



PEACE BUILDING IN AFRICA

Dr. Ukiyedeikimie Ugo Moses

Department of Social Studies, Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Cite this article:

Ukiyedeikimie Ugo Moses (2023), Peace Building in Africa. African Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Research 6(4), 60-74. DOI: 10.52589/AJSSHR-UCIAWTHG

Manuscript History

Received: 2 May 2023

Accepted: 21 July 2023

Published: 14 Aug 2023

Copyright © 2023 The Author(s).

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0), which permits anyone to share, use, reproduce and redistribute in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

ABSTRACT: *Africa has been the theatre of conflicts since the end of the Cold War. Intra-state conflicts have particularly taken a heavy toll on human lives in the past two decades. The state of insecurity in the continent has retarded socio-economic and political goals and set the continent decades back in all development indices. Consequently, Africans have witnessed unprecedented levels of misery and human suffering. This makes peace building an important engagement in the continent as a necessary tool to re-establish security and initiate the process of nation-building in war ravaged countries in the continent. This paper is a contribution to the debate on the place of peace building in a troubled continent. The analysis is dependent on secondary sources: the internet, textbooks, newspapers and magazines. The paper discussed the roles of local level involvement, government/state institutions and international partners and organizations in peace building in Africa. Identified challenges to peace building are the conception of peace building as a post conflict engagement by the international community, lack of capacity and proper coordination, lack of resources and external influence, and control of the process and programmes. To surmount these challenges, the paper recommended the involvement of local actors in the design and implementation of peace building programmes, indigenous capacity building, and central coordination of peace building initiatives.*

KEYWORDS: Peace Building, Conflicts, Cold War, Africa



INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the cold war, conflicts have made Africa one of the most difficult places to live. Sub-Saharan Africa was noted as the most conflict-ridden in the world (Karbo, 2008). Africa was also host to the preponderance of United Nations peacekeeping activities around the world. Though conflicts were not confined to Africa, as the decade after the Cold War witnessed a remarkable surge in conflicts around the globe, the African continent attracted the most concern due to the prevalence of localized conflicts that took a heavy toll on human security. The increased realisation that local conflicts were a potent danger to international peace and security necessitated a rethink on the approaches to maintaining global security. The result was a shift in focus from emphasis on peacekeeping to peace building by the international community, both as a conflict preventive measure and an effective post conflict peace building tool. As a mechanism to de-escalate the incidents of conflict around the world, peace building was considered safe and less expensive for the international community.

Decades ago, Johan Galtung had acknowledged peace building as a veritable instrument in the efforts to establish a world free of violent conflicts. But the Cold War environment made it almost impossible for the international community to embark on effective peace building endeavours. In 1992, the United Nations galvanized the international community into taking a bold step on peace building through the Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali's report, *An Agenda for Peace* (UN: An Agenda for Peace, 1992; McAskie, 2010). Though peace building was not a new activity in the United Nations, the *Agenda for Peace* provided a road-map, a renewed commitment and focus on peace building by the international community. It is noteworthy that elements of peace building have always been part of the activities of the international community in any effort to restore peace in conflict situations. The *Agenda for Peace* was however remarkable as an international commitment to the pursuit of peace building.

But in spite of the commitment and efforts of the international community to prevent conflicts through peace building, conflicts have continued to constitute a major problem and a threat to human security in Africa (Berhe, June 2016). This raises fundamental questions, some of which bother on the actors in any peace building process in the continent. This paper therefore examines the roles and activities of actors in peace building in Africa. This is with a view to establishing the reasons why peace building efforts have not yielded the desired peace in the continent.

The paper is divided into five sections. After the introduction is the review of relevant literature. The next section deals with the nature of conflicts in Africa. The third section focuses on the role of key actors in peace building in Africa. Under this section, the role of local actors, institutions of government and the place of international organizations and partnerships in peace building are discussed. These are followed by a section on the challenges of peace building in Africa, recommendations and conclusion.



LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Tschirgi (n.d), United Nations Secretary General, Boutros Boutros Ghali introduced peace building in his report, *An Agenda for Peace* to the 47th session of the General Assembly on 17th June, 1992. Tschirgi noted that peace building was proposed to respond to both the security challenges of the post Cold War world and the development needs of nations. Tschirgi stated that peace building was one of several tools developed by the international community to deal with conflicts in the world. According to Tschirgi, peace building encompasses demilitarization, demobilization, reconciliation and post conflict development of a state.

Ajayi (2006) acknowledged the primary responsibility of the United Nations to secure global peace but emphasized the importance of partnership with regional organizations. In Africa, Ajayi noted the significant collaboration between the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in peace building. Ajayi observed that the Peace Building Commission (PBC) was established in the UN in 2006 to ensure peace in post conflict countries. To achieve this goal, the PBC was mandated to coordinate other actors in the peace building process, mobilize resources and develop best practices for post conflict recovery, and to lay the foundation for sustainable development in post conflict countries. Ajayi identified the existence of multiple actors engaged in peace building in the continent as a major challenge.

Karbo (2008) asserted that peace building is not new in Africa as there were diverse indigenous resources and institutions for conflict resolution and peace building. Karbo observed that the fundamental objective of peace building is rebuilding social relations in a society. Karbo acknowledged that peace building is a long term engagement that occurs before, during and after conflict. The purpose of peace building therefore is to prevent deadly conflicts in society. Karbo noted that the several Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved in peace building in Africa is a reflection of the concern for peace in the continent. The NGOs are assisted by Community Based Organizations (CBOs) which Karbo noted are always better in reaching out to all sections of society. According to Karbo, it is important that the activities of NGOs in Africa and the work of government institutions be properly coordinated in order to realise the objectives of peace building in the continent. Karbo noted that demobilization, disarmament and reintegration are part of peace building as these activities are essential to the process of peace building.

Karbo identified some challenges to peace building in Africa. The intractable nature of conflicts and the short term of international engagement on peace building in the continent were noted as a major challenge. Karbo argued that as a result of the relatively short period of time spent on peace building in post conflict countries, such countries often relapse into conflict. Another challenge Karbo noted is the lack of consultation and proper engagement with local level actors in designing programmes and activities for peace building. There is also the challenging nature of conflicts in Africa. Karbo argued that the spill-over of conflicts across national borders is a cause of conflicts being protracted and less amenable to peace building. Corruption amongst government officials and its impact on domestic investment and Official Development Assistance (ODA) to post conflict countries in Africa was also observed as a challenge. Karbo stated that post conflict countries that default in loan repayment with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund are sanctioned. Karbo stated that donor agencies



also suspend assistance to such countries in reaction thereby complicating the process of peace building in affected countries.

CONFLICTS IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICA

There has been no common cause of conflicts in contemporary Africa. A number of broad factors have been implicated in the conflicts across the continent. This makes sweeping prescriptions on peace building across pre and post conflict environments difficult.

The Cold War had its negative and positive impacts on governance and politics in Africa. While the ideological contest for Africa turned the continent into a theatre of proxy wars, the struggle to partition Africa along ideological lines also resulted in the sustenance of weak and despotic governments allied to either of the two ideological powers. The end of the Cold War and the diminished geopolitical and strategic importance of Africa eliminated the source of sustenance of despotic rulers in the continent and created an opportunity for long-oppressed people to challenge the continued stay in office of their governments. This resulted in conflicts in various parts of the continent. The end of the Cold War therefore had two immediate impacts on governance in the continent: it created a lot of instability occasioned by regime changes and also left a lot of states too weak to shoulder the responsibilities of government. As noted by Carmen (2003), the incapacity of many states in West and Central Africa to provide for the welfare and wellbeing of their citizens, to protect citizens from internal and external threats and regulate conflicts resulted in state failures and consequently conflicts. Carment (2003) further observed that the weakness of governments encourages opposition groups to take up arms against the state thereby generating conflicts. This was the scenario in Somalia, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Burundi and Rwanda (Peters, 2003). Therefore, there were sustained violent conflicts in Africa at the end of the Cold War (Dokubo, 2012).

Ethnic or identity conflicts and ethnic nationalism has been a major driver of conflicts since the end of the Cold War. Rather than being a blessing, the multiplicity of ethnicities in the continent has been the bane of the continent in the past two decades. Some have argued that ethnicity is only a tool used by the elites in the struggle for power in multiethnic societies and not the cause of conflicts (Aapengnuo, 2010; Yilmaz, 2018). The fact is that identity conflicts have surged in and have constituted a major source of instability in the continent in the past two decades. The prolonged deadly conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the source of widespread instability in the Great Lakes region, readily comes to mind. It is a fact that the confrontation between the Hutu ethnic group and the Tutsis in Rwanda, Burundi and the proxy wars by ethnic militias supported by both ethnic groups in eastern DRC is the root of the deadly conflict in that country.

The foundation of the first war between the Arab tribes and the Fur ethnic group of Sudan's Darfur region is attributed to ethnic nationalism (Waal, 2022). In Rwanda, ethnic nationalism was primarily responsible for the hate that resulted in the genocide of 1994 (Nikuze, 2014). The persistent strife in Rwanda is replicated in neighbouring Burundi with the same ethnicities (Institute for Peace and Security Studies). In both cases, ethnic differences were exploited to generate conflict. There have also been ethnic conflicts between the Amharas and the Tigreans and the ethnic disturbances of the Oromos, all of Ethiopia. From Somalia to Eritrea and from



Djibouti to Sudan, ethnic conflicts have caused misery and deaths in the Horn of Africa. The story is not different in other parts of the continent.

In Nigeria, ethnic nationalism has existed as a persistent threat to the corporate existence of the country since independence (Gilbert, 2013). The Tiv riots of 1962 and the separatist bid of Isaac Adaka Boro in 1966 in the '12 Day Revolution' to the secessionist struggle of the Igbos of the Eastern Region in 1967 were all fueled by ethnic nationalism. Agitations by ethnic militias and ethnic based associations have continued to pose a threat to the sovereignty and stability of Nigeria (Olayode, 2011; Gilbert, 2013). The post Cold War era has witnessed a resurgence of ethnic agitations leading to conflicts and general political instability in the continent.

In the past two decades, post election violence often resulting in conflicts is a common problem of the democratisation process in most African countries. In 1993 the Republic of Congo (Congo-Brazzaville) erupted in violence after a disputed election (Bekoe, 2010). The post election violence of 1993–1994 was the precursor to the civil war in 1997 in that country. Between 1993 and 1998, a total of about 37,000 persons had lost their lives in the post election crisis and the civil war that ensued from the deadlock (Bekoe, 2010). Nigeria was in turmoil over the annulment of the presidential election of 1993 in which Chief MKO Abiola was presumed to have won (Omotosho & Oyeranmi, 2014). The ensuing crisis almost led to the implosion of the country. Before then, Algeria was similarly engulfed in a post-election crisis that resulted from the cancellation of the 1991 general election in which the Islamic Front was well on its way to victory (Peters, 2003). Between 2010 and 2011, the aftermath of a disputed presidential election in Cote d' Ivoire and the deadly confrontation between forces loyal to the two presidential candidates in the election—Laurent Gbagbo and Alasane Quattara—left 3,000 persons dead (Human Rights Watch, 2020). The same circle of violence and killings also marked the outcome of the 2020 presidential election (Human Rights Watch, 2020). In the Republic of Congo (Congo Brazzaville), the post election crisis of 1993–1994 resulted in a civil war in 1997. Kenya had a taste of post election violence in 2008, Zimbabwe in 2018, Togo in 2005, 2010 and 2015, and Guinea Bissau is embroiled in protracted instability after the general election of 2020. A lot more other countries in the continent have experienced crises in the aftermath of democratic elections.

The activities of insurgent groups and the contest for political power is another source of conflict in the continent. The struggle for political power has been a defining cause of conflict in Africa in the past two decades. The contest for power in Liberia between the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the regime of Samuel Doe resulted in an intractable civil war in that country (Ukeje, 2003 a). In neighbouring Sierra Leone, the confrontation in 1991 ignited by Foday Sankoh and his Revolutionary United Front against the government of President Saidu Momoh was an attempt to wrest political power which culminated in a decade long civil war (Ukeje, 2003 b).

The rich natural resource endowment of the Democratic Republic of Congo has made conflict endemic to that country and the entire Great Lakes region (Koning, 2011; Katunga, n.d). Natural resources are the underlying factor in the Niger Delta conflict in Nigeria. It is still the underlying factor in the separatist agitation of the Cabinda region of Angola (Francis, 2011; Halleon, 2009).



In recent years, there has been a notable rise in religious conflicts in Africa. In Nigeria, the Boko Haram Islamic sect is waging a violent war against the state in a bid to establish an Islamic caliphate in the country (Chiluwa et al., 2021). Al-Shaabab is engaged in a deadly conflict in Somalia with spill-over effects on Kenya and its other neighbours (Basedau, 2017). The Central African Republic was in turmoil as Christians and Muslims were engaged in violence. Religion was also a remarkable influence in the conflicts in Congo-Brazzaville and Mali, Al Qaeda in the Maghreb, and the infiltration of the Islamic State (IS) in Niger and the Sahel belt has also resulted in an upsurge in conflicts (Basedau, 2017). There are several other conflict flashpoints in Africa that are motivated by religion.

Democratic elections in many countries in Africa are often characterised by post-election crises and conflicts. In 1993, Nigeria was thrown into crisis when the June 12 presidential election was aborted by the military. Kenya was engulfed in a deadly post-election conflict from 2007–2008 (Onguny, 2019). Cote d' Ivoire was also caught in the web of post-election imbroglio in 2010, resulting in large-scale violence and deaths (Cook, 2011; Lamin, n.d). In Cameroon, Liberia, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Sierra Leone, Senegal, and Gambia, low-intensity violence and election related crises have attended the electoral processes (The Nordic Africa Institute). This indicates that the process of democratisation in most African countries is characterised by crises and conflicts.

These factors have conspired to complicate the security of states in Africa and caused general instability in the continent. This has made effective peace building necessary in sustaining and facilitating the process of restoring peace in the continent. This makes the roles of various actors crucial to the peace building process.

ACTORS IN PEACE BUILDING IN AFRICA

The traditional actors that have remained relevant to peace building in Africa are the local or grass root actors, national actors, regional and continental actors, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the international community. The activities of these actors are not compartmentalized as being presented as peace building is always a coordinated process by several actors. As an enterprise, peace building requires the participation of multiple actors. The process of an effective peace building begins with the elimination of threats to the root causes of conflicts in society. Peace building therefore encompasses all efforts involved in sustaining pre-conflict and post-conflict peace.

How to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of these actors in building peace in the continent is an important consideration. The increasing complexity and the emerging new sources of conflict require new approaches to peace building in Africa even as the traditional actors remain relevant to the process.

INDIGENOUS/LOCAL ACTORS IN PEACE BUILDING



Indigenous or local actors are the focus of any peace building process and their involvement is critical for a successful peace building (Gawerc, 2006). This is because the focus of peace-building is on increasing and strengthening the capacity of individuals and communities to peacefully resolve problems (African Union Report, 2020). Local ownership of the peace building process is the most important factor in the success of any peace building endeavour in Africa. This makes local actors the drivers and critical stakeholders in peace building. This is particularly relevant in African societies that have deep cultural practices in dispute resolution and reconciliation. As the most important stakeholders in the peace building process, what should be the role of local actors? The role and functions of local actors are expected to change with the changing environment of threats to peace in the continent. In other words, how can local actors remain relevant and local practices of peace building adapted to contemporary times?

It has been demonstrated in a number of post-conflict environments that the resort to traditional methods of conflict resolution and reconciliation is effective in restoring peaceful social relations in African societies. Murithi (2008) laid out some indigenous practices of peace building in African societies. In post genocide Rwanda, the sheer number of perpetrators of genocide and the dearth of the necessary legal infrastructure made the government to employ the traditional *Gacaca* or community based process of justice in facilitating national reconciliation (Brehm, 2014). This was largely responsible for the post genocide peace experienced in the country.

In post apartheid South Africa, the communal values embedded in the cultural worldview expressed in the concept of *Ubuntu* were utilized in the peace building process (Murithi, 2006). *Ubuntu* is an expression of the common humanity of all individuals in society. It is based on the deep rooted traditional African belief that an individual is part of the society and so what affects the individual or a section of the society is a problem for the entire society (Murithi, 2006). It provides a rationale for sacrificing or letting go of the desire to take revenge for past wrongs (Murithi, 2006). *Ubuntu* therefore makes conflict resolution and reconciliation an important part of the social life of communal Africa. This was a constant point of reference in the healing and reconciliation process in post apartheid South Africa. Traditional practices of dispute resolution and reconciliation in Africa places a premium on “forgiveness, healing, reconciliation and restorative justice” (Murithi, 2008). Employing these traditional instruments that are part of the culture of African societies will greatly enhance the process of reconciliation and further the objectives of peace building in Africa.

It is worth noting that there are elements of these traditional practices of dispute settlement in all African cultures and traditions which are valuable to peace building. A peace building process that draws from these common practices will be more meaningful to Africa and Africans as opposed to foreign prescriptions (Waldman, 2009). The active participation of the people is necessary in preventing conflicts, in the de-escalation of existing conflicts and in re-establishing social harmony. In modern times, what is needed is support from national and international partners in enhancing peace at the local level. The active participation of the local population is therefore indispensable to peace building.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT/NATIONAL ACTORS



Peace building in Africa is largely dependent on national institutions. This is particularly the case where the primary task is to prevent the occurrence of violence or a relapse to conflict. The hosting state, its government and institutions are important to peace building. International partners require the support of national governments where one exists (King & Mathews, 2012). Government and state institutions play important roles as critical stakeholders in peace building. National governments are important stakeholders that sustain the peace building process when international partners withdraw (United Nations General Assembly, 2016).

INTERNATIONAL ACTORS AND PEACE BUILDING IN AFRICA

The 1992 United Nations *Agenda for Peace* provided the basis for a robust international engagement in peace building in Africa and around the world. In furtherance of its commitment to peace building, the international community has created a number of institutions and frameworks to promote peace building around the world. The United Nations architecture for peace building consists of the Peace Building Commission (PBC), the Peace Building Fund (PBF) and the Peace Building Support Office (PBSO). Each of these institutional frameworks has specific roles in the peace building process. The Peace Building Commission is responsible for coordinating all aspects of any peace building effort by the international community. This includes the coordination of the activities of other actors and mobilization of resources for any peace building assignment. The Peace Building Commission (PBC) is therefore the central coordinating body in the broad efforts to build peace in any troubled country. It works under the office of the Secretary General and is directly answerable to the General Assembly (United Nations, 2010).

The Peace Building Support Office (PBSO) plays a supportive role to the Peace Building Commission (PBC) particularly in administering the fund for peace building and in facilitating the objectives of the international community in peace building (United Nations, 2010). The Peace Building Fund (PBF) is the United Nations fund set aside to support countries emerging from conflict.

Generally, the United Nations is responsible for coordinating the peace building efforts of international donors, multilateral institutions, International Financial Institutions, regional organizations, NGOs, the private sector and other actors. Either a Resident Coordinator or a Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) heads the implementation of the objectives of the international community (United Nations, 2010). The international community depends on the coordination of the UN in delivering on peace building objectives.

An important international actor in peace building in Africa is the European Union (EU). The EU was the single biggest contributor (31% of the total sum) to the United Nations Trust Fund in Liberia (Knight, 2008). The fund was utilized for various aspects of demilitarization, demobilization and reintegration programmes of the United Nations in Liberia. The EU has also fostered co-operative engagements with regional and continental organizations in peace building efforts in Africa (Knight, 2008).

Beyond the inputs of international organizations, continental and regional organizations play critical roles in peace building. Often, it is under the auspices of the African Union that peace accords between parties in conflict are initiated and signed and peace keeping troops deployed



to effectively commence post-conflict peace building in any African country. For example, the Arusha Peace Agreement of 2000 that heralded the cessation of hostilities in Burundi in 2003 was initiated by the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union (Knight, 2008). The United Nations only got involved when general peace was established. More often than not, the wider international community looks up to the lead of the continental organization. The AU is also a platform for mobilizing international support for peace building efforts in the continent. The African Union therefore plays a crucial role in any peace building endeavour in the continent.

The collaborative efforts of sub-regional organizations are vital to peace building. Since the end of the cold war and the unprecedented spike in conflicts in the continent, sub-regional economic organizations have assumed critical roles in facilitating peace. Continental efforts have increasingly relied on the support of these organizations. Sub-regional organizations have assumed important roles due to the closeness of these organizations to the theatres of conflict and therefore their better understanding and appreciation of the factors on the ground.

CHALLENGES OF PEACE BUILDING IN AFRICA

Peace building in Africa is not lacking actors and institutionalized frameworks, yet the process is persistently challenged. The existence of multiple challenges confronting peace building in the continent largely accounts for the ineffectiveness of peace building endeavours in the continent.

The conception and approach to peace building by the United Nations as the lead agency is a source of challenge to peace building in Africa. The United Nations conceive peace building as a post conflict engagement. Peace building became part of the official lexicon of the global body through Boutros-Ghali's *An Agenda for Peace* in 1992. Boutros-Ghali conceived peace building as a new undertaking in countries emerging from conflict (Knight, 2008). Peace building therefore became closely associated with post-conflict engagement of the United Nations. Clearly, this has shaped the approach of the international community to peace building. Beyond intervening in post conflict peace building, which is the major focus of the international community, peace building also encompasses pre conflict and conflict environments.

The post-conflict conception of peace building in the United Nations means the global body rarely gets involved in peace building in societies that are yet to experience conflict. United Nations involvement through peace keeping and post-conflict peace building is much more felt when a country is enmeshed in conflict. But pre-conflict peace building will be more relevant and successful in Africa. The emphasis therefore should be more on pre-conflict engagement so that conflicts do not occur. The focus of the international community on conflict and post-conflict peace building is more tasking and less likely to be as effective as pre-conflict peace building.

There is also the problem of development of local capacities required to sustain the process of peace building on the withdrawal of international actors. Peace building is a long term engagement which more often than not foreign actors do not stay long enough to see through. In cases where international actors withdraw from the peace building process, the sustenance



of the process becomes a problem. The problems of lack of manpower and resources needed to prosecute various programmes become immediate challenges.

A common challenge of post-conflict peace building in Africa is the lack of resources. Funds for peace building in Africa are sourced from international financial institutions, donor countries and Non Governmental Organizations. Africa has been the epicentre of global crises since the end of the Cold War. The continent has therefore been the focus of donor attention for the past two decades. This prolonged engagement in Africa has led to donor fatigue and the depletion of resources available for peace building in the continent. Also, competition for available resources from other parts of the world and domestic opposition to foreign commitments have all conspired to drastically reduce international funding for peace building operations in Africa. The consequence is that peace building activities in Africa have been starved of funding which is indispensable to the success of any peace building programme. This is affecting the operations of all donor dependent peace building operations in the continent and has contributed to the reduced capacity and effectiveness of existing institutional frameworks for peace building.

Peace building is an activity that attracts the engagement of multiple actors. Each actor brings to the peace building process its interests and objectives which are either organizational or national depending on the sponsors. These actors are often not always amenable to control and coordination by a single body. Different actors implementing different objectives and pursuing often parallel interests in a conflict environment increases the complexity of the peace building process. The lack of proper coordination of activities is therefore a challenge to the success of peace building in Africa.

A related problem emanates from the sources of funding for peace building. Countries that are emerging from conflict depend on the international community for sustenance of peace building programmes. The general economic weakness and poverty of African states disposes the continent to depend on rich nations to fund peace building programmes. This exposes the continent to undue influence from extra-continental powers (Simonians, Stephenson & McCall, n.d). This exposes the peace building process to manipulations by sponsors and donor countries. Consequently, host countries, sub-regional and continental organizations are often not in charge of the peace building process as conditions and prescriptions reflecting the national interests and objectives of donor countries are imposed. A case in point is the liberal peace thesis which recommends the application of Western model democracy as a panacea to conflicts in conflict endemic countries in Africa (King & Mathews, 2012). This is grounded in the belief that conflicts in Africa can be resolved by simply cultivating Western democracy. This informs efforts of Western donors to introduce democracy in all countries plagued by conflict. This has however not resolved the root causes of conflicts in Africa. The fact is that democracy is a foreign policy objective of Western nations in Africa and peace building provides one opportunity to realize this goal in the continent.

As it is with resources for peace building, Africa also lacks the necessary expertise, logistics and requisite knowledge for conflict management, resolution and reconciliation. The continent depends on the international community and foreign partners for support in these critical areas. This explains the inability of the continental mechanism to effectively respond to threats to peace.



Peace building is a process that requires long term commitment from international partners and donor agencies. The emphasis on short term goals dictated by domestic politics considerations of donor nations does not promote sustainable peace building. The result is that established institutions and structures are often too weak and so cannot sustain the peace building process. This explains the relapse to conflict soon after disengagement by the international community (Simonians, Stephenson & McCall, n.d). The failure to properly understand and appreciate the local context of societies in conflict before administering peace building processes also constitutes a grave challenge to the success of peace building (Simonians, Stephenson & McCall, n.d).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Peace building programmes in Africa should be designed to properly engage the people and local communities as the primary beneficiaries. Local ownership of the process is important to the success of any peace building endeavour. Local communities and actors should be involved in the design and implementation of all stages of the programme as these are meant to benefit them. Non involvement of the local people in fashioning peace building programmes ends as imposition of the process on the people. This leads to lack of commitment to programmes which negatively impacts on the success of peace building.

Peace building can only yield the desired results if activities are centrally coordinated. Lack of central coordination of the process often leads to duplication of activities and lack of common goals and therefore the lack of success of the process. The coordination of a central body is therefore advocated to enhance the success of peace building programmes in the continent.

Building continental capacity for peace building should be a primary focus of the international community and continental and sub-regional organizations. The continent cannot afford to continue to depend on the international community for expertise and logistics for peace building.

CONCLUSION

In the past two decades, Africa has been the epicenter of global conflicts. These conflicts are attributed to the end of the Cold War and its impact on governance in the continent, ethnic nationalism or identity conflicts, religious conflicts, post election violence and the scramble for natural resources. These conflicts made peace building an important engagement of the international community in the continent. The major actors in the process of peace building in the continent are local actors, national actors, continental actors, NGOs and the international community.

Peace building in Africa is challenged by a number of problems. The view that peace building is a post-conflict engagement of the UN has limited activities in pre-conflict peace building in Africa. The problem of lack of local capacity and proper coordination of peace building in the continent, lack of resources and external influences, and control of the peace building process were some identified challenges. Other issues of peace building in Africa are logistic deficiency and the lack of long term commitment to peace building by donor agencies.



In order to improve on the results of peace building in the continent, the involvement of local actors in the design and implementation of programmes is recommended. Also, the building of indigenous capacity for peace building and the proper coordination of peace building initiatives in the continent are advocated.

REFERENCES

- African Union Report (2020, June 30). 2020 review of the United Nations peace building architecture: African regional consultation report.
https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/2020_review_of_the_united_nations_peacebuilding_architecture_african_reg.pdf
- Aapengnuo, C.M. (2010, April). Misinterpreting ethnic conflicts in Africa. *Africa security brief*. No. 4. <https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ASB04EN-Misinterpreting-Ethnic-Conflicts-in-Africa.pdf>
- Ajayi, T. (2006). The UN, AU and ECOWAS: A triangle of peace and security in West Africa? *African studies, peace and conflict studies, Africa*.
- Basedau, M. (2017). The Rise of Religious Armed Conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa: No Simple Answers. (GIGA Focus Afrika, 4). Hamburg: GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies - Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien, Institut für Afrika-Studien. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-53174-4>
- Berhe, M.G. (2016, June). The African peace and security architecture. World Peace Foundation. Paper No. 1. <https://sites.tufts.edu/wpf/files/2017/07/1.-African-Peace-Security-Architecture-Gebrehiwot-f.pdf>
- Bekoe, D. (2010). Trends in electoral violence in sub-Saharan Africa. United States Institute for Peace. Peace Brief 13.
<https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/PB13Electoral%20Violence.pdf>
- Brehm, H.N., Uggen, C., and Gasanabo, J.D. (2014). Genocide, justice and Rwanda's Gacaca courts. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*. Vol. (30) 3, pp. 333–352. DOI: 10.1177/1043986214536660.
http://users.soc.umn.edu/~uggen/NysethBrehm_Uggen_Gasanabo_JCCJ_14.pdf
- Carment, D. (2003). Assessing state failure: implications for theory and policy. *Third World Quarterly*, 24 (3), pp. 407-429.
<https://library.fes.de/libalt/journals/swetsfulltext/16987765.pdf>
- Chiluwa, I., Chimunya, L & Ajiboye, E. (2021). Communicating religious extremism in West Africa. ResearchGate.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342458325_Communicating_religious_extremism_in_West_Africa/link/5f08bcfb92851c52d626f822/download
- Cook, N. (2011, January 28). Cote d'Ivoire's post-election crisis. Congressional research service. <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4d58e5832.pdf>
- Dokubo, C. (2012). Nigeria's role in peace and conflict resolution in Africa: the importance of a new paradigm. In T.A. Imobighe & W. O. Alli (Ed.). *Perspectives on Nigeria's national politics and external relations: essays in honour of Professor A. Bolaji Akinyemi*. pp. 430-455. Ibadan, Nigeria: University Press PLC.
- Francis, D., Lapin, D. & Rossiasco, P. (2011). Securing peace and development in the Niger Delta: A social and conflict analysis for change.
file:///C:/Users/dell/Downloads/WoodrowWilson-AFR_110929_NigerDelta_0113.pdf



- Gawerc, M. I. (2006, October). Peace building: Theoretical and concrete perspectives. *Peace and change*. Research Gate. Vol. (31) 4. Pp: 435- 478.
file:///C:/Users/dell/Downloads/Gawerc_Peacebuilding-1.pdf
- Gilbert, L.D. (2013). Revisiting ethno-nationalism in the Niger Delta of Nigeria: An interrogation of its achievements and prospects. *International Affairs and Global Strategy*. Vol. 16.
file:///C:/Users/dell/Downloads/REVISITINGETHNONATIONALISM.pdf
- Halleon, D.N. (2009, June). An analysis of natural resources related conflicts in Central Africa and the Gulf of Guinea. *Cameroon journal on democracy and human rights*. Vol. (3), 1. <http://rgi-documents.s3.amazonaws.com/d0a506fa29c20e89827fe8aaf55f8d8f60d9fbef.pdf>
- Human Rights Watch, (2020, Dec. 2). Cote d' Ivoire: post election violence, repression: over 50 killed since presidential poll; dozen opposition leaders arrested.
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/12/02/cote-divoire-post-election-violence-repression>
- Institute for peace and security studies (peace and security report) (2018). Burundi conflict insight. file:///C:/Users/dell/Downloads/burundi_formatted_final_21.02.2018-1.pdf
- Karbo, T. (2008). Peace-building in Africa. In D. J. Francis (Ed.). *Peace and conflict in Africa*. Zed Books. pp.113-130. <https://handoutset.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Peace-and-Conflict-in-Africa-David-J.-Francis-.pdf#page=126>
- Katunga, J. (n.d). Minerals, forests and violent conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *Report from Africa: Population, health, environment and conflict*.
<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/publication/Katunga12.pdf>
- King, E. & Mathews, R.O. (2012, Spring). A new agenda for peace: 20 years later. *International journal*. Pp: 275 – 293. https://wp.nyu.edu/e_king/wp-content/uploads/sites/1791/2015/04/Elisabeth-King-Robert-O.-Matthews-1.pdf
- Knight, W.A. (2008, August 18). Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration and post-conflict peacebuilding in Africa: An overview. *African security*. 1 (1), pp. 24-52.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19362200802285757>
- Koning, R. (2011, June). Conflict minerals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Aligning trade and security interventions. *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Policy Paper*. <https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/files/PP/SIPRIPP27.pdf>
- Lamin, A.R. & Zounmenou, D.D. (n.d). Cote d'Ivoire's post election crisis: Quattara rules but can he govern? *Journal of African elections*.
<https://www.eisa.org/pdf/JAE10.2Zounmenou.pdf>
- McAskie, C. (2010). 2020 vision: Visioning the future of United Nations peacebuilding architecture. (working paper on the future of future of the peace building architecture project). https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/112503/5_McAskie.pdf
- Mengistu, A. & Bekoe, D. (2002, August) (Rapporteurs). Operationalizing the ECOWAS mechanism for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping, and security. https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/oper_ecowas.pdf
- Murithi, T. (2006, June). Practical peacemaking wisdom from Africa: Reflections on Ubuntu. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*. Vol.(1), 4.
http://www.jpnafrican.org/docs/vol1no4/PracticalPeacemakingWisdomFromAfrica_JP ASvol1no4.pdf
- Murithi, T. (2008). African indigenous and endogenous approaches to peace and conflict resolution. In D. J. Francis (Ed.). *Peace and conflict in Africa*. Zed Books. pp.16-30.



- <https://handoutset.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Peace-and-Conflict-in-Africa-David-J.-Francis-.pdf#page=126>
- Nikuze, D. (2014), "The Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda: Origins, causes, implementation, consequences, and the post-genocide era", *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, Vol. 3 No. 5, pp 1086-1098.
- Olayode, K.O. (2011). Ethno-nationalist movements and political mobilization in Africa: The Nigeria experience (1990-2003). *Stichproben. Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien* Nr. 20/2011, 11. Jg., 69-93.
https://stichproben.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/p_stichproben/Artikel/Nummer20/20_Olayode.pdf
- Omeje, K.C (2008). Understanding conflict resolution in Africa. In D. J. Francis (Ed.). *Peace and conflict in Africa*. Zed Books. pp.68-91. <https://handoutset.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Peace-and-Conflict-in-Africa-David-J.-Francis-.pdf#page=126>
- Omosho, T. & Oyeranmi, S. (2014). The June 12 struggle as a phenomenon in the Nigerian political history. *Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences*, (5, 2 Quarter), pp. 1-20.
<http://www.onlineresearchjournals.com/aaajoss/art/141.pdf>
- Onguny, P. (2019). Electoral violence in Kenya: The role of vernacular radio. DOI: 10.20940/JAE/2019/v18i1a5. <https://www.eisa.org/pdf/JAE18.1Onguny.pdf>
- Peters, J. (2003). The nature of African conflicts. *Nigerian Journal of International Affairs*, 29 (1&2), pp. 393-410.
- Simonians, A., Stephenson, J. & McCall, R. (n.d). Not in our image: The challenges of effective peace building. *PRISM (1) 2*.
https://cco.ndu.edu/Portals/96/Documents/prism/prism_1-2/9_Prism_123-132_Stephenson_McCall_Simonians.pdf
- The Nordic Africa Institute, "Electoral violence in Africa". Policy Notes 2012/3.
<https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:581667/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Tschirgi, N. (n.d). Defining peace building. International Development Research Centre.
<https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/23281/112813.pdf?sequence=1>
- Ukeje, C. (2003 a). State disintegration and civil war in Liberia. In Sesay, A. (Ed.). *Civil Wars, child soldiers and post conflict peace building in West Africa*, pp. 85-112. College press and publishers Ltd.
- Ukeje, C. (2003 b). Sierra Leone: The long descent into civil war. . In Sesay, A. (Ed.). *Civil Wars, child soldiers and post conflict peace building in West Africa*, pp. 113-133. College press and publishers Ltd.
- United Nations: An Agenda for Peace. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/145749?ln=en>
- United Nations (2010). Peace building: an orientation. Peace building support office.
https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/peacebuilding_orientation.pdf
- United Nations General Assembly (2016, May). Resolution 70/262 (Review of United Nations peace building architecture).
https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_262.pdf
- Waal, A. (2022, February). Conflict in Darfur, Sudan: Background and overview.
<https://sites.tufts.edu/reinventingpeace/files/2022/04/AdW-expert-witness-statement-DF-for-ICC.pdf>



Waldman, T. (2009, December). Conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and Youth.

ResearchGate.

file:///C:/Users/dell/Downloads/ConflictResolutionPeacebuildingandYouth-2.pdf

Yilmaz, M.E. (2018, January). The rise of ethnic nationalism, intra-state conflicts and conflict resolution. *Turkish Journal of TESAM Academy*. 5 (1) 11-33. ISSN: 2148 – 2462.

<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/422827>