Leadership and Peacebuilding in Africa

'Funmi Olonisakin

Dr. 'Funmi Olonisakin is the founding Director of the African Leadership Centre (ALC), and current Programme Director of the ALC King's College London MSc Security, Leadership and Society and MSc Leadership and Development. She is a Research Associate with the Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria, South Africa and also a distinguished Fellow at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP). She has previously worked as Director of the Conflict, Security and Development Group at King's College London, and in the Office of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict overseeing the Africa work of that Office. 'Funmi Olonisakin is a founding member of the African Security Sector Network (ASSN) and has published a range of articles, books, and book chapters on Security and Development issues in Africa.

The **African Leadership Centre** (ALC) was established in Kenya in June 2010 as part of a joint initiative between King's College London and the University of Nairobi. Its overall goal is to build a new community of leaders generating cutting-edge knowledge for peace, security and development in Africa. To that end, it works to build the capacity of individuals, communities and institutions across Africa which can contribute to peace and stability.

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3

LEADERSHIP AND PEACEBUILDING IN AFRICA

Table of Contents

Introduction

Africa's experience of violent conflict since the 1990s has drawn attention to the applicability of notions of peace building, which were first analyzed in conflict resolution literature about two and a half decades earlier (Galtung 1975). Although the activities that constitute peacebuilding have continued to expand while a precise definition of the term has remained elusive, there is apparent consensus about the end that peacebuilding seeks to serve. This is durable peace through the resolution of underlying structural issues in society. This has been a rare achievement for those intervening to bring peace to societies afflicted by armed conflict. But at a minimum, the prevention of the outbreak of violence in the first instance or the prevention of a relapse into violence is a primary focus of peacebuilding interventions by actors, external to societies affected by violent conflict. The structures and processes that characterize these interventions are important determinants of the extent to which the end of peacebuilding can be achieved.

In this Working Paper, which serves as background for ALC's Research Cluster on *Leadership and Peacebuilding*, I put forward several inter-related arguments. First, the way institutions are established and how they function as well as the quality of leadership that is committed to building and sustaining those institutions in the first instance will determine in part, whether or not durable peace is attained. Second, sustainable peace also depends on the extent to which the affected societies can be reconciled such that the bitterness and grievances that led to the conflict become a thing of the past. Therefore, these two strands – institution building and societal reconciliation – are not mutually exclusive in the process of building lasting peace.

Peacebuilding initiatives in Africa whether by global or regional actors have had mixed results. While large scale armed conflict has receded in a number of situations [e.g. Liberia, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire] conflicts have mutated

in some settings and persisted in others [e.g. Somalia, DRC]. There are actors whose ideas about implementation and priorities in peacebuilding are in conflict just as much as their roles are interdependent. Very often, even where there is a structured international presence on the ground, the need to address factors at the root of conflict can get lost in the multi-layered activities designed to ensure an immediate end to violence. Failure to effectively tackle the factors at the root of conflict, one of which relates to gaps in leadership, accounts for the relapse into violence or indeed a mutation of conflict in ways that transcend the capacity of external interveners to manage such conflicts.

The ALC's *Research Cluster on Leadership and Peacebuilding*[1] has two inter-related aims. The first is to address some of the gaps in knowledge on peacebuilding in Africa – conceptually and practically. Second and related, is to contribute to the development of a knowledge base on peacebuilding in Africa, particularly among a next generation of scholars and policy analysts.

Research conducted in this cluster will therefore seek to:

- Examine the relevance of peacebuilding as presently conceptualized, to African realities
- Explore the relationship between leadership and peacebuilding theory and practice
- Interrogate peacebuilding activities in Africa, led by global actors such as the UN (including the UN Peacebuilding Commission, other UN agencies and funds)
- Examine the capacity of African regional and local actors to effectively undertake peacebuilding in response to conflicts in the region
- Develop a system for engaging the next generation of African scholars in cutting edge research on leadership and peacebuilding in Africa

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[1] This Cluster comprises ALC staff, Associates, select ALC Fellows and Alumni with an interest in this subject, who are able to contribute to research and publications.

Origins and evolution of peacebuilding

Peacebuilding has undergone an evolution, both conceptually, and practically in the last four decades. The conceptual foundations laid by Johan Galtung (1975) continue to impact the study of peace and conflict resolution. Two ideas are worth highlighting in this regard. First is the notion of structural violence, in which individuals within societies are systematically denied the right to freely access the channels that could lead to the attainment of their full potential. Second concerns the ideas of *negative peace* and *positive peace*, in which negative peace focuses on just the absence of violent conflict or war (yet there remains structural forms of violence); and positive peace goes beyond this to ensure a building of relationships that breed conciliation and cooperation between groups and nations. For Galtung, therefore, addressing structural violence and promoting positive peace would require 'the creation of peacebuilding structures to promote sustainable peace by addressing the "root causes" of violent conflict and supporting indigenous capacities for peace management and conflict resolution.'(Galtung 1975)

In his approach to peacebuilding, John Paul Lederach uses mediation and negotiation as his entry point and the result he seeks is *conflict transformation*. Conflict transformation focuses on engaging with the relationships, processes and interests that support the continuance of violent conflict – the transformation of which will yield peaceful outcomes. Removing the structures and conflictual issues in relationships that promote and sustain violence means that invariably, the locale of conflict does not shift from one thing (which may find resolution) into another (**).

Former United Nations Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali refocused the world's attention on the essence of peacebuilding and its crucial role in conflict
management and resolution in 1992 in his *Agenda for Peace,* a report presented to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). He identified the

need for *post-conflict peacebuilding,* which he defined as 'action to identify and support structures, which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict' (Boutros-Ghali 1992). And he considered this one of the aims of the prevention and resolution of conflict in addition to *preventive diplomacy*, to remove the sources of conflict to prevent outbreak of violence; *peacemaking,* to resolve the underlying issues in a conflict when violence erupts; and *peacekeeping*, to preserve peace when fighting stops and to implement the agreements reached by peacemakers (Boutros-Ghali 1992). In relation to post-conflict peacebuilding, he stated:

> Peacemaking and peace-keeping operations, to be truly successful, must come to include comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people. Through agreements ending civil strife, these may include disarming the previously warring parties and the restoration of order, the custody and possible destruction of weapons, repatriating refugees, advisory and training support for security personnel, monitoring elections,
> advancing efforts to protect human rights, reforming or strengthening governmental institutions and promoting formal and informal processes of political participation. (Boutros-Ghali 1992)

Boutros-Ghali was clear that peace building has two important underpinning and interlinking dimensions – one aimed at rebuilding institutions and infrastructures; and the other, which seeks to reconcile erstwhile adversaries locked in bitter struggle, not least by addressing the root causes of conflict.

The prominence given to the tasks of peacebuilding alongside preventive diplomacy and peacemaking coincided with a period when the end of the Cold War had given way to widespread demand for fundamental freedoms and good governance across the world especially in Africa – many degenerating into large-scale violence. The situations of insecurity confronting the United Nations at the beginning of that decade ranged from the fallout of liberation and civil wars (e.g. Mozambique, Angola), to the outbreak of brutal conflict between repressive governments and armed segments of the population (e.g. Liberia, Sierra Leone).

The period from 1992 to 2002 saw a rapid growth in the situations in which the United Nations intervened in conflict in one form or another. Already, by 1995, at the time of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, the situations requiring

intervention of the United Nations Security Council had grown to twice the 1992 instances. In his *Supplement to An Agenda for Peace*, Boutros-Ghali acknowledged that the conflicts in which the UN was making peace had more than doubled and peace operations deployed by the UN had increased by more than 60 percent.

Conceptually, defining peacebuilding largely as a response to post-conflict contexts seemed to offer less risk. This was so (and remains so) particularly for organizations such as the United Nations. Focusing on post-conflict environments in which conflict has escalated beyond the capacity of state actors to manage them meant that it was relatively easy to gain entry into that terrain without suspicion or accusations of infringement on sovereignty.

In contrast, where state actors claim to be in control of a conflict situation, regardless of its intensity, it is difficult for international actors to assist no matter how laudable the peace agenda is, without being accused of interference in the internal affairs of the concerned state. Yet in an ideal situation, peacebuilding should be undertaken to prevent the outbreak of violence before it becomes the basis for larger crisis. All of this notwithstanding, there was also an acknowledgement by the United Nations, that peacebuilding was an important companion for preventive diplomacy – a tacit admission that peacebuilding ought to be both a pre-(armed) conflict and post-conflict activity (Boutros-Ghali 1995). The debate in the subsequent era on the principle of "responsibility to protect" (R2P) began to address similar issues but this is not the focus of this paper.

In 2000, the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations commonly known as the *Brahimi Report* reinforced the idea that peacebuilding is fundamentally a post-conflict concern. The report described

peacebuilding as 'activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations, something that is more than just the absence of war.'[2] This implies the need for conflict transformation or the tackling of root causes of conflict.

The *High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change*, established by former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Anan, in 2003, took the discourse on peacebuilding to a new level. The Panel's report was clear that preventive action before latent threats become real, including development, was the first line of defense against the threat of intra-state conflict and large-scale violation of human rights. But the panel devoted much attention to the reality on the ground – the growing threat of armed conflict within states, war between states, transnational organized crime, terrorism, and the threat of nuclear and biological weapons as well as infectious diseases, environmental degradation and poverty. On peacebuilding, the Panel had this to say in its report:

> When wars have ended, post-conflict peacebuilding is vital. The UN has often devoted too little attention and too few resources to this critical challenge. Successful peacebuilding requires the deployment of peacekeepers with the right mandates and sufficient capacity to deter would-be spoilers; funds for demobilization and disarmament, built into peacekeeping budgets; a new trust fund to fill critical gaps in rehabilitation and reintegration of
>
> combatants, as well as other early reconstruction tasks; and a focus on building State institutions and capacity, especially in the rule of law sector. Doing this job successfully should be a core function of the United Nations[3]

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[2] United Nations, Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, 2000, Doc. A/55/305 – S/2000/809

[3] United Nations, A more secure world: Our shared responsibility, Report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, 2004. See also: http://www.un.org/secureworld/brochure.pdf

One of the key recommendations of the High-level Panel was the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission to provide focused attention to countries just emerging from conflict. The UN Peacebuilding Commission was established in 2005. Two African countries – Sierra Leone and Burundi – became the first countries on the agenda of the Commission.

Despite the significant recognition and huge success that greeted the concept of post-conflict peacebuilding, implementation has not been easy. There are many actors whose ideas about implementation and priorities are in conflict just as much as their roles are interdependent. On the ground in conflict affected countries and regions are a whole group of actors – global, regional and local – alongside the parties to the conflict. Aligning their ideas and actions is crucial for the success of any peacebuilding effort but this has not always been easy to achive.

The Lessons of Experience for the UN

These experiences yielded important early lessons for the United Nations. First, there was a marked change in the nature and class of conflict to which the UN found itself responding. This was largely intra-state with broken systems of governance. Second and as a result the operations deployed in response to these conflicts, were largely multi-functional in nature and this naturally led to the implementation of a wide range of activities from security provision and reform to civil affairs. Third and perhaps more importantly for peacebuilding objectives, there was a real recognition that implementing a peace agreement in such terrains within a set timeframe will not necessarily bring lasting peace. According to Boutros-Ghali,

> It is now recognized that implementation of the settlement in the time prescribed may not be enough to guarantee that the conflict will not revive. Coordinated programmes are required, over a number of years and in various fields, to ensure that the original causes of war are eradicated. This involves the building up of national institutions, the promotion of human rights, the creation of civilian police forces and other actions in the political field…. only sustained efforts to resolve underlying socio-economic, cultural and humanitarian problems can place an achieved peace on a durable foundation (Boutros-Ghali 1995).

Indeed, the lessons of experience at the time suggested that there was a likelihood that conflict would recur within 5 years in 50 percent of cases where peace settlements had been reached (Licklidier 1995). A later assessment suggests that in 44 percent of cases, there will be a relapse into conflict within 10 years (Cousens and Rothchild 2002). This is the classical peacebuilding dilemma.

A fourth lesson and a potential dilemma, which is a practical challenge that directly affects the degree to which peacebuilding can be effective, has to do with institutional presence (accessibility) on the ground in conflict-affected environments. There are two typical situations – one in which a peace mission

is present to implement a negotiated settlement and the other in which such sustained presence does not exist. Peacebuilding can be more structured and relatively easier to implement in the first type of situation. The other is when peacebuilding is undertaken or attempted in the absence of a formal peace mission. This has implications for research and policy. In research terms, it is difficult to document and collate authentic peacebuilding activities by the local society outside of international actors including INGOs. This challenge can however be surmounted by the underpinning research methodology. At this moment, very little knowledge is generated about 'peacebuilding from below' i.e. the local resources deployed by that society toward addressing the root causes of conflict. More often than not, these are typically dominated or stifled by externally generated ideas and approaches. In policy related terms, creating structures for the institutionalization of peace might be more difficult in the second situation than in the first because a structured and formal presence is better able to gain access to all actors. This is however not a forgone conclusion. Formal presence of regional and international organization does not guarantee that local ideas and initiatives will be included in the international peacebuilding efforts.

It is difficult to rule out the possibility of resentment in some quarters, not least because externally driven agendas might conflict with local ideas about peace and peacebuilding. This is part of the criticism of the liberal peacebuilding model, which has become the signature of the United Nations in the post-conflict contexts where it intervenes. This is however not the immediate focus of this paper. The point however is that no matter how well meaning, the presence of external actors might create a legitimacy dilemma for a variety of reasons. This legitimacy dilemma is a core part of the leadership issues addressed in this paper. The manner in which the handing over of peace building functions to local governance institutions is conducted and the transfer of decision-making from the UNSC to the government are crucial to the attainment of sustainable peace. The handing over to local governance institutions becomes all the more complex where peacebuilding activities are undertaken by a whole range of UN and other agencies. Experiences vary

from one context to the other and each situation will have to be decided on the basis of its own experience.

In situations where the UN (or indeed other institutional actors) has no presence external actors must fall back on the valuable local and international actors present in those countries. According to Boutros-Ghali,

> In those circumstances, the early warning responsibility has to lie with United Nations Headquarters, using all the information available to it, including reports of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) resident coordinator and other United Nations personnel in the country concerned. When analysis of that information gives warning of impending crisis, the Secretary-General, acting on the basis of his general mandate for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-building, can take the initiative of sending a mission, with the Government's agreement, to discuss with it measures it could usefully take.

While this reflects the makings of a strategy for dealing with such contexts, it does not address the issue of how best to mobilise local, non-state actors and resources in dealing with such a context.

How Africa has fared

Africa is not the only region in which active UN peacebuilding interventions have been occurring in the last two decades since Boutros-Ghali's Agenda for Peace; but it has received a far more significant chunk of the attention of the United Nations Security Council. The UN alone (not including regional organisations) makes enormous annual investments – materially and substantively – in peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa. Africa now hosts 7 peace operations out of 17 missions globally (see Adebajo and Scanlon 2006; Adebajo 2009). But the possibility of relapse remains as some conflicts have merely mutated and their root causes are still largely unaddressed. This is one of the key challenges that remain unaddressed by peacebuilding as currently practiced in Africa.

Some key trends and issues are apparent when one examines peacebuilding undertakings in Africa since the end of the Cold War and these are outlined below:

- **Limited input from African regional actors when compared to UN involvement:** International actors, particularly the United Nations, have initiated and led the vast majority of peacebuilding interventions undertaken in Africa in the past two decades. African attempts at structured peacebuilding intervention are more recent. The African Union's Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) Policy was adopted only in 2007 and implementation has been gradual.

- **All actors in peacebuilding whether African or global, tend to gravitate toward post-conflict environments** (mostly for the reasons discussed earlier). The AU PCRD also focuses on post-conflict peacebuilding. Overall, there is very limited engagement with the

notion of pre-armed conflict peacebuilding even though this is recognized as important. Critically, this means that despite notions such as the "Responsibility to Protect", it is still incredibly difficult to pierce the veil of sovereignty.

- **Results of peacebuilding interventions are not surprisingly skewed toward post-conflict settings and centre around creation of structures**: International efforts have concentrated on post-conflict situations from Sierra Leone, Liberia and Burundi, to Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, CAR and Guinea Bissau. The tasks involved have entailed development of institutional frameworks and processes including, security sector reform, truth commissions, criminal court (e.g. special court on Sierra Leone) Commissions on elections, consolidation of peace, constitution, etc. Indeed the assumptions that have underlined the creation of these structures and the neo-liberal ideas and agendas that have shaped them have been subjected to criticism in some sources (e.g. Paris, 2004). There is very limited focus on longer-term reconciliation.

- **Success stories relating to reconciliation and resolution of root causes are limited:** This is perhaps the biggest dilemma confronting peacebuilding initiatives in Africa. In Sierra Leone, for example, with an annual investment in of approximately USD 1 billion, many of the root causes of the conflict remain despite evidence of institution building. This in part demonstrates that while the creation of structures remains important, the process of reconciling society and addressing deep-seated causes of conflict is a long-term one. However, there appears to be a more fundamental challenge to do with the capacity of local actors in particular to pursue sustainable peace through longer-term reconciliation strategies – this is discussed further below.

- **Ability of local, national and regional actors to deliver sustainable peace is severely limited**: Some scholars have argued that

international efforts fail to give timely attention to local actors and local level reconciliation. Rather much effort is expended on implementing peacebuilding plans from the top (see Lederach 1997). There however appears to be a deeper challenge on the ground. Overcoming the challenges of legitimacy, the absence of a unifying norm or vision caused in part by the failure of local leaders to rally the commitment and loyalty of the population around a common vision or norm is perhaps the biggest obstacle to lasting peace.

- **The dividends on the ground are too little despite two decades of targeted intervention:** Conflict has persisted in a number of settings. To be certain, large scale armed conflict has reduced; and regional and international interventions have expectedly reduced. But the threat of insecurity, conflict and underdevelopment persists. Failure to successful deal with root causes of conflict and security invariably diminishes the prospect for lasting peace and sustainable development.

Major gaps to be addressed

The presence of UN and/or regional peace missions provides only a part of the picture and anecdotal evidence suggests that the results on the ground are mixed/patchy at best. In settings where neither regional nor global actors are present or actively engaged in formal peacebuilding processes, the actual and potential escalation of conflict is a real threat to security and development in the region. The factors at the root of those conflicts are not systematically addressed nor are they given genuine and focused attention. The democratic reversals, witnessed in parts of Africa as well as the uprisings/ popular protests in North Africa are concrete evidence that the root causes of conflict and insecurity are rarely addressed. **Patterns of leadership and governance that breed insecurity and do not provide effective**

management of conflict in society have persisted across Africa with very few exceptions.

Therefore, the *peacebuilding dilemma* described above remains a reality in many parts of Africa. Where conflicts have mutated following intervention, they continue in other forms and a relapse into armed conflict is not unlikely. The escalation and spread of conflict in places where systematic intervention is yet to occur, poses a real threat to security in the region. Indeed, in some of these societies, the state confronts a crisis of authority and legitimacy.

In examining why conflict has persisted both in places that have experienced formal peacebuiling support and those that have not, a number of questions make sense. First, did the nature of the peacebuilding intervention limit the results or outcomes achieved? In what ways did these interventions succeed or fail to contribute to lasting peace? Is there an inherent challenge in the target environment, which peacebuilding as conceptualized is unable to address?

Some attempt has been made to answer several aspects of these questions in places such as the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) in South Africa. For example, a forthcoming publication (Curtis and Dzineza 2012) resulting from a process launched by CCR in 2009 addresses a number of inter-related questions and issues including, for example, the inter-linkages and tensions between local, regional and global dimensions of peacebuilding. A key issue raised by CCR in this process is the issue of hierarchy and politics, given the multiplicity of peacebuilding programmes and actors in Africa. Hierrachy, in terms of who secures particular resources and who participates in decision-making is important. Yet failure to get this right and to establish legitimate hierarchies can become a source of conflict. Thus a key question for CCR is whether peacebuilding is primarily concerned with global order and global hierarchies. (see Curtis and Dzineza 2012; CCR 2009).

Apart from contexts in which peacebuilding programmes are being implemented by this broad range of actors, in societies that are yet to encounter systematic peacebuilding support from any of these sources, a related set of questions are applicable. First, through what mechanisms can peace and stability be created in societies where states experience a crisis of authority and legitimacy? Who can influence change in these societies? What role does leadership play?

Is there a relationship between peacebuilding and leadership?

Academic and policy debates on peacebuilding in Africa in the last two decades have rarely placed the issue of *leadership* at the core of analysis of peace and

stability in Africa even if it is often implied. While the analyses of the causes of conflict in Africa, duly acknowledge leadership failures particularly in governance, this issue does not occupy a central place in considerations of reconstruction and peacebuilding. We argue that there is a critical need to interrogate the leadership factors and dynamics that lead to conflict as well as those that can create foundations for peace in order to radically shift the security and development situation in Africa toward lasting peace and stability.

There are two apparent reasons for the lack of focus on leadership as a central factor in peacebuilding. One is a general assumption that once effective institutions are created, they will develop and shape leaders that will manage situations differently. We take the position that in contexts where institutions are weak or almost non-existent and the state is generally unable to manage contradictions within it (as seen in much of Africa), leadership is critical and it is an important starting point for institution building. What constitutes leadership must be articulated with clarity and must of necessity be shaped by evidence in order to drive meaningful change in such contexts.

A second and related factor is that leadership is rarely conceptualized as a science, which requires careful interrogation to ensure that it keeps pace with local conditions in the target environments. Rather, there are particular assumptions in popular literature and public opinion about what constitutes "good" leadership. The concept and practice of leadership is not

16

systematically engaged in the development of theories of conflict and strategies for peace. There is therefore a tendency for peace planners to take leadership at face value and gravitate toward popular conceptions of the term.

Rarely does thinking about peacebuilding take on board literature addressing the concept and practice of leadership. A closer look at the scientific literature on leadership begins to clarify the factors at the core of the leadership concept and separate them from every day notions and assumptions about the phenomenon. Notwithstanding the plethora of definitions and conceptualizations of leadership, there is a near consensus on some key factors that are crucial to understanding leadership within groups and across society. Three are important here for this discussion of peacebuilding.

The first is that rather than a phenomenon, which focuses almost exclusively on the individual leader or indeed on political actors only, leadership is:

i. A social "process" defined through interaction
ii. An influence relationship (between leaders and led) built over time; and
iii. A process of legitimacy-building – where the leader:

- makes meaning for society, for example, by articulating a common vision, setting goals and priorities, and demonstrates competence toward achieving the collective goal;
- makes influence assertions and society accepts the leader's assertions of influence (see Hollander and Julian 2008; Smircich and Morgan 1982).

Second, effectiveness in leadership therefore occurs when:

- A society or group moves toward the achievement of its collective vision and goals

- A system exists in which the leader, the led and their common situation form part of an interactive process in pursuit of a common set of goals
- Leaders are able to function as mediators within a group or society
    - Which in the larger society or state setting, entails maintaining institutions of governance to manage competing demands between groups in society so that they do not become the basis for crisis

Warren Bennis (1989) sums up key criteria for leadership by articulating four "competencies", which leaders must possess. Pierce and Newstrom (2005) outline these competencies as:

- Management of attention through vision;
- Management of meaning through communication;
- Management of trust through reliability and constancy; and
- Management of self through knowing one's skills and deploying them effectively".

Current trends suggest that there are serious leadership gaps in Africa not least
because there are a significant number of situations in which leaders in Africa:

- Fail to mobilize or invent meaning for the vast majority of the population.
- Have no clear vision, goals or priorities that respond to the needs of millions of citizens.
- Articulate the goals, priorities, and narrow interest of a small group – i.e. ruling elites and their network of cronies.
- Are unable to secure society's acceptance of their assertions of influence and therefore suffer a crisis of legitimacy and authority.

- Have ceded the space for external actors or actors outside of the immediate society to secure the loyalty and commitment of the populations for which they are responsible and to which they are accountable.

There is therefore an argument to be made for systematic inclusion of leadership as part of the core of the focus in peacebuilding given that in many conflict-affected societies in Africa, failure to provide effective leadership in the ways outlined above is one of the factors at the root of conflict. Dealing with the peacebuilding dilemma of periodic resumption of armed conflict requires tackling the root causes of conflict. As such, a consideration of leadership and of leadership building offers great potential for boosting peacebuilding success in Africa.

If we take the area of **security and justice** as a case in point, in which, the above leadership gaps are apparent, the security leadership process looks like this:

What leaders are committed to – in principle	What happens in reality – common trends
- Securing the sovereignty rights of the state i.e. maintain legitimate control over the means of violence on behalf of the state. - Defend the territory against external attack. - Secure itself (the regime) in power. - Ensuring security and protection	- Elite failure to reconcile and rally citizens around a common security vision and goal. - Citizens not seen as central to security considerations. - Effective service delivery not pursued as a way to secure citizen's commitment. - The security services, courts and prisons become instruments of repression and deception over time; and are treated like the

for the populations within a territory which among other things entails: - Safety and protection from crime; and - Access to justice	personal property of the ruling elite. • Many citizens feel compelled to operate outside the realm of the state, having been driven away from the formal state system. • Citizens retreat to the "edge" of society where they find alternative systems of security and justice • The proliferation of alternative [informal, non-state] systems of security and justice: a symptom of the crisis of authority and legitimacy confronting many African states and leaders.

Peacebuilding interventions in such settings must therefore seek to address the mindset of leaders; and to alter the dynamics between them and local populations. Interestingly, much of the effort in peacebuilding has been focused on bargaining between elite groupings, which is one of the criticisms of the liberal peacebuilding agenda. It is assumed that reconciling the elite and building new institutions for them to preside over will make change happen. Creating institutions without devoting attention to the transformation in leadership across society may not lead to a strengthening of those institutions. Indeed, peacebuilding interventions that fail to address the leadership deficits on the ground may in fact create more dictatorships than reduce them (see Call and Cook 2003). The democratic reversals witnessed in sub-Saharan Africa in the past decade in which leaders have tended to "instrumentalise" elections and

reform processes while society and institutions remain unchanged suggest the need to pay greater attention to leadership issues.

In considering leadership as an integral part of peacebuilding, a number of questions come into sharper focus. These include the following, for example:

i. *Defining the context and the goals*

- **Whose narrative defines the situation and the needs of the target population?**

    o Who articulates the vision and goals for the population as a whole?

    o To what extent does this reflect the collective expectations of the target population and citizenry?

- **To what extent are existing peacebuilding frameworks adaptable to the goals articulated?**

    o Can these be translated into practical reality for the target population?

ii. *Leadership issues*

- **To what extent do peacebuilding agendas in Africa successfully address the loss of authority and legitimacy (of leadership and institutions) that predated or led to the conflict?**

    o Is there an influence relationship between those in positions of authority and the population as a whole? Who focuses the population's attention toward a set vision or goals?

    o Do authority figures or local leaders achieve set goals on behalf of the local population? If not, who achieves those goals?

- o Are the goals being achieved visible across the population or impacting only specific areas

- **Whose authority or legitimacy is strengthened by peacebuilding interventions in post-conflict environments – local/national leaders or external actors?**

  - o Where does legitimacy lie? With local leaders or external leaders – regional and/or UN?

  - o Which of these provides effective leadership in the local environment?

  - o Are non-formal, non-state sources taken into account in the search for effective leadership?

- **How does succession planning or transfer of legitimacy take place?**

  - o Where leadership is about to change at the local level, what is the approach to succession?

  - o In cases where external actors have clear legitimacy through an influence relationship with the local population through what process does transfer take place?

  - o In situations where local, non-state actors/ leaders command the loyalty and commitment of much of the population, is there an attempt to share or transfer that legitimacy to the formal space?

Research on Leadership and Peacebuilding at the African Leadership Centre

Research at the African Leadership Centre (ALC) seeks to contribute to peacebuilding thinking and practice in Africa in three significant ways. First, it examines the role of leadership in peacebuilding in Africa conceptually and practically. Second, it seeks to draw a comparison between conflict contexts that experience systematic peacebuilding intervention either through the United Nations and/or African regional organizations and those that do not. Third, it assesses how regional (African) peacebuilding efforts fare in relation to UN efforts and draws important lessons for African and other policy actors.

In this regard, five key questions will be at the core of our research on leadership and peacebuilding in Africa, from which other questions will flow:

- What role does leadership play in peacebuilding failure and success in Africa? To what extent do dominant approaches take this into account?
- Is leadership a key factor in understanding the peacebuilding dilemma – whereby the risk of a relapse into armed conflict remains in settings where peacebuilding intervention has occurred?
- How can international actors support and not substitute effective local leadership in peace building in conflict-affected societies where they operate in Africa?
- What are the most critical leadership issues in settings where there is no systematic or sustained peacebuilding?
- Where does intellectual leadership on peacebuilding reside in Africa? How can this be harnessed?

Key themes and questions

ALC research will look at the central questions outlined above under the following thematic areas:

The concept of peacebuilding, its evolution, and ideas of leadership
- Does the concept outlined by the UN adequately capture African realities?
- What is the relationship between leadership and peacebuilding?
- Does thinking about leadership help produce a more robust conception of peacebuilding?
- How can this concept be refined for the African environment?
- What are the most crucial gender considerations to take into account in refining this concept?

UN peace mission-led Peacebuilding initiatives
- What are the leadership roles of UN peace operations in Africa?
- What is the impact of UN Peacebuilding in African post-conflict environments?
- What kind of leadership is needed from the international community to support peacebuilding initiatives in Africa?
- How does UN peacekeeping engage with local peacebuilding ideas, actors and activities? Do they strengthen local leadership?

African regional organization-led peacebuilding initiatives
- Is there a conceptual difference in the peacebuilding agenda articulated by African organizations and the UN?
- Do regional organizations impact local realities differently? How?
- How can African regional organizations radically impact African realities?

- What kind of leadership is needed from regional actors to advance the peace building agenda in Africa?

Leading peacebuilding in the absence of organized UN and regional efforts

- What are the most critical issues in African societies experiencing conflict, where no formal peacebuilding processes exist?
- What are the most common leadership features of these societies?
- What influences can be brought to bear to effectively address conflict in these societies?
- What leadership ideas can transform conflict in the affected societies?
- What factors frame the choices and decisions that post-conflict leaders must make to ensure that their countries do not slide back into conflict (whether or not external actors were present)?

Creating and sustaining a "knowledge base" on peacebuilding in Africa

- To what degree does a "knowledge base" exist at the moment?
- What are the challenges of developing a viable knowledge base?
- What are the key indicators of effectiveness?

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