakeholders, the multifaceted challenges presented by Abyei and its environs continued to hinder efforts to improve the situation on the ground and find sustainable solutions.

State–Society Relations

The relationship between the Khartoum government and the Humr Misseriya is one of the more dynamic political games in Sudan. The Humr Misseriya felt that they had been betrayed by the National Congress Party (NCP)-led government they fought for during the second Sudanese civil war (1983–2005). Most of Humr Misseriya believed that the end of the war did not bring any real improvement to their lives. They felt that the CPA was not negotiated with their interests in mind, thus politically and eco-

25. Craze, ‘Creating facts on the ground’.
nomically marginalizing them. As a result, some disgruntled former fighters built alliances with the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) against the incumbent regime.\textsuperscript{30} To mitigate resentment, the government developed a plan to work with and use Humr and other groups within the Misseriya tribe to ensure control over Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states.

Retaining the loyalty of the Misseriya was beneficial to Khartoum because of the importance of the Misseriya to the NCP as a constituency. Thus, any attempt by the government to concede and implement the PCA-recommended borders would provoke the Humr Misseriya. In other words, the government feared losing their support if it made concessions on the political future of Abyei that would endanger the Humr Misseriya’s access to grazing lands.

Between 1988 and 1989 in Muglad, the future Sudanese president Omar Hassan al-Bashir had been assigned as officer in charge with the rank of brigadier general, which involved his directly supervising Humr Misseriya militias on how to attack SPLA forces and its supporters. After Bashir seized power in a coup in 1989, he promulgated the Popular Defence Force Act, under which the Humr Misseriya militias and other similar groups were formally integrated into Sudan’s Popular Defence Forces (PDF).\textsuperscript{31} Ever since, Bashir and his party have been telling the Humr Misseriya that Abyei belongs to them.\textsuperscript{32} Thus, any process that would eliminate the possibility of Abyei becoming ‘theirs’ would amount to an infidelity.\textsuperscript{33}

In the meantime, the government of South Sudan is not likely to be reluctant on the Abyei issue—including acquiescence to any ‘solution’ that allows Abyei and its resources to remain in Southern Kordofan—because of the strong historical connections between the SPLA and the Ngok Dinka. Thus, the South Sudanese have been working with internal and external stakeholders to ensure that Abyei ultimately become part of South Sudan.

**Referendum and Settlement Controversy**

The main points of contention between the two Sudans that ultimately derailed the referendum on Abyei’s future status are demarcation of its territorial boundaries and criteria for determining voter eligibility in the area.

As mentioned above, the right to participate in the Abyei referendum under the Abyei protocol is to be given to the residents of Abyei, but there is no agreement on who should be considered a resident. The Abyei Referendum Act, passed into law in December 2009, has not led to the creation of an Abyei referendum commission, which would be responsible for defining criteria for residence, because of disagreement over

\textsuperscript{30.} After the launch of the CPA, the JEM became increasingly active in recruiting from among the Humr Misseriya, some of whom serve in leadership positions of the movement, among them a man who led JEM’s delegation to peace talks in Doha in February 2010. See Concordis International, *More than a Line; Craze, ‘Creating facts on the ground’*.

\textsuperscript{31.} The PDF served as a de facto reserve for the national army. The Humr Misseriyas’ inclusion further polarized the dispute between them and the Ngok Dinka as the government also set about redistributing Ngok Dinka land to the Humr Misseriya and others. International Crisis Group, *Sudan’s other wars*, Africa Briefing, 25 June 2003.

\textsuperscript{32.} Craze, ‘Creating facts on the ground’.

\textsuperscript{33.} Flatman, *Abyei: Predicting the future*. 
the composition of the commission. To fill this loophole, the AUHIP’s proposal defines residents of Abyei as those ‘having a permanent abode within the Abyei area’.  

The government in Khartoum has firmly asserted that there can be no referendum in Abyei without the participation of Humr Misseriya. Similarly, Humr Misseriya claim that they should be allowed to participate not only because they deserve an equitable share of the territory’s natural water and grazing pasture resources, but also because they have the right to live, own property, and invest in the area and its environs, which they have inhabited with the Ngok Dinka for more than three hundred years.

Some 25,000 Humr Misseriya nomads spend an average of six to seven months in a year in Abyei while grazing their livestock, but the Khartoum government asserts that an estimated maximum of 400,000 Misseriya must be allowed to vote should the referendum go forward. Why? If the 400,000 Misseriya, as a tribe, were allowed to vote in the Abyei referendum, their numbers would overwhelm the estimated 70,000 Ngok Dinka, thereby securing the territory for the Republic of Sudan. South Sudanese officials claim that the Humr Misseriya have historically held permanent residence in Southern Kordofan and cannot be considered permanent residents in two places simultaneously. One might infer from this line of argument that it was logically inconsistent for the CPA to guarantee the Humr Misseriya grazing rights in Abyei if they are not to be counted as permanent residents. The demand by the Khartoum government that the Humr Misseriya be given the right to vote is inconsistent with the precedent of the south Sudan referendum, in which seasonal migrants could not cast ballots. Moreover, the South Sudanese government and the Ngok Dinka have rejected this approach based on the well-grounded fear that if the Humr Misseriya are given voting rights in the referendum, Khartoum will vigorously flood the northern part of Abyei with pro-government Humr Misseriya to influence the referendum.

As the southern Sudanese and Ngok Dinka feared, Misseriya leaders said they would not allow the return of land to Bahr al-Ghazal and would continue to prevent border demarcation, as well as increase settlements in the area. Several Humr Misseriya leaders announced their own intention to settle in Abyei, creating permanent abodes, to try to ensure participation in the referendum. The SPLM spokesman in Abyei reportedly alleged in 2010 that 2,000 PDF members had been mobilized from the Misseriya tribe to settle in northern Abyei in a bid to facilitate Misseriya settlement. Following this development, it was reported that Khartoum had been settling Humr Misseriya in the northern part of Abyei to up permanent presence beyond the seasonal migration period. By August 2010, there were allegedly 25,000 new settlers in northern Abyei, and in the second half of 2011, it was estimated that their number had increased to 75,000.

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36. Sansculotte-Greenidge, ‘Abyei’. The Sudanese government has also argued that the AUHIP had not taken into account that the lifestyle of the Humr Misseriya ‘is inimical to the concept of permanent abode’. See Human Security Baseline Assessment, ‘The crisis in Abyei’.
37. Craze, ‘Creating facts on the ground’.
38. Rendón and Hsiao, ‘Resolving the Abyei crisis’.
Humr Misseriya Anxiety

Despite the provisions for the Humr Misseriya to retain their grazing and water access rights, they nonetheless fear losing them if the CPA were to be fully implemented.40 Their fear emanates from past experiences with traditional rights entwined in national politics. For example, following the Addis Ababa accord, clashes erupted between the southern police forces and the Humr Misseriya. Similarly, after the signing of the CPA, the Humr Misseriya complained of SPLA/M harassment, such as time restrictions on grazing, requirements to disarm, and payment of taxes, which often led to clashes along the Unity and Warrap state borders.41

In some places, it was reported that Humr Misseriya pastoralists were obliged to pay the SPLA 15,000 Sudanese pounds (US$6,300). In 2007, they were also forced to pay SPLA soldiers one or two calves per herd to access the southern provinces. Moreover, in 2008 the majority of the Humr Misseriya’s cattle stayed north of the Kiir River and suffered a shortage of both grazing and water.42 More recently, on 14 December 2012, Dinka chiefs and other local authorities met and decided to refuse Humr Misseriya access to southern lands, claiming that the water resources in the area were insufficient for shared use. The Dinkas’ perspective was also likely colored by fears of security threats, which the Dinka associate with the Humr Misseriya pastoralists.43

Oil

The PCA placed most of the contested oil fields (Heglig and Bamboo) outside of Abyei, to the north in Sudan, but the Khartoum government still seeks to preserve access to current and future oil revenues in Abyei.44 Apart from the stated political and economic factors, the governments of Sudan and South Sudan both have their eyes on Abyei’s existing and potential lucrative oil resources. The Khartoum government has used Humr Misseriya militias in the northern part of the territory to force the removal of Ngok Dinka inhabitants to open up the area for the exploitation of its oil reserves.45

Proliferation of Armed Militias

From the Ngok Dinka perspective, the primary threat to peace is the arming of the Misseriya by the Sudanese government, especially since mid-2010 to prevent the implementation of the PCA-backed plan.46 More than a dozen militia training camps have been established along Abyei’s northern border in the last five years, with new recruits reportedly receiving around 50 Sudanese pounds (US$21) a month. The government has been motivating the new recruits by emphasizing that Abyei is the Humr

42. Craze, ‘Creating facts on the ground’.
44. Belloni, ‘The birth of South Sudan and the challenges of statebuilding’.
45. Craze, ‘Creating facts on the ground’.
Sudan versus South Sudan

1. Sudan versus South Sudan

Misseriya’s territory. Moreover, South Sudanese officials claim that after the 2005 CPA, the PDF was reorganized and equipped with trucks, motorcycles, 12.7 mm machine guns, 82 mm mortars, RPGs, antitank weapons, and small arms. The Humr Misseriya militias are receiving such weapons from the SAF. This assistance from the Khartoum government enabled them to devastate much of Abyei town and the surrounding villages of Dungop, Maker, Tajalei, Todac, and Wungok.

Identity

The issue of identity, mainly in attachment to the land, is essential in explaining the Humr Misseriya and Ngok Dinka’s allegiances and actions. Having lived and worked on the land, both have a strong moral claim to it. They also have a strong sentimental attachment to Abyei due to religious and cultural factors that shaped and strengthened their ways of life for generations there. It, naturally, plays a significant role in their history, legends, values, and traditions. Because of multifaceted historical and contemporary factors, their identities and attachments have resulted in adverse impacts on relations between the two peoples, as each claims Abyei as its exclusive territory. This perception has contributed to the collapse of multiple proposals to deal with the Abyei issue.

Negligence toward Traditional Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

The Humr Misseriya and Ngok Dinka managed to share the land of Abyei and its environs for more than three centuries and settled most of their disputes on the basis of custom and tradition. Since the signing of the CPA, both groups’ traditional leaders at the local level have been trying to safeguard the peace and prevent a worse conflict. These efforts are not well publicized or supported by the two governments and the international community. For example, the North and South were the only two parties officially represented at the ABC, PCA, as well as AUHIP, creating a feeling of marginalization, especially among the Humr Misseriya.

Political Rhetoric

The political rhetoric surrounding Abyei by officials on both sides helped strain North-South relations. President Bashir has insisted that the Abyei issue cannot be solved without the Arab Humr Misseriya nomads participating in a referendum. In 2011 he declared, ‘We are saying, loud and clear, that there will be no referendum on Abyei without the Misseriya’. Salva Kiir Mayardit, leader of the south Sudanese and

48. Craze, ‘Creating facts on the ground’.
49. Abdallah, ‘Abyei natural resources conflict’.
52. ‘Sudan’s Bashir: No Abyei vote without Misseriya’, Middle East Online, 31 March 2011.
later president of South Sudan, asserted in turn that Abyei belongs to the nine Ngok Dinka chiefdoms and that the North-aligned Humr Misseriya tribe have no territorial rights in the area other than access to water and pasture for their cattle. Kiir contended, ‘The truth is here with us. Abyei belongs to us. Whether Omar al-Bashir likes it or not, one day Abyei will rejoin the South’.

The razing of much of Abyei town and the surrounding area in 2011 by the Humr Misseriya militia and PDF has made it difficult for the Ngok Dinka to make a sustainable return to the territory. Today, because of the uncertain political future of the territory, security threats, and lack of basic services, the rate of the Ngok Dinka’s return remains a trickle.

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE

The Sudanese government looks likely to retain its negotiating position that the Humr Misseriya must take part in full in an Abyei referendum. This position is entirely contrary to the ruling that only the nine Ngok Dinka chiefdoms and other permanent residents should be eligible to participate in the Abyei referendum, the South Sudan referendum experience, and international opinion. Thus, the Khartoum government’s prospects in this matter are not practically feasible, so there needs to be a negotiated agreement between the two governments on the referendum. If an agreement is not supported by the commonality of interests and age-old customary norms and traditions of the Misseriya and Dinka peoples, the hope for a sustainable peace in and around the area will remain gloomy.

The CPA and the PCA rulings have upheld land use rights for the Humr Misseriya migration in the Abyei area before and after the referendum. If the Humr Misseriya, however, continue to be blocked from entering South Sudan by the military there and some Ngok Dinka traditional leaders, it will put additional strain on grazing resources in Abyei. Above all, given practices on the ground, if Abyei becomes part of South Sudan, the Humr Misseriya may be locked into a perpetual, ruthless conflict with the Ngok Dinka and South Sudanese military. Conversely, unless Khartoum and the Humr Misseriya drop their insistence on land ownership for the pastoralists, and settle for land use rights in Abyei, the possibility of sustainable peace will be nil.

The potential for peace will also be undermined if the two Sudans refuse to accept a demilitarized zone or soft border to allow transitory groups to cross freely, relying on the good faith of the two governments to refrain from sending proxy militias through the Abyei area in search of offenders. The South Sudanese government should also demonstrate its commitment to nomadic rights to access grazing lands and water in the south by passing legislation or creating a political position or body for nomadic representation at the local level.

The AUHIP proposal attempted to overcome the Abyei impasse by shifting much of the authority for determining who should vote in the referendum to the African Union. The two sides, as noted, are yet to agree on the referendum. The current pro-

53. ‘South Sudan’s Kiir talks tough on oil, Abyei’, Sudan Tribune, 21 July 2011.
Proposal appears to favor the South Sudanese government and the Ngok Dinka as it contends that Humr Misseriya herdsmen are not full residents of Abyei and thus ineligible to vote. The union’s PSC has announced that it will endorse the AUHIP’s proposal as final and binding, and request endorsement by the UN Security Council, if the two parties cannot come to an agreement on it. Should this occur, the AU and UN Security Council may take action to force Khartoum into reconsidering its stand. From this scenario, one can infer that a popular vote would most likely result in Abyei joining South Sudan, which would satisfy the Juba government and Ngok Dinka, but the implementation process could be conducted smoothly only if the other side has been convinced by and accepts the proposal.

As discussed above, after the CPA, some Humr Misseriya settled in the northern part of Abyei as a strategy for taking part in the referendum and altering the demographic composition of the area. To prevent such manipulation from having an impact, it will be essential to check voter registration in Southern Kordofan localities that were considered part of Abyei in the 2008 census. This may help identify who should be included, based on self-identification in 2008, to move on to the next step.

From July 2012 to the end of January 2013, some 21,700 of the 110,000 displaced Ngok Dinka returned to Abyei with the help of UNISFA, but because of limited social services delivery, absence of local administration, and lax security, many other displaced Ngok Dinkas have been discouraged from doing the same. The environment there will remain uninviting for displaced Ngok Dinkas until administrative and security problems are resolved.

For sustainable peace and security in the Abyei area, Juba and Khartoum should allow and encourage community and religious leaders from the Ngok Dinka and Humr Misseriya as well as representatives of peacebuilding civil society organizations from both countries to meet to discuss the security situation in Abyei and its environs. Such a dialogue would allow communities to tackle a range of problems that are a direct legacy of the conflict, including the breakdown in cross-border relations between Ngok Dinka and Humr Misseriya. Besides, it may result in a considerable added value to the overall efforts by the African Union and other peace-seeking bodies if it facilitates addressing a number of core issues in the conflict, such as natural resources, migration, and cross-border security-related concerns.

In sum, the peace process looks inexorably gloomy because of the strong reciprocal relationships between the Khartoum government and Humr Misseriya on one side and the South Sudanese government and Ngok Dinka on the other, disagreement over voter eligibility in an Abyei referendum, the Humr Misseriya’s settling on land in Abyei, all parties’ desire to exploit the area’s oil resources, omission of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, state officials’ political rhetoric, and a continuing security impasse. Although the proposal presented by the AUHIP in September 2012 requiring the two countries to undertake further negotiations offered a compromise solution to ending the crisis in Abyei, progress thus far has not been encouraging.

Women in Anglophone Cameroon: Household Gender Relations and Participation in Local Governance

Justine Ayuk Fonjock and Joyce Bayande Endeley

Most current feminist and development scholarship asserts that women’s numeric presence in local government is a necessary but not the sole condition for creating women-friendly legislatures. Such legislatures are possible only when women’s numeric presence complements the effective participation of women in policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Many efforts examining the conditions under which these numbers translate into meaningful participation pay little attention to whether and how household-based gender relations affect women’s effective participation in local government. This case study attempts to change the direction of this trend in its examination of women councillors in Anglophone Cameroon. Its findings reveal that the women surveyed tended to have greater influence in council decisions and projects when they were similar to decisions over which the women exerted some control in their household. In addition, the experience of serving on a council enhanced women’s influence over decision making in the home.

The promotion of good governance and sustainable development is prominent in Africa’s development policy discourses. The literature on past and current governance challenges plaguing the continent, particularly from the 1990s on, makes clear that good governance underscored by representative decision making and accountability, among other issues, stands as a vital prerequisite for the consolidation of peace and sustainable development on the continent. Likewise, ensuring gender, ethnic, and racial diversity in decision making continues to be challenging, particularly at the central levels of governance, and has often been a major cause of recurrent
One of the strategies to ensure representative democracy, often echoed in debates, has been the promulgation of political reforms tilted toward the decentralisation of decision making from centralised systems to local government. This strategy, it is argued, helps ensure equitable representation of diverse groups in decision making, thereby rendering governance processes more efficient and effective.

From a gender perspective, local government is often presented as an important governance strategy to enhance women's participation in decision making. Feminists and gender scholars contend that women generally find it easier to effectively participate as political actors at the local level, given that local government is closer to their sphere of life, and eligibility criteria for candidacies are less cumbersome compared to those at the central level. By this logic, one could argue that achieving a critical mass of women in policy-making bodies, which is considered necessary to put women's strategic issues on the policy agenda, is more feasible at the local than at the national level of decision making.

Recent literature on gender and governance, however, suggests a negative correlation between women's numeric presence in decision-making bodies and the expected substantive participation of women in deliberative bodies and thus their ability to influence policy outcome in favour of women's strategic needs and concerns. This suggests that women's presence in decision making and governance is necessary, but is not sufficient in and of itself to trigger women-friendly legislatures. The latter can occur only when women's numeric presence complements their effective participation in policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Therefore, examining women's participation in deliberative bodies remains imperative as concerns promoting gender equality principles and women-friendly legislatures.

Efforts at investigating the conditions under which numbers translate into meaningful women's participation in decision making, however, have paid little attention to whether and how household-based gender relations affect the participation of female politicians in decision making. In this respect, the study here examines the relationship between household-based gender relations and roles of women councillors and their corresponding levels of participation in decision-making processes in local government in Anglophone Cameroon. Analysis of household gender relations is important in understanding the political behaviour of men and particularly of women politicians at the local level.

4. The Republic of Cameroon comprises ten regions, two of which—the Northwest and Southwest provinces—are located in former British West Cameroon. Anglophone Cameroon in this article denotes the geographical area of the former British West Cameroon.
The growing literature on women in local government justifies the above approach. For instance, while major improvements in the status of women have occurred, with women in recent decades gaining access to positions of power and decision making in local government, traditions that continue to restrict women to household responsibilities remain powerful influences on the activities and policy priorities of women legislators. As a consequence, in addition to sociocultural and economic factors, women's participation in local government needs to be assessed in connection with household-based gendered dynamics, which are influenced by unequal gender power relations between women and men.

The methodology for this study employed qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The study draws on empirical data generated through questionnaires and interviews conducted with 151 women councillors out of a target population of 180 in thirty-one of the sixty-seven councils in Anglophone Cameroon. The sites were chosen by taking into consideration the proportion of female councillors per council. At least two councils were selected from each of the eleven divisions (six and five, respectively) of the Southwest and Northwest provinces that constitute Anglophone Cameroon. Field data were collected between August and November 2012. It was no easy task visiting all of the sites due to the vast nature of the study site and because the majority of respondents were residents in villages located some 30 kilometers from their councils. As a consequence, female graduates of the Department of Women and Gender Studies at the University of Buea worked closely with the researcher to collect field data. The assistants had previously assisted other researchers working on related topics.

RESEARCH CONTEXTS AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Republic of Cameroon has in recent years demonstrated interest in promoting women's participation in decision making. It is among the 165 states to have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The convention called on member states to implement adequate measures to increase the number of women in governance and promote their involvement at the national and local levels. Article 7 requires all parties to implement measures to 'eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life' and ensure that they participate on equal terms with men in elections and policy formulation processes at all levels.

Cameroon is also a signatory to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, with articles requiring state parties to implement strategies to promote the participation of women on equal terms with men at all levels of decision making, governance, implementation of state policies, and development. The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, to
which Cameroon is also a party, emphasises the need for member states to carry out strategies to enhance representative democracy and human rights. Together with other international conventions and declarations—for example, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals—as well as regional conventions, including the Platform of the Economic Commission of Central African States concerning gender integration in policy and action plans, one might conclude that Cameroon is truly committed to promoting gender equality principles in governance. Past and current figures of female representation in decision-making positions in the country, however, do not lead to this conclusion.

According to statistics from the 2010 population census, women constitute 52 percent of Cameroon’s 19 million people. Despite their larger number compared to men, Cameroonian women are tokenised at all levels of decision making, especially in local government. Women constitute more than 70 percent of the country’s rural population, but Cameroon is yet to achieve the 30 percent quota of female representation in local councils stipulated in the 1996 Platform for Action and CEDAW. Tepid progress in women’s representation in local councils has been observed in the last two municipal elections (2002 and 2007) in Cameroon, but the number of women councillors and mayors remains marginal compared to men. In 2007 municipal elections, only 24 out of 360 elected mayors (6.7 percent) were women, and only 15.5 percent of councillors (see Table 1).

The social relations of power between women and men are generally discussed under the rubric of ‘gender relations’ or ‘gender power relations.’ These relations influence, in unequal ways, the social and economic opportunities and outcomes for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Councillors</th>
<th>Number of women</th>
<th>Percentage women</th>
<th>Number of mayors</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1982–1987</td>
<td>5,107</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1987–1992</td>
<td>5,347</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1996–2001</td>
<td>9,932</td>
<td>1,061</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002–2007</td>
<td>9,963</td>
<td>1,302</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–2012</td>
<td>10,632</td>
<td>1,651</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


men and women at the private (household) level and in the public sphere. Gender relations, for instance, influence the extent to which men and women engage in different activities, have access to and control over economic, social, and political resources, and influence policy decisions in the household and within the community. This concept of gender relations is employed here to examine how social relations of power exhibited by women councillors in their households affect their level of participation in local government.

Participation as related to Carole Pateman’s theory of democratic decentralisation denotes a process whereby opportunities are created for particularly neglected segments of the population to contribute to decisions that affect their lives. In a similar vein, the World Bank defines participation as the process ‘through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decision and resources which affect them.’ Emphasis on participation is crucial in regard to the need to engage disadvantaged and marginalised individuals and groups as active agents in decision-making and policy formulation processes. In this respect, the concept of participation is viewed at the local level as an effective strategy to encourage diverse individuals and groups, particularly women, to actively engage with the goal of promoting social change and improving living standards for individuals within communities.

**Feminist Engagements with Debates on Gender and Governance**

Owing to their perceived potential to promote balance and equitable and sustainable development, gender-sensitive approaches to governance and decision making have gained in recognition in the development discourse over the last two decades. It occupies a key position in the development agenda of the United Nations, the African Union, as well as the Network of Partnership for Africa’s Development, the Millennium Development Goals, and the African Peer Review Mechanism. These institutions, instruments, and partnership agreements consider gender-inclusive decision making a good strategy for promoting representative democracy, good governance, peace, and sustainable development.

The discourse on engendering governance processes at the international, national, and local levels centres primarily on the importance of integrating women into decision-making and governance processes. Given that women’s political actions are mostly manifested at the local level, and the assumption that women can most easily gain access to deliberative bodies at that level, feminist political advocacy has tended to focus more on promoting women’s agency in that arena.

The discourse on women’s political agency has been articulated from two mutually inclusive perspectives. Earlier analyses, inspired by critical mass theory, defined women’s political agency in terms of their numeric presence in decision-making positions, otherwise known as descriptive representation. The number of women holding

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seats in national parliaments and local councils was, thus, considered an indicator of women's agency in decision making. The debate on descriptive representation also occupied a central position in the global women's movement, which greatly contributed to the implementation of such strategies as system-wide quotas and the reservation of seats for women candidates to enhance women's political participation.\textsuperscript{11} The number of women in parliament and local councils is currently increasing in almost all regions of the world.\textsuperscript{12} Although groundbreaking gains are yet to be achieved, current trends show that the gap is narrowing, although at a very slow rate.

Feminist politics in recent decades, in addition to emphasising women's numeric representation, have tended to focus on quality in women's political governance and decision making. In other words, a critical mass of women in decision making should result in women actors who are able to positively influence policy decisions advancing women's strategic needs, concerns, and interests. The emphasis on quality was inspired by empirical evidence revealing that achieving a critical mass of women in decision making does not automatically translate into an increase in women-friendly legislatures, also referred to as substantive representation. As such, debates on women's political agency, in addition emphasising descriptive representation, highlight a growing effort by feminists, gender activists, and gender scholars to examine factors that influence the effectiveness of female politicians.\textsuperscript{13}

One such effort has been in the increasing examination of the public–private dichotomy, in particular, attacks on patriarchal and familial constraints on women's meaningful participation in decision making and governance. The detachment of the public arena of decision making from the private (household) sphere is considered problematic by feminists.\textsuperscript{14} Approaching governance from the public sphere, for instance, masks the ways in which 'familial' norms and values influence how men and women enter the public sphere.\textsuperscript{15} Likewise, the public–private divide inherent in the definition of governance, argue Anne Marie Goetz and Rina Sen Gupta, has continu-


\textsuperscript{12} Inter-Parliamentary Union, Women in National Parliaments database, 2011, http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm, shows that the proportion of women in national legislatures increased by 6.6 percent between 2000 and 2010. The number of countries with at least 30 percent representation by women in decision-making positions has increased from one country in 1998 to thirty in 2008. At the local level, policies reserving seats have enabled more women to gain in political power in a number of countries, particularly in Southeast Asia.


\textsuperscript{15} Kabeer, 'Gender aware policy and planning'.

ously institutionalised women’s exclusion, as well as reinforced unequal gender power relations between women and men in the public sphere. Thus, in most cases women are subjected to ‘typical’ female tasks closely associated with their household roles and subjected to sexual harassment or violence, both of which ‘symbolically and literally threaten and constrain women’s identity as political actors’.

Despite the general agreement that private, household gender dynamics influence the manner in which men and women engage in activities in the public sphere, very few studies have attempted to critically examine how household-based gender relations influence the effective participation of women in political decision-making processes. Early studies on household gender dynamics were mostly dominated by the field of economics. Economic analysis of household behaviour typically focuses on how household members pool and redistribute social, economic, and political resources to various members. Feminist economists became interested in understanding the extent to which household gender relations affect women’s activities and decision-making power over resource allocation within and beyond the household.

Studies on women’s participation as politicians generally have focused on the gendered nature of public goods and the social provisioning women and men politicians are likely to promote, as well as constraints that limit women’s effective participation in decision-making processes, particularly in local government. This study therefore seeks to relate women’s household gender behaviour to their political behaviour.

**WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ANGLOPHONE CAMEROON**

Women councillors in the two regions that constitute Anglophone Cameroon were quite similar in terms of demographic attributes, despite their differences in geographical location and the cultural contexts of the areas in which they live. Slightly more than half (51.7 percent) of the councillors who participated in the study were at least fifty-one years of age, while close to one-third (31.1 percent) were between forty-one and fifty years old. Only 17.2 percent were under 40 years of age. Most of the women were married (65.5 percent). Their marital status covered the spectrum from single, married, separated, divorced to widowed. Among those married, 48.6 percent

16. Goetz and Gupta, ‘Who takes the credit?’
17. Ibid.
had been so for more than thirty years, while 36.5 percent had more than thirty years of marriage experience.

Findings further revealed that most of the women had been educated beyond the primary school level (59.5 percent), and 36.4 percent were primary school dropouts. Only a negligible proportion (4.0 percent) had no formal education. Before becoming municipal councillors, 58 percent had been teachers or petty traders with average monthly incomes estimated at 124,500 CFA francs. For 33.8 percent of the women, farming had been their main source of income, while 4.8 percent were full-time housewives, and 3.4 percent had retired.

It was interesting to find that almost all the respondents (98 percent) were either co-heads (64.2 percent) or heads (33.8 percent) of household. The household sizes ranged from a minimum of three to a maximum of eight persons. Almost half (44.5 percent) of the women had acquired such durable assets as land, houses, businesses, and cattle. Further analyses revealed a significant negative relationship between marital status and ownership of personal assets. For instance, it was observed that 83.7 percent of the unmarried women owned property acquired independently compared to 24.7 percent of the married women (see Table 2).

Secondary data indicate that the English-speaking councils in the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest, like those in the French-speaking regions of Cameroon, are supposed to promote the development of their respective localities in collaboration with other stakeholders, such as private operators, local nongovernmental organizations and community-based organizations. The council areas under investigation were mostly in rural areas and had populations ranging between 55,998 and 115,000 inhabitants. Women and youths constituted the majority of the population in all the council areas. The thirty-one councils were observed to engage in similar development-oriented activities, such as construction and equipment of educational institutions (specifically primary and secondary schools), road maintenance and building of culverts, water and electricity projects, and support to agricultural activities (providing assistance to farmers, such as tools, fertilisers, pesticides), and hygiene, sanitation, and health campaigns.

To perform these activities, all the councils had established similar committees in the areas of health, culture, agriculture, education, housing, water, environment, infrastructure, natural resources management and forestry, sports and leisure, supervisory and youth affairs, and economy and finance. The committees play roles in educating the population on council activities in the arenas of economics, health, culture, and social well-being. In collaboration with the local population, they held responsibility for identifying possible projects to be executed by the councils in their respective jurisdictions.

Almost all the women (92.7 percent) who participated in this study had been serving as municipal councillor for at least five years and sat on one or more committees. A few (3.3 percent), however, had more than 10 years of experience as councillors. The desire to represent the public interest in order to improve the well-being of the population was the dominant reason provided for becoming a councillor. In specific terms, a slight majority (50.7 percent) of the women sought to promote strategies that would enable the council to improve the well-being of all segments of the local population to enhance the overall development of their area. A reported 39.7 percent wanted to ensure that the council’s deliberative bodies addressed women’s strategic interests and
### Table 2

**Profile of Women Councillors in Anglophone Cameroon**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (years)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36–40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>41–45</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46–50</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 and above</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(151)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>65.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(151)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years spent in marriage</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt; 16</td>
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<td>16–30</td>
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<td>31 and above</td>
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<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(99)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Marriage contract</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monogamy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polygamy</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(99)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of education</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No formal education</td>
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<td>4.0</td>
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<td>Primary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>19.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (post-secondary diploma)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18.9</td>
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<td><strong>(148)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational status of respondent’s spouse</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Non-literate / primary</td>
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<td>20.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literate</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>78.8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(99)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Household status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>33.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-head</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>64.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(151)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Profile of Women Councillors in Anglophone Cameroon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household size*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4–6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>26.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 and above</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farming</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None (full-time housewife, student, retired)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled worker</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled worker</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income**</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 49,000</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000–99,000</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000–149,000</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150,000–199,000</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200,000 and above</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Ownership of personal assets (number and percentage)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own asset(s)</td>
<td>Does not own asset(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>24 (24.7%)</td>
<td>73 (75.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not married</td>
<td>41 (83.7%)</td>
<td>8 (16.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65 (44.5%)</td>
<td>81 (55.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Mean = 7.63; Standard deviation = 3.69
** Mean income = 124,500 CFA francs

Source: Fieldwork data collected August through November 2012.

outcomes. These women thus viewed their municipal councillorship as a gateway to advocating for women’s rights and promoting the socioeconomic and political empowerment of women in their communities. Some 6.2 percent relayed that their presence on the council served as motivation for other women to take part in local politics, enabled them to represent the interests of the needy and minority groups, and helped overcome the stereotype of women being inferior to men.

More than 93.3 percent of the female councillors belonged to committees. They generally predominated in the health, finance, women’s empowerment, and education committees and were tokenised in the culture, agriculture, physical projects and infrastructure, youth, transport, supervision, infrastructure, tenders, and natural resources committees. In addition, very few women occupied decision-making positions: chair-
person (19 percent), secretary (7 percent), adviser (4 percent), financial secretary (3 percent), and vice chairperson (2 percent). The majority (65 percent) held no leadership positions in their respective committees.

LEVEL OF WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Most of the women, 85.6 percent, in local government served as councillors, whereas 14.4 percent occupied posts as mayor as well as first and second deputy mayor and municipal treasurer. The respective percentages of the latter positions were 0.7 percent, 6.2 percent, 6.8 percent, and 0.7 percent. The mayors and first and second deputy mayors had primary or no formal education. By contrast, women who were fairly educated were ordinary councillors. This may suggest that the level of education is not likely to influence the position women occupy in local government administration. What, however, were the criteria used in selecting people for these positions? Interviews revealed that effective participation in community activities as well as council activities contributed significantly to their election. This was the experience of Helen, who noted, “It was through my participation in the affairs of my community that I was chosen to represent my community in local government.”

The level of women councillor’s participation was observed in terms of meeting attendance and frequency at which they raised issues or contributed to issues raised by other councillors as well as in terms of specific issues raised by women councillors about women’s strategic interests. Almost all the councillors interviewed (92.7 percent) claimed to attend council meetings on a regular basis and to participate in discussions by raising issues or contributing to matters raised by others.

As municipal councillors, the women interviewed acted as mediators between the council and their respective constituencies. They were charged with interacting with the local population to identify strategic needs and problems, tabling the needs and community problems in the council, ensuring that identified needs and problems were covered in council projects, and following up on projects in their constituencies to ensure that they were effectively realised. In addition to mediation, a few women councillors who occupied administrative positions (mayor and deputy mayors) also attended to civil matters, such as issuing birth, death, and marriage certificates.

The activities performed by most (84.1 percent) women councillors included mobilising the community (particularly women) to participate in such developmental activities as those involving hygiene, sanitation, and clean-up campaigns; sensitising the population to economic, health, and social issues; managing and supervising council projects on behalf of the community; heightening community awareness of the importance of education, effective management of education institutions, and civic responsibilities (particularly the importance of paying council taxes, political

22. Interview with female councillor, S14, 14 October 2012. For interviews, women were identified by their residence in either Northern (N) or Southern (S) region and an individual number. Names of respondents have been changed to maintain confidentiality.

23. A large majority (82.6 percent) had never chaired a council meeting, as such meetings were typically chaired by mayors, most of whom were men. Only three of the thirty-one councils visited had female mayors. All of the councils, however, had a female deputy (assistant) mayor.
participation, and respect for the law); training women on income-generating activities and sensitisation of women's groups to help boost their social, cultural, economic, and political empowerment. The women councillors performed one or more of these activities through participation in one or more of the committees discussed above.

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOUSEHOLD GENDER ROLES AND COUNCILLORS' PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

This section attempts to compare activities performed by women councillors in their households to activities they perform on their councils. Likewise, a comparative analysis is made between the decisions women councillors prioritise and influence in the household and those in which they are involved in their councils. The intention is to examine whether and how women's engagement in household activities and decision-making processes relate to their activities and decisions as council members and thus potentially influence local government.

**Household and Council Activities**

Despite movement towards women's emancipation in general, most of the councillors still adhere strongly to their traditional gender roles as caregivers and homemakers. The findings reveal that close to 60 percent of the women councillors who participated in the study prioritised their domestic household work over council activities. For most of these women, being a ‘good wife’, determined by how effectively they managed their homes, was an indication of their effectiveness as a municipal councillor. As such, a woman who could not successfully manage her home tended not to be a good councillor. One of the female councillors interviewed shared this observation: ‘I have to give a good impression to the population as a good wife and a councillor. . . . I cannot be a good councillor when my home is not in order. . . . I have to be a good example of a wife and a councillor so that others [women] can copy [me].’ As Miriam saw it, ‘It helps me gain popularity. When people see me succeeding as a good wife, they know I am better placed as a councillor.’ These women strikingly reinforced such stereotypes during meetings with women’s groups in their constituencies. For example, asked what specific issues they discussed with these groups, a majority (67 percent) of the councillors cited home management, family issues, health, hygiene and sanitation, water supply, and balancing (productive, reproductive, and community) roles. Lilian said that her discussions with women’s groups featured such issues as ‘educating women on how to manage their home alongside what they do outside their home.’ The women’s discussions echoed the views of R. Chattopadhyay and E. Duflo, who are of the opinion that women in local government tend to uphold activities that reinforce female traditional gender roles.

A few respondents (29.6 percent) said that in their meetings with women’s groups they stressed the need for women to engage in income-generating activities. Their

24. Interview with female councillor, N3, 12 August 2012.
25. Interview with female councillor, N5, 14 August 2012.
26. Interview with female councillor, N4, 14 August 2012.
27. Chattopadhyay and Duflo, ‘Women as policy makers’.
main reasons for doing so were not, however, personal empowerment, but to enable the women to better manage their families and to educate their children, especially girls. In this light, Patience said, ‘I advise women to make their families better by carrying out income-generating activities so that they can raise income to take care of their families’.28 Dorothy said she educated mothers to ‘support their husbands to sponsor girl child education. If they don’t, their husbands will instead send the boy child to school and forget about the girl child’s education’.29 A negligible proportion of respondents (4.6 percent) discussed such issues as leadership skills for women, empowerment for self-assertiveness, and the need for sisterhood among female politicians.

Contrary to E. K. Kapampara’s study, which noted that participation in local government results in a remarkable shift in women’s performance of household activities, only a few respondents, less than 10 percent, reported that their husbands collaborated with them in performing household chores, especially when council activities were demanding.30 Vivian, a member of this minority, shared, ‘When I have a major council project, I sacrifice my housework and concentrate on the project. My husband is cooperating and often takes over the housework in those times’.31

**Household and Council Decision-Making Power**

While the research findings suggest that the majority of women councillors replicated their traditional household responsibilities and activities in local government, the activities performed by women in the home did not influence their decision-making power in local government. Rather the councillors’ agency in council decision-making processes was observed to be enhanced by the degree of influence the women councillors exhibited in household decision making.

Evidence suggests that the councillors, irrespective of their level of education, income, age, and marital status, had a commendable influence over household decision making. Virtually all the respondents (98.6 percent) took decisions either independently or together with their spouse on such issues as health, division of activities within the household, allocation of household income, child bearing, education of children and extended relatives, building projects, and finances.

From the analysis of interviews, it became apparent that women councillors seemed to have greater influence in council decisions that were similar to decisions they controlled at the household level. These women were observed to wield greater control in decisions concerning child bearing, management of household income, and children’s education in their households. In a number of cases, it was observed that projects proposed by women councillors were fully executed by their councils, especially projects concerned with education and income generation for women. Sophia, a forty-eight-year-old councillor with primary school education and married for thirty-three years, offered, ‘I am more concerned with the promotion of education,

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28. Interview with female councillor, S4, 15 October 2012.
29. Interview with female councillor, S8, 15 October 2012.
31. Interview with female councillor, S3, 12 October 2012.
especially for girl children in my community. . . . For example, every year, prizes are
given to the two best female students in my community, which is what I proposed to
the council.\textsuperscript{32} Furthermore, Ngum, a fifty-six-year-old councillor with the same aca-
demic qualifications, said, “All the quarter projects I proposed to the council, like or-
ganising seminars to train women on income-generating activities and support to
schools in my community, have been executed due to my follow up’. In the same vein,
Christine, age sixty-five and married for forty-three years, reported, ‘Muambong
women never had a market for their farm products, but I have made that possible’.\textsuperscript{33}
These findings corroborated the specific issues women councillors raised during
council sessions.

Similarities in women councillors’ household and council decision-making were
also evident in the issues women tended to prioritise during council meetings. In
terms of the dominant issues raised at the meetings, it was observed that close to 75
percent of the women were more concerned with social issues, such as holiday jobs for
youths, scholarships for deserving students in the municipality, education (particu-
larly for girls), adult literacy programmes, financial assistance to schools and health
centres, health and hygiene, and sanitation. The women felt that these concerns ad-
dressed the general welfare of the community, not just women’s needs. In line with
this observation, Miriam said she was interested in ‘promoting girls’ education, which
is a big issue in my community’. She emphasised the need to ‘solicit funds to sponsor
the education of the girl child’.\textsuperscript{34}

About one-fifth (21.64 percent) of the women councillors said that they had
sought to promote the economic empowerment of women. They further reported
that during council meetings, they advocated for councils to support farmers, farm to
market roads, parks, agric-exposition, and promotion of income-generating activities.
For instance, one of the women councillors said she requested that the council ‘help
everyone [men and women] in the rural area with farm tools, buying seedlings and
giving them out for planting’.\textsuperscript{35} For another respondent, it was important for her
council to ‘support economic activities like smoking fish and cassava transformation
in order to increase sales’.\textsuperscript{36} Issues relating to gender inequality in social provisioning
and resource management as well as violence against women and girls were rarely
brought up by female councillors during council sessions. Only one reported that she
always campaigns for the council to address issues of violence. She also offered, ‘I raise
issues like the alleviation of maltreatment of widows in traditional widows’ rights’.\textsuperscript{37}

Conversely, issues relating to infrastructure, road construction, and management of
council projects were predominantly the preoccupation of male councillors, according
to respondents. Asked whether there was a difference in the kinds of issues raised by
men and women councillors, Manka’a replied, ‘Women complain about the water crisis
because they suffer most. Toilets in the market are absent. Women also talk about
female education and health. Men talk about issues of power and always want to

\textsuperscript{32} Interview with female councillor, N2, 2 September 2012.
\textsuperscript{33} Interview with female councillor, S8, 3 October 2012.
\textsuperscript{34} Interview with female councillor, S9, 3 October 2012.
\textsuperscript{35} Interview with female councillor, N6, 16 August 2012.
\textsuperscript{36} Interview with female councillor, N7, 16 August 2012.
\textsuperscript{37} Interview with female councillor, S10, 2 November 2012.
dominate’.38 Lum noted, ‘Women mostly raise issues that warrant the council to support women's groups, whereas men just like to argue in sessions about major projects, like road construction, construction of culverts, and other contract issues’.39 On the same issue, Evelyn asserted, ‘Men always raise issues that most often will benefit only them directly, like heading contracts for road construction and other projects. . . . They are selfish in their discussion and proposals while women are always concerned with [the general] welfare, i.e., things that will benefit everybody, including men’.40 These responses illustrate that women councillors, irrespective of their level of education, income, or marital status, are more likely to influence decisions at the council level when the decisions are similar to those they influence in their households.

How Does Participation in Local Government Affect Household Gender Relations?

While evidence from this study suggest similarities in activities and decisions that women councillors prioritise at the household and local government levels, women’s involvement in local government did not significantly transform household gender relations. Study results revealed that close to 70 percent of the women councillors did not experience any significant changes in them, especially as concerned household decision making, after they became councillors. This observation corroborates Kapampara's study, which observed that participation in local government does not enhance women's bargaining power at the household level.41 Some of the respondents who were active in decision making said they were already empowered before becoming municipal councillors. Esther shared, ‘Before being a councillor, I was active in my home and in the public as a politician, so I still take part in those things I used to do’.

The 30 percent of councillors who reported changes in household gender relations asserted that their influence in household decision making was gradually improving and that their participation in local government seemed to have contributed to this. Many of these changes were related to increased trust by husbands and control of husbands’ income. One women asserted, ‘My husband now takes my ideas seriously and will not do something without consulting me. . . . I could not make firm decisions, . . . but my participation in the council has enabled me now to make firm decisions and stand by them’.42 Other women felt that they had acquired commendable influence over their husbands’ incomes. For example, one respondent noted, ‘My husband now understands and takes my proposals as to his expenditures because he is a little extravagant, so I advise him on how to spend his income. . . . He believes more in me now’.43

38. Interview with female councillor, N1, 3 August 2012.
39. Interview with female councillor, N11, 18 August 2012.
40. Interview with female councillor, N12, 18 August 2012.
41. Kapampara, ‘The impact of women participation in local councils on gender relations in the family’.
42. Interview with female councillor, S12, 17 October 2012.
43. Interview with female councillor, S16, 15 October 2012.
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, the decision-making power of women councillors expressed in household decision making in Anglophone Cameroon had a direct influence on their effective participation in council’s deliberative discussions and activities. It also revealed a transfer of bargaining aptitude and ability of women councillors in the household to the council. The findings suggest sufficient grounds to contend that when women have the opportunity to participate in community activities, they not only gain in qualifications, but also become more visible and more likely to be elected. As a consequence, any efforts at strengthening women’s decision-making power at the household and community levels is likely to bring added value to women’s potential eligibility to take part in politics. Outcomes from such capacity-strengthening efforts will be employed by women to transform gender relations in local government because the women will bring with them an enhanced capacity to effectively participate in decision making. Therefore, what women bring to local government is critical as it shapes their participation and contribution in local governance.

The implication for development efforts to increase the quantity and quality of women’s active participation in politics and governance is to implement strategies and measures that will a priori empower women’s voices, capacities, rights, and participation in community projects. The current approach shortchanges the huge benefit that could be derived otherwise. Emphasis should be placed on quality as much as on quantity.