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“Making and sustaining peace and security is also an intellectual challenge. We therefore undertake to build the capacity of our universities and research institutes to explore the nature of African conflicts, to investigate what succeeds and what fails in conflict resolution efforts, and to arrive at African-centred solutions, drawing from our own distinctive and unique experience.”

Tripoli Declaration (2009)

About the AfSol Journal

Africa, like every other continent in the world, has unique problems that require special diagnosis as well as a unique socio-cultural and political landscape that distinctly impacts the peace and security environment. With the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) in 2002, new objectives under the new framework emphasized the need to define and find African-centred solutions for peace and security in the continent. While the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) is already operational, there is an emerging need for the AU to focus more on the interface between peace, security and governance. This makes the search for African-centred solutions in peace and security more complex and broad since the solutions have to include elements of governance, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Pursuant to these needs, it is time for Africans to actively discuss the past and present in order to shape their future by debating and analyzing conflict, peace and security issues through an African perspective. Vision 2063 of the AU pursues “a people-driven process for the realization of the vision of the AU for an integrated, people-centred, prosperous Africa, at peace with itself”. The AU Heads of State and Government recognized peace and security as an “intellectual challenge” in the 2009 Tripoli Declaration on the Elimination of Conflicts in Africa and the Promotion of Sustainable Peace. Responding to this “intellectual challenge”, IPSS offers the AfSol Journal as a platform for critical debate that avails theoretical and practical knowledge to academia and policymakers. This knowledge is drawn from newly emerging practices and from past experiences, found in oral verses and practices of Africans, written in academic publications, daily periodicals and policy documents. It is embedded in what Africa has achieved in the past and in what it could have done better; it is entrenched in its history, its traditions, values and its people. Our objective is to bring this knowledge together to publish papers with high academic standards that are presentable to policymakers and to those working towards a peaceful and prosperous Africa.

Scope of the Journal

The Journal on African-Centred Solutions in Peace and Security (AfSol Journal) is an initiative of the Institute for Peace and Security Studies at Addis Ababa University. The Journal is an inter-disciplinary African studies journal, focusing broadly on the fields of peace and security in Africa. It covers the interface between ‘academia and practice’ and ‘theory and policy’ in African security and governance issues that have implications on the management of peace and security in the continent. The Journal publishes articles from broad fields of study with at least one of the following criteria:

- ▶ Original empirical data collected and presented through acceptable scientific methods.
- ▶ Already existing data and with a unique or advanced theory. Practical cases in one of the following analytical dimensions:
 - ▶ African ownership and commitment
 - ▶ Leadership
 - ▶ African shared values
- ▶ Narrate and analyze undocumented events or practices with suitable academic rigour.
- ▶ Unless it is especially relevant to the present or is a critical account of a missing piece of history, biographic and/or autographic narratives are not published in this Journal.

The Journal would particularly like to publish critical analyses of Africa’s social, cultural and political factors that influence peace and state building in Africa. It ultimately aims to gather cross-cutting themes that would inform policymakers, civil society, and academicians, and also advance the promotion of effective interventions across Africa. Unless explicitly specified in the call for papers of a specific edition, articles within this scope are considered for review.

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- ▶ Pan-Africanism, diversity, integrity and inclusion
- ▶ Commitment to delivery and social transformation

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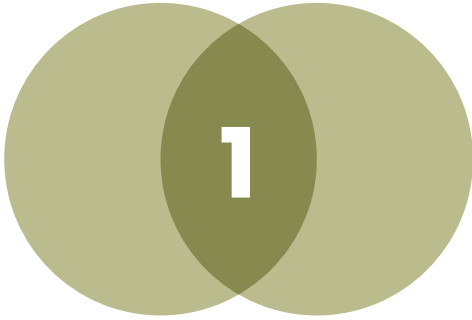
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The Great Lakes Region (GLR) Security Complex: Lessons for the African Solutions for Peace and Security (AfSol) Approach

Lawrence Mhandara

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Keywords

Great Lakes
Region; Regional
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Abstract

The Great Lakes Region (GLR) appears to be an arena of intractable conflicts that have continued to evade durable solutions or have resisted mitigating interventions. To this end, the GLR poses challenges to AfSol's commitment to building sustainable peace on the continent. This paper applies the Regional Security Complex Theory to establish a pattern of security interdependence in order to discern lessons for the AfSol approach. This will be done using a minimalist definition of the GLR that focuses on four states: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. Findings show that the current state of security distress is a result of various structural and proximate factors such as colonial impact, political culture, ethnicity and weak state systems that take advantage of geographical proximity to cause the spread of conflicts and insecurity through conditions of clustering, contagion/diffusion and connectedness. The multiplicity of actors in the four states and the various rebel movements in each define the dynamics of security, giving rise to a regional insecurity complex more so than a security complex. The existence of AfSol, however, continues to offer some modicum of hope if lessons are to be learnt from the experience of the four countries. The lessons are that i) common factors take advantage of geographical proximity to socialise the GLR states into a region of insecurity; ii) the GLR is a conflict formation security complex; iii) ethnicity is instrumentalized by political elites; iv) the rebel problem is linked to state actors; and v) the old agenda for security dominates the GLR security complex.

Introduction

The GLR appears to be an arena of intractable conflicts that have for long evaded durable solutions or resisted mitigating interventions. To this end, the GLR continues to pose challenges to AfSol's commitment to building sustainable peace on the continent. The GLR has two zones – the core and the periphery. Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) belong to the former and Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, Central Africa Republic, Republic of Congo, Sudan and South Sudan to the latter. This area is along Central Africa's Great Rift Valley, stretching in a south-north direction from Lake Tanganyika in the south to Lake Edward in the north (Lermachand, 2009; p. 1). This submission is centred on the minimalist definition of the area that focuses on the core because of the intense negative patterns of security interdependence located there. The four countries in the core of the region are some of the most affected by recurring violence and armed conflict in Africa.

Rwanda has had a long history of ethnic violence, stretching as far back as the 1959 revolution. Burundi, with its own ethnic tensions, has also experienced bloody conflicts along the Tutsi-Hutu divide; more prominently demonstrated in the civil war fought between 1993 and 2005. The DRC is renowned for its perpetual conflicts, especially in the eastern side of its borders, which had led to a continental war in 1998. Uganda has also not been spared from civil strife, especially in the northern parts. Because of the web of conflicts in these states, the countries have been united into a region of insecurity mediated through geographical proximity. Geographical proximity catalyses the spread of insecurity through three transnational dimensions identified by Forsberg (2016), namely, clustering, diffusion/contagion and connectedness. The ways in which regional differences in conflict and cooperation develop is now more a matter of local rather than global politics (Gleditsch, 2002). Gleditsch's core argument is that the density of different types of positive and negative interactions will tend to

be higher and, therefore, more relevant between geographically proximate actors than between distant ones (2007; p. 295). Several works have found evidence of the spatial linkage of security, in the sense that the risk of conflict increases when neighbouring states are involved in conflict (for example Forsberg, 2016; Gleditsch, 2002; Salehyan & Gleditsch, 2006), and neighbouring conflict has been suggested as useful for predicting conflict or generating 'early warning' systems (Esty et al, 1998, as cited in Gleditsch, 2007; p. 295). With emphasis on regions gaining traction in the post-Cold War, the GLR security complex should be revisited to expose the link between geographical proximity and insecurity. Indeed, African security analysis and therefore its solutions should start with regional analysis because "the regional level stands more clearly on its own as the locus of conflict and cooperation ..." (Morgan, 1997; p. 6-7, as cited in Buzan & Waever, 2003; p. 9). This approach is particularly relevant in the peace and security context that is marked by a strong-willed shift towards AfSol.

The driving force behind the AfSol is the philosophy which insists it is within Africa that solutions to security challenges must be sought. Over the years, this has translated into the now popular maxim 'African Solutions to African Problems', meant for Africans to take the lead in conflict prevention, management and resolution. This position was coherently championed by African contemporaries like Mugabe and Mbeki at the turn of the millennium. The concern of African leaders and institutions is centred on the need to roll back the long history of destructive conflicts on the continent and to dispel the myth that Africans were or are incapable of solving their own challenges.

The transformation of the OAU into the AU in 2002 paved the way for the institutionalisation of the AfSol. The decision adopted at the 2009 African Heads of State and Government meeting in Tripoli defined the AfSol agenda in formal and specific terms as it focused on 'eliminating conflicts in Africa and promoting sustainable peace'. The same axiom was reiterated by prominent diplomats on the continent, including the former African Union Commission Chairperson, Jean Ping, who stated that "the solutions to African problems are found on the continent and nowhere else" (Remarks by the former AU Commission Chairperson during the AU Summit on 15 July 2012, as cited in Ndabuisi, 2016; p. 2). The AfSol approach has three pillars: commitment to finding lasting solutions to African conflicts, norm and value sharing and the primacy of African actors and mechanisms in finding solutions, that is, African ownership in positive handling of conflicts (Rupiya, 2016; p. 6; Institute of Peace and Security Studies Report, 2014; Kambudzi, 2013; p. 40). African ownership is meant to minimise external interest in local conflicts while accepting such external actors as partners in the search for sustainable peace.

AfSol has a dual character. On one hand, it expresses itself as an aspiration by Africans to achieve their desires (idealism) and on the other, it has a practical dimension in that it reflects Africa's collective, home-grown efforts in peace and security (Institute of Peace and Security Studies Report, 2014). In recent years, the search for solutions for peace and security has expanded into the domain of governance (democracy, human rights and the rule of law), informed by the AU Agenda 2063 and related initiatives. It is rooted in Pan-African ideology and African identity, while still working within the global domain. Despite its good intentions, the AfSol approach has faced a number of challenges in conflict affected areas, including the GLR. The challenges that stifle the innovativeness and effectiveness of interventions include the lack of

practical commitment among African institutions to implement and support local solutions; most initiatives rely on partnerships with the international community and the 'soft' approach toward incumbents who contribute to conflicts (South Africa Institute of International Affairs, 2019). Despite the challenges, there is still room for AfSol to deduce lessons from past failures and reshape the future of Africa towards a trajectory of peace.

The objective of this paper is to analyse the peace and security dynamics in the GLR through the lens of the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) and to generate lessons for the AfSol approach based on the observed pattern of security interdependence. The paper has four sections:

The first section provides the theoretical basis upon which the units in the GLR can be understood. This entails reviewing the key assumptions of the RSCT. This section shows how geographic space and security are linked such that challenges and solutions to peace and security in geographically proximate states cannot be isolated from one another. The second section explores the key actors that determine the patterns of security interdependence in the region. The next section focuses on how insecurity is spread through clustering, diffusion and connectedness among the four GLR states. This is followed by a summary of key observations about the security complex and potential lessons for the AfSol. The final part is the conclusion.

Regional Security Complexes - A Theoretical Detour

The break in history that marked the end of the Cold War impacted the pattern of international security. To paint a proper portrait of global security, one needs to understand the 'international' and its sub-systems independently as well as their interactions, noting that "the regional level of security has become both more autonomous and more prominent in international politics and that the end of the Cold War accelerated this process" (Katzenstein, 2000, as cited in Buzan and Waever, 2003; p. 3). The evaluation of regions as independent units of analysis is associated with the RSCT. Its significant contribution is challenging the dominant systemic theories, especially neo-realism, by relegating security analysis from the global level to regional level using the geographically fixed units called Regional Complexes. The RSCT enables a proper understanding of regional structures as nuanced units of analysis in international security.

The theory distinguishes between the system-level interplay of global powers, whose capabilities enable them to transcend distance, and the sub-system level interplay of lesser powers whose main security environment is their local region. Security complexes may well be extensively permeated by global powers, but their regional dynamics nonetheless have a substantial degree of autonomy from the patterns set by global powers. The implication is that while global powers have capabilities that allow them to reach any part of the global system in pursuit of their interests, the power to influence all countries in a region may not be possible because of local dynamics that are not amenable to great power influence. This limits the penetrative effects of global power interests on local dynamics. Less intrusive policies from great powers bestow more independence on regions. This has sometimes played out in regions insisting on the respect of their complete sovereignty from great powers in a manner that is strikingly similar to regional exceptionalism. Thus, the post-Cold War period has witnessed more participants in global security with the more prominent role assumed by regions.

The central idea in the RSCT is that, since most threats travel more easily over short distances than over long ones, security interdependence is normally patterned into regionally based clusters called security complexes. A regional security complex is defined as a “set of units whose major processes of securitisation and desecuritisation are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from each other” (Buzan and Waever, 2003; p. 43). The processes of securitisation and thus the degree of security interdependence are more intense between the actors inside such complexes than they are between actors inside the complex and those outside it. The RSCT suggests a theoretical schema in which security concerns tie within a geographically defined area (territoriality) where geographical distance is of paramount importance, placing emphasis on proximity and the distance effect to understand security relations. This argument may also be related to Tobler’s First Law (TFL) of geography. Originally promulgated in Tobler’s article published in 1970, the law states that “everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things” (Waters, 2017). Tobler was proposing that this was the most important law in geography and that physical distance was the most important variable governing the influence of one entity on or over another. The regional security complex defines the boundaries of security interaction; instead of linking geographical space to politics (geo-politics), it links geography to security (geo-security).

Significant to note here is that the RSCT is rooted in the traditional security paradigm because its primary referent object is the state. A caveat is useful here; that in the case of the GLR, it is impossible to analyse security relations at the exclusion of non-state actors. I therefore adapt the RSCT to include non-state actors into the security matrix, to better appreciate the dynamics requiring AfSol attention.

The patterns of security interaction and dynamics in any regional security complex can be located along a continuum, depending on whether the defining security interdependence is driven by amity or enmity. At the negative end lies conflict formation, in which interdependence arises from fear, rivalry and mutual perception of threat. At the centre lie security regimes in which actors will treat each other as potential threats but have made reassurance arrangements to reduce the security dilemma among them. At the positive end of the spectrum lies a security community in which actors no longer expect to use force in their relations with each other.

Key Actors

Besides the four state actors (DRC, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi), the region’s security interdependence also involves non-state actors. The most prominent non-state actors (rebel and insurgency groups) are:

Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)

After Museveni came to power in Uganda in 1986, one challenge he faced was how to manage discord in the Muslim community, one that was deeply divided and politicised throughout the 1980s. The divisions were exacerbated by the emergence of the Tabliq Movement which challenged traditional Ugandan Muslims’ understandings of Islam. President Museveni’s efforts to control the community led to violent confrontation in 1991, followed by the arrest and incarceration of the Tabliqs (Titeca and Fahey, 2016; p. 15). Upon release from

prison, one of the Tabliqs, Jamal Mukulu, established the Salaf Foundation, which consisted of an armed wing, the Uganda Muslim Freedom Foundation (UMFF), which was in turn overrun by the Ugandan army (Chande, 2008, as cited in Titeca & Fahey, 2016; p. 15). Its leaders subsequently fled to the DRC where they renamed their movement as the ADF. At the same time, they formed alliances with anti-Museveni groups in Uganda. Because it is an off-shoot of the Uganda Salafist Movement, it has retained its Islamist ideology. It seeks to overthrow the Ugandan government and has remained domiciled in the chaotic Eastern DRC since then. The group has been responsible for violent acts in the DRC and straddling into Uganda, killing civilians on either side. It has also attacked the UN Stabilisation Mission in Congo (MONUSCO) and killed peacekeepers. The Uganda army had entered Eastern DRC between 1998 and 2017 in pursuit of the ADF but it has failed to defeat the rebels. In 2018, Uganda accused the DRC and the UN for preserving the ADF, opening possibilities for a future return of Ugandan forces into the DRC.

Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR)

This is predominantly a Hutu rebel group composed in part of former Rwandan soldiers and Hutu militias who fled to the DRC after the 1994 civil war between the Rwanda Armed Forces and the Interahamwe militia against the RPF (International Crisis Group (ICG), 2005). The group's original objective was to overthrow the Rwandan government by force, ousting the RPF and returning ethnic Hutu political leaders to power (Le Sage, 2007). However, as the FDLR evolved and the RPF consolidated its control of Rwanda, its priorities shifted toward calling for an inter-Rwandan dialogue and a grant of security for refugees to return to Rwanda (ICG, 2009). When the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) was formed in 2006, representing Tutsi interests in the DRC and beyond, it declared FDLR an enemy. Beginning in late 2008, due to gross human rights violations and the security concern posed to the DRC and Rwanda, the two governments cooperated militarily against both CNDP and FDLR, resulting in the collapse of CNDP and the weakening of FDLR (Dagne, 2011; Spittaels & Filip, 2008). In 2009 and 2010, FDLR's leaders were arrested in Germany and France, thereby collapsing its political wing. The FDLR, albeit significantly weakened, continues to remain a security issue for both DRC and Rwanda, although it announced in November 2013 that it is potentially willing to disarm, along with other armed groups, following the surrender of M23. In 2015, the FDLR was accused of training the youth wing of Burundi's CNDD, raising fears of a repeat case of genocide, and leading to over 100,000 Burundians fleeing into neighbouring countries (Project on Violent Conflict, 2015). Uganda is accused by Rwanda of supporting the group, with its long-term goal of regime change against President Kagame's government. During Kabila's reign, Rwanda has also occasionally accused DRC of supporting the rebels.

Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)

This is a rebel group operating in northern Uganda. It also has presence in the DRC and other neighbouring countries. The LRA was the end product of Museveni's successful rebellion against the Lutwa government. Aggrieved by the defeat, Lutwa's army, dominated by the Acholi ethnic group, fled home to the north and organised into rebel groups that ultimately coalesced around the

LRA (Margaret, 2010; p. 15). The group emerged in 1988 from the remnants of the Holy Spirit Movement Army founded by Alice Auma Lakwema. The group first operated as the Ugandan Christian Army and adopted the name LRA in 1992. It launched a brutal rebellion that sought to depose Museveni's government and rule the country according to the Biblical Ten Commandments. Sustained military campaigns by the Ugandan military have weakened the group but it remains functional. Its remnants are hosted in the eastern parts of DRC.

Mai Mai Militias

This refers to a range of armed groups in DRC, predominantly present in the eastern parts, in particular North and South Kivu provinces. The historical sentiment among the militias is to fight against oppression and colonial conquest. These are self-protection armed community groups that emerged in the 1960s with the support of some members in Patrice Lumumba's government (Dunn, 2002 as cited in de Heredia, 2017; p. 127). During the first and second Congo wars, most of the militias fought in defence of the government against the rebels and their foreign backers. The groups remained autonomous from the Congolese army but shifted allegiance over the years to the extent where most of the groups have now developed an anti-government stance. The militarisation of civilian life in the Congo has set citizens on a path of permanent armed conflict (Misako, 2008 as cited in de Heredia, 2018; p. 128). The imperative of self-defence is easier to justify because of the insecurity provoked by rebel groups present in the DRC and the omnipresent threat of foreign intervention. The challenge of the Mai Mai emanates from the diversity of the groups. Some abide by a strict code of conduct and are attached to an agenda of self-defence and liberation while others are predatory, implicated in systematic abuse of the population they purport to protect. Other groups have been used by former DRC governments as proxies in their conflicts with the country's neighbours (Hoebeke et al, 2009, as cited in de Heredia, 2017; p. 128). Despite several national and international efforts to disarm the militias, their role as vectors of self-defence and political participation is still prevalent in the DRC. Their political objectives are however eclectic; ranging from anti-government sentiments and income generation to maintaining social control of the population (Verwejen, 2015; Hoffmann, 2007; Jourdan 2004, as cited in de Heredia, 2017; p. 129).

Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23)

This group was formed in 2012, emanating out of the Rwanda-backed Tutsi CNDP, itself a successor to another Rwanda-backed outfit called the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) based in Eastern DRC. The group worked against the central government until 2013, when it was defeated by the DRC armed forces, with assistance from MONUSCO. Unfortunately, the remnants of the defeated M23 rebels have fled to Rwanda and Uganda and have become a time bomb. Rwanda and Uganda were implicated by a 2012 UN Report as the backers of the rebel group. Rwanda has a history of interference in the eastern DRC region, first through direct military involvement during the first and second Congo wars and then by supporting predominantly Tutsi rebel groups fighting the central government in Kinshasa. Rwanda cut ties with the M23 rebels when the US and other governments threatened to cut aid to the country. Nonetheless, even when the West has pressured Rwanda to stop supporting Congolese rebels,

Kagame's economic successes reduce his incentives to collaborate with DRC authorities and work in favour of peace in the region. As a result, Rwanda has remained hawkish on Eastern DRC issues (Ghins, 2019).

Republican Forces of Burundi (FOREBU)

This is an anti-Burundi government group. It was formed in 2015 following the failed coup attempt by Burundian military defectors. It established itself in December 2015 in Eastern DRC and mostly recruited from Burundi nationals (mainly Tutsi) living in refugee camps. It is, nevertheless, a mixed-ethnic movement. There were allegations from the DRC opposition that FOREBU was also supported by Joseph Kabila's government (Anderson, 2017). Rwanda's support has also not been ruled out, given the friction between Presidents Kagame and Nkurunziza. In 2017, FOREBU changed its name to Popular Forces for Burundi (FPB) as part of its re-organisation.

Rwanda National Congress (RNC)

This is a movement led by Rwanda's prominent dissidents and is designated as a rebel group by the Government of Rwanda. Its leaders, however, argue that it is only a political party. The organisation was formed in 2010 by Kagame's former allies in the ruling RPF. In 2019, Uganda has been openly accused by Rwanda of succouring the group.

Such varied non-state actors and their complicated relationships with state actors illustrate that the GLR is a typical conflict formation. Patterns of security interdependence are shaped by rivalry, fear and mutual perceptions of threat that become more pronounced because of geographic proximity.

Geographical Proximity and Insecurity in the GLR

Literature on conflict suggests that geographical proximity links states in a web of conflict and insecurity through three transnational dimensions: contagion or diffusion, clustering and connectedness (Forsberg, 2016). Firstly, geographical proximity encourages the spread of insecurity through contagion/diffusion. The essence of contagion is that an internal conflict in one location alters the possibility of another internal conflict occurring in another location at a later point in time (Forsberg, 2016; p.7). What is it about conflict in a neighbouring state that increases the risk that another state will experience conflict? The increase in risk could stem from direct contagion. Direct contagion takes the form of direct spill-over of conflict across borders and is linked to the onset of a new conflict. Spill-over effects include arms and refugee flows (Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006; Lisher, 2005, as cited in Forsberg, 2016) and economic decline in neighbouring states (Murdoch & Sandler, 2004, as cited in Forsberg, 2014b). Refugee flows, for example, disrupt the demographic balance in the host state, intensifying competition over limited resources or through the militarisation of refugee camps. The onset of a civil conflict in one state often leads to an increased availability of cheap arms, which can then easily be transferred to neighbouring states where aggrieved groups may be encouraged to initiate violent conflict (Forsberg, 2016: p.7). It has also been concluded that arms and mercenaries are likely to freely move back and forth between countries that share a long border which is difficult to police and monitor. Contagion may also be indirect, working

through a process whereby a conflict in one country provides lessons, inspiration and clues for actors in another state to choose to pursue their goals through violence (Byman & Pollack, 2008, as cited in Forsberg, 2014a). However, the effect is difficult to establish as more intense conflict in the neighbourhood may also deter rather than inspire groups in neighbouring states.

Conflict by contagion primarily spreads to countries which are already at risk of conflict, and is less likely to spread to countries with a low risk in terms of domestic conditions. Braithwaite (2010; p. 363) empirically demonstrates that high levels of state capacity such as “stability, control, protection from predation, the extraction of resources and the ability to adapt and respond to unexpected crises” make a state better able to resist contagion. States with these capacities are able to resolve internal conflicts and to efficiently monitor and control their borders, thereby preventing movement of arms and rebels across borders (Fearon & Laitin, 2003, as cited in Cunningham & Seymour, 2012). Insurgencies have the opportunity to mobilise in peripheral areas inside weak states combined with minimal police or military presence.

The overall political context prevailing in a region is also key to ascertaining the barriers against support or intrusion by regional actors in the affairs of other states. Conflict and cooperation cannot ignore the regional context within which domestic institutions develop and local relations unfold. The more constrained the political leaders in a region, the stronger the ex-ante barriers against involvement in the disputes inside neighbouring states (Gleditsch, 2002). Conversely, states in a more autocratic region, where leaders face few formal constraints on intervention, have a higher risk of political conflicts escalating to violence. Therefore, the existence of transnational political linkages in the form of less democratic political institutions engenders the risk that one country will experience a civil conflict just like its neighbours (Gleditsch, 2007; p. 298).

Transnational ethnic linkages are risk factors that encourage contagion (Gleditsch, 2007). External interventions in conflicts often seem motivated by efforts to support ethnic kin in other states, while ethnic kin and migrants in other states have often played an important role in also mobilizing and financing insurgencies in neighbouring states. Although ethnic kin in principle could be located in many countries, supporting insurgencies is much more difficult for communities far from the conflict country. Austvoll (2005, as cited in Gleditsch, 2007; p. 297) confirms that countries with shared ethnic ties to actors in civil war are much more likely to intervene in ongoing conflicts. When an ethnic group involved in armed conflict has kin members living in a nearby state, there is an increased possibility that the kin group in that state will also engage in armed conflict (Forsberg, 2014a). The rationale for this is that such groups are more likely than others to be inspired to increase their own demands. This is because the bonds and similarities that these groups share across borders become salient when conflict breaks out. Contagion processes are more likely when transnational ethnic groups exist; such groups may work as “conflict transmitters” (Brown, 1996; 595, as cited in Forsberg, 2014b; p. 146; Forsberg, 2014b; p. 149-150). Hence, all else being equal, the expectation is that the risk of civil conflict should be higher when more ethnic groups are found on both sides of an international border (Gleditsch, 2007; p. 289-299). Transnational linkages may also become instrumentalized by political actors. The core idea of instrumentalism is that ethnicity is neither inherent in human nature nor of intrinsic value (Varshney, 2007; p. 283-84; Fearon, 2006; Horowitz, 1998). Ethnicity masks a deeper core of

interests which may be economic or political. Ethnicity is useful for gaining political power and/or economic benefits and this is why it is often deployed in multi-ethnic societies. Ethnicity becomes a focal point and its mobilisation requires a coordination of expectations. This responsibility is often assumed by charismatic ethnic leaders.

Secondly, geographically proximate states are easily affected by conflict through connectedness. Contagion suggests a specific process involving a sequence of actions and a direction from one state to another, while connectedness relates to a process by which actors from different conflicts may start cooperating with each other because of similar goals, a common enemy or shared common bonds through ethnic or ideological affiliation (Forsberg 2016). Over time, there may be an incentive for certain actors, such as illicit dealers and mercenaries, to benefit from conflict. Trans-border connections between security issues and actors within a region are referred to as a regional conflict complex (Wallestern and Sollenberg, 1998, as cited in Forsberg 2016). The key feature of such a complex is that conflicts are mutually reinforcing, to the extent that it may be impractical to solve just one without considering the regional aspects. External involvement and support complicates conflicts in that internal contradictions become protracted and intensified, resist settlement and engender the risk of escalation into an international conflict. An actor may provide support in solidarity with another or to destabilise another government in a neighbouring state. Proxy wars, however, often tend to be two-way. War economies are formed when economic activity is highly militarized and resources are mobilized to finance warring groups (Ballentine et al, 2003; p. 9, as cited in Gleditsch, 2007).

Thirdly, conflicts and insecurity take advantage of geographical adjacency through clustering in space and time. Spatial clustering indicates that the likelihood of armed conflict in a country partly depends on the presence of armed conflicts in its neighbourhood. This means that a country is more likely to experience an eruption of internal conflicts when one or more of its neighbours experience civil strife. A country located with 'bad neighbours' (Brown, 1996, as cited in Forsberg 2016; p.6 & Gleditsch, 1996) is more likely to experience armed conflict as compared to a country located in a region which is predominantly at peace. Clustering of insecurity is explained by the existence of countries that are spatially close to each other and have similar contextual factors such as political systems and economic structures (Gleditsch, 2002).

The insights gleaned from this theoretical literature are useful for providing an analytical framework for linking spatial proximity to security interdependence in the GLR. The conflicts in the GLR are on-going and intractable at both intrastate and interstate levels. Data shows that from 1960 to 2018, 101 conflict-episodes involving both state and non-state actors, including communal groups, were recorded in the GLR: 35 in Uganda; 32 in the Democratic Republic of Congo; 23 in Burundi, and 11 in Rwanda, while the 1990s and the 2000s account for three quarters of these conflict episodes (Lumumba, 2019). The prevalence and recurrence of conflicts in the GLR defies the trend in most of the other regions of the continent, in which there has been successful prevention, management and resolution of most conflicts since the end of the 1990s (Carter & Strauss, 2019; Szayna et al, 2017).

The thrust of AfSol is concerned with building sustainable peace. The first step in strengthening the AfSol is thus to understand the linkage between geographical proximity and insecurity. The following paragraphs attempt to link the calamities in

the four states to factors that take advantage of geographical proximity to spread insecurity through contagion, clustering and connectedness.

The GLR as a Cluster

Most of the aforementioned insecurities arise from acts of direct violence in the four geographically proximate states that share common political systems founded on the colonial experience. The history of colonialism may have set in place particular configurations of conflict which take on path dependency and are particularly hard to break, even long after the colonial period is over (Ruane & Todd, 2003). The three colonial powers responsible for the four territories under study, namely Belgium, Britain and Germany, produced three conflict-generating factors related to political and ideological aspects as well as to juridical statehood (Shyaka, 2008; p. 6-7). The viciousness of the colonial state was underpinned by a common interest to defend white settler privileges that had to be sustained through elaborate strategies steeped in the subjugation of the Africans. It was a system designed along racial lines and one which was ready to employ violence with impunity when faced with political dissent, especially calls for decolonisation. The system was then preserved through the deconstruction and decimation of indigenous political and peace building structures. Belgium was implicated in the assassination of Africans who were delegitimising its colonial policies in Rwanda, DRC and Burundi. In Rwanda, the involvement of Belgium in the killing of King Rudahigwa in 1959 led to the revolution which marked the beginning of open resentment between the Tutsis and Hutus. The inter-ethnic antagonism would later spread into neighbouring countries, especially Burundi, demonstrating a contagious effect. The Belgians also had a hand in the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in 1961, which destabilised the DRC immediately after decolonisation. Political actors in the four countries may have learnt from colonial experience to resort to violence when faced with internal conflict, and the lessons have been transmitted from one generation of political leaders to the next through political socialisation.

Colonialism also expressed itself through the practice of 'divide and rule' in the four countries, especially through politicisation of ethnicity. The colonial masters did not only invent false ideological justification to oppress Africans, such as their presumed genetic and cultural inferiority, but they also structured the territories around identities. Belgium used and augmented previous ethnic distinctions to define the local ruling elite, going as far as giving identity cards to distinguish the Tutsi and the Hutu in both Burundi and Rwanda. The identity-based antagonism, intensified by colonialism, is linked to the construction of ethno-centric states and exclusive societies in Rwanda and Burundi. Populations have been socialised to intensify the divisions, to hate and to resolve conflicts through violence.

Juridical statehood relates to how the colonial approach disregarded the convergence of social environments that demarcated traditional African kingdoms. In so doing, the colonial systems were significantly arbitrary and absorbed different groups under the same colonial frontiers. Subsequently, the post-colonial integration of such communities has been constantly challenged or has produced deadly clashes, as unnatural unions have been historically imposed on the people. For example, people of Rwandan descent were scattered in different territories and their exclusion, or general sense of it, has been attributed to certain violent conflicts, making colonialism a significant source of insecurity. The artificial boundaries imposed by colonial rule

may also feed into the explanation for the structural problem of state weakness in the four states.

Actors in the four states also share a similar political culture of armed rebellion. Political culture is a set of attitudes, beliefs and orientations which guide political activity and significantly inform the set of rules that determine behaviour in a political system. The GLR is a political system defined by a distinct political culture that is common in the four states. Power is concentrated in the hands of former rebel movements and leaders. Elite competition is mostly mediated through armed rebellion as compared to other regions. The support rendered to rebel groups by states led by former rebel leaders themselves suggests a strong tendency to institutionalise this culture in these four adjacent countries. In Burundi, the two Hutu-dominated rebel groups, National Council for the Defence of Democracy and Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), which fought the Tutsi-dominated institutions during the civil war, only transformed into a political party in 2005. Understanding this legacy is part of the explanation as to why a wider range of spaces in the region are occupied by rebel groups who have been socialised into political competition and why armed rebellion is accepted as a suitable route to attain political office. President Nkurunziza, a key figure of the rebellion in Burundi, is a role model who endears future leaders into emulating his political path which is now viewed as a symbol of success in Burundian politics. In Uganda, President Museveni was the leader of the National Resistance Movement/National Resistance Army (NRM/NRA) and in Rwanda, President Kagame led the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) in the civil war against the Rwandan government. This strengthens the resolve of rebel leaders to invest in violence as they correlate such activities to rewarding political outcomes. Armed rebellion is frequently the preferred mode of mediating competition for those pursuing political power and they often seek the support of former rebel leaders. The history of political change in the four countries is a history of violent takeovers of power. The region is thus entrapped in abnormal politics which heightens the risk for onset of further conflict.

Contagion Factors and Risks

The insecurity in the region can be best viewed as a series of local and national conflicts, in which political elites have taken advantage of transnational ethnic linkages that tend to merge and intertwine through the weak state system in the four countries. Weak institutions of government are highly predisposed to insecurity. The presence of weak state systems in geographical proximity incarnates in the lack of capacity to effectively deal with threats to security. State weakness in the DRC largely emanates from weak sovereign control of the territory. The DRC occupies the geographic centre of the region but lacks control over its vast territory and it is noted that “the absence of territorial control, porous borders, very poor communication between the centre and the periphery are noteworthy aspects of its weak state status” (Reyntjens, 2005). The unclaimed space, manifesting in the satellisation and fragmentation of provinces from the centre, is then taken over by non-state actors – militias, warlords, illicit traffickers of small arms, rebels and other insecurity entrepreneurs. The eastern part of the DRC is notorious for the illegal exploitation, trafficking of natural resources, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, illegal armed groups, sexual/gender-based violence and forced population displacement (ISS Report, 2012). The DRC lacks the morphology of a cohesive state. Thus, while the defeat of the largest local rebel group in the DRC, Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23),

in November 2013 was widely celebrated, it only served to further fragment the armed group landscape. By 2013, there were more than 70 groups active in the region (Jason, Verweijen & Baaz, 2013). Its fragility is also a source of insecurity for its neighbours because of the presence of transnational rebel groups that threaten other states. As an example, in December 2017, the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) made an unexpected foray into the DRC in pursuit of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) (Mpagi, 2017).

State fragility in Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda partly emanates less from ineffective territorial control and more from the questions of power and legitimacy. Exclusive governance institutions have resulted in ethnocentric states (mostly constructs of ethnic groups) that express themselves within a shrunken political base of authority and eroded legitimacy (Lemarchand, 1997). This is a historical pattern in Rwanda, a template that was defined and sustained by successive Hutu governments since 1961. Similar exceptionalism and particularism was common practice for the Tutsi governments in Burundi. The hierarchical state systems in both countries are a source of superiority and inferiority feelings that are unsustainable in the long-term, as insecurity entrepreneurs will continue to exploit this fault line. Generally, both Burundi and Rwanda have failed to move on from the political mentality informed by the fear of the past. It has been difficult to entirely go beyond the discourse of the genocide, and such tensions may lead to yet another explosive fallout that will have deadly regional security implications. On its part, Uganda's regional divide between the Bantu and the Nilotes explains the restiveness of the northern parts of the country where rebellion has been common. The Nilotes have a strong connection to the state at the exclusion of the Bantus, a divide created by British indirect rule and one the 1987 revolution has gratuitously failed to roll back.

The convergence of weak states in the GLR creates a regional security complex with susceptible and multiple security threats. State weakness in this sense is defined as a failed process of state building in the region when evaluated against indicators of statehood, such as the ability of the state to maintain sovereign authority over its territory; to provide a source of national identity; to host the capacity to mobilise resources and serve as an arena for politics; and to be the guarantor of security (Khadiagala, 2017; Katumanga, 2012, as cited in ISS Report, 2012). State weakness may also be part of the explanation as to why the GLR experiences a paradox of democracy and elections that are triggering violence, instead of entrenching good governance and contributing to stability. This can be attributed to weaknesses of the institutions that are mandated to conduct credible elections and to produce legitimate results. Instead, processes to encourage democracy and scheduled elections usually trigger new tensions and rejuvenate old ones.

Contagion is also encouraged by ethnicity; a conspicuous fault line that cuts across the national boundaries of the four states. The presence of large numbers of refugees in each of the four core countries with collective ethnicities and memories of violence is connected to regional security patterns. After the 1959 Rwandan Revolution, the Hutu attack on the Tutsis created a huge outflow of the latter into Uganda, Burundi and one of the periphery countries of the region, Tanzania. The suppression of the Hutu rebellion by the Tutsi government in Burundi between 1965 and 1972 resulted in a massive Hutu migration into Rwanda, exacerbating the already tense Hutu-Tutsi antagonism in the country. A common trend is how a history of ethnic contradictions has become a conflict catalyst.

It is also possible that ethnicity has been instrumentalised by rational politicians. The existence of ethnic differences is not a sufficient cause of conflict, as some regions which are ethnically diverse have managed to maintain peace. The contours of ethnicity are fluid, and ethnic coalitions mostly emerge for short term political gains. In most cases, expansionist ethnic agendas from political elites take advantage of the existence of transnational ethnic groups that straddle the four states. History is usually reconstructed so that blame can be attributed to a certain ethnic group in order to 'legitimate' a cause for retribution. Selective portrayal of historical events legitimises action against other groups without putting issues into their proper historical context. Conflicts take place mostly because political actors have strategically manipulated ethnicity for the sake of political power or economic gains (Varshney, 2007; p. 283-84; Fearon, 2006; Horowitz, 1998). This is a significant risk which makes the four states susceptible to future conflicts.

The Elements of Connectedness

The key dimensions in connectedness are war economies, external support and proxy warfare (Forsberg, 2016; p. 12-13). In war economies, predation, rent-seeking and illicit transfers of goods and services become prevalent. The war economy has a strong transnational character centred on illegal cross-border trade in natural resources and arms. The motivation of financial gain and profit from continued instability may explain the prevalence of conflict in some countries and not others. Arms are also an important trade commodity in war economies, as they are often procured in return for access to natural resources. The procurement process goes through various types of political and social networks, including ethnic ties that exploit geographical proximity. Leaders of rebellions may also see conflict as an industry in which looting generates profits. Leaders of rebellions are driven by a desire to amass fortunes, and masses join them in anticipation of a share in the loot. Given their geographical concentration, natural resources are an essentially 'lootable commodity' and conflicts predominantly erupt in regions with economies that are highly dependent on natural resource extraction because of prevalent greed among political actors (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004, as cited in Varsheny, 2007; p. 285).

The problem in the four states feeds from the resource wealth in the eastern regions of DRC, where actors from the four countries thrive in the economy of conflict. It can be noted that "across the country, the security situation has deteriorated markedly as government authority has collapsed, emboldening rival militia groups who hold sway over large areas of territory, often competing for the DRC's rich resources" (Burke, 2018). However, the argument is not as simplistic. It is evident that "minerals have been a powerful factor in the conflicts, but the exact relationship between DRC's resource wealth and the waging of war is harder to decipher than mainstream discourse captures" (Lyall, 2017). The argument is that while rebels make money from mineral resources, it is not their primary motivation, since most of them do not control the resources but finance their activities through levying taxes from households and from transporters of illegally extracted minerals. The proliferation of armed groups which are active in the four countries is fuelled by the motivation for profits within ungoverned and privatised public spaces.

External support and proxy warfare are also connectors of conflict and promoters of instability from one country to the other. These forms of support involve both state and non-state actors receiving and providing assistance. The support varies in magnitude and type. Some actors seek influence by backing one side against

the other directly by providing troops, or indirectly by supplying arms, funding and logistical support. The interactions among the four states resemble an intense competition for regional influence, primarily between Rwanda and Uganda, and to some extent DRC. This plays out through states forming coalitions with rebel groups to undermine fellow states in an attempt to further their regional influence. Rebel groups are often aided by governments to undermine fellow governments. In Uganda, the Museveni rebellion that culminated in his ascendancy to power in 1987 hugely benefited from the support of Tutsi refugees who enlisted in his rebel group, the National Resistance Army (NRA). An estimated 20-25% of the NRA was Tutsi, including the current Rwandan leader President Kagame (Reyntjens, 2005). Museveni would later play a key role in the armed return of the Tutsis to Rwanda under the political-military movement Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF). The RPF invaded Rwanda with some form of support from Uganda, but the attempt to seize power in 1990 was aborted. Negotiations for a transitional government, which resulted in the Arusha ceasefire agreement signed in August 1993 to accommodate the two ethnic rivals, failed. This fanned ethnic tensions and was soon followed by the 1994 genocide, which created yet another mass flow of refugees into eastern DRC's Kivu Province. This pattern of refugee flow shifted from Uganda and Burundi to DRC, with a reversal of fortunes for the Hutus this time. Burundi was under a Tutsi government and Uganda being friendly to the Tutsi movement RPF, DRC was the only available option for the Hutus and their Intarahamwe militia. The militias continued their resistance against the RPF from Eastern DRC. This has created what Lemachand (1997) terms "crisis generating refugees", in that refugee camps were frequently used as rebel recruitment bases. Rwanda's concern with DRC stems from this contextual fact. Additionally, the DRC has provided sanctuary for the weakened Lord Resistance Army (LRA) rebels from Uganda. The rebellious refugees provided the backdrop for the Uganda-Burundi-Rwanda invasion of the DRC in 1997 (1st Congo war) which supported Kabila's rebellion that deposed Mobutu. A year later, Kabila's sponsors turned against him, leading to the 2nd Congo War. The classic categorisation of conflicts as interstate and intrastate in the Great Lakes Region seems inapplicable, since the conflicts tend to expand geographically and their epicentre shifts from one locus to another (Kanyangara, 2016).

Kagame was once a friend to Museveni, but at the time of this paper's writing, the two have turned into foes, raising fears of a potential military confrontation. Relations between Rwanda and Uganda, peer competitors in the security complex, openly soured in 2019 after Rwanda blocked Ugandan cargo trucks from entering its territory at the busiest crossing point, Katuna. It also barred its nationals from crossing into Uganda. Rwandan Foreign Minister Richard Sezibera accused Uganda of offering assistance to two foreign-based Rwandan rebel groups — Rwanda National Congress (RNC) and Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). Back in 2018, Uganda accused the DRC and the UN for preserving the ADF, opening possibilities for a future return of Ugandan forces into the DRC. Burundi has also accused Rwanda of fanning instability in its domestic affairs.

Lessons for the AfSol Approach

The GLR security complex has significant levels of security interdependence among state and non-state actors, making it impossible to only direct attention to states when AfSol considers sustainable interventions. Security interdependence in the region involves substantial interaction among these units but mostly in a manner

that has favoured insecurity. The marked line of security interaction is transnational, involving both state and non-state actors through processes of clustering, contagion/diffusion and connectedness. Interstate security dynamics in the GLR are typically spill-overs of domestic dynamics, particularly refugee flows, violence targeting foreigners as well as civil strife. In that sense, security interaction in the region is generated more by weakness than by strength; failure to contain internal threats which in turn affect neighbours (horizontal effects of internal dynamics).

The most common conflicts involve an alliance between a state(s) and an insurgency or rebel group on one side facing a similarly structured alliance on the other. It is uncommon to find states in the GLR engaged in substantial security interactions on their own without involvement of rebel groups. Such patterns have obvious boundaries and the proximity or geographical distance among the states and rebel groups transforms the security dilemma dramatically. The general pattern is that each country sits at the centre of a set of security interactions connecting it to its immediate neighbours. Security and insecurity are best understood from a regional perspective, as most issues are internal but regionalised. The GLR is Africa's own 'Middle East' – tense, volatile, combustible and driven by the old agenda of security (military threats) when other regions are gravitating towards the 'new'. In the whole of Africa, the GLR countries are among the best exporters of insecurity. War and rebellion are the export commodities of choice. At least five lessons can be deduced for input into the AfSol approach:

- i. Common elements exploit geographic proximity to socialise the GLR states into a relationship of insecurity. Transnational alliances and counter-alliances between and among states and rebel groups suggest the existence of common factors that exploit spatial proximity to socialise the four states into a complex web of insecurity. Despite the tensions and conflicts among the states and ethnic groups, strong ties do exist and this presents an opportunity to build peace through AfSol. The colonial legacy is a permanent scar on the region's security conundrum. It cannot be wished away but can only be accepted and confronted pragmatically. Parenthetically, the causes of insecurity in one state and the various actors involved help to determine the security dynamics in the four states. Therefore, insecurity in one state cannot be adequately addressed or analysed to the exclusion of others. The classical distinction between inter-state and intra-state threats is blurred and the locus of insecurity is ever mutating. The cause of conflict in one country can frequently be found in a neighbouring one, with events in one country often triggering reactions and repercussions in another because of geographical proximity. Indeed, and as Tobler's First Law of Geography suggests, all things are connected but closer things are more connected. The conflicts feed off and reinforce each other and as such the success of AfSol initiatives at a national level will be enhanced when they are implemented with a regional focus, complemented by simultaneous and complementary actions across the four countries.
- ii. The GLR is a conflict formation security complex. Fear, rivalry and mutual perceptions of threat define the patterns of security interdependence, resulting in enmity and by extension what this paper has termed 'geo-insecurity'. Alliances and coalitions between states and rebel groups have evolved out of aggressive intents more so than from constructive ones.

- iii. Ethnicity is real in the four states but may well be instrumentalised by political elites. The problem with ethnicity may be the political elites that exploit and intensify ethnic rivalries to legitimate their claims to power. It is argued that “expressions of solidarity alongside common identities, as communities struggle for and pursue control of political power against each other within and outside defined national boundaries, are a common feature in the region” (Obuoga, 2016; p.12). The underlying problem relates to weak states in geographic proximity that cannot, individually or collectively, respond to the multiple threats to their security, as state weakness is itself a source of multiple threats (elite, factional, communal and ethnic). After all, the overplayed song of ethnicity may turn out to be a platitude. The underlying factor is state weakness. With strong institutions and structures, and not strong men, ethnicity may be better managed.
- iv. The rebel problem is linked to state actors. Most of the rebel movements in the region do not exist hermetically; they enjoy significant support from one or a combination of the four states who amplify the problem. Part of the political vocation of elites in this region has been to fan instability in other countries, either by hosting rebel groups or extending support to them to undermine fellow governments. The solution to the rebel question lies within the same states that harbour and succour the movements. The M23 rebels were only defeated when Uganda and Rwanda cut ties with the group. Similarly, the CNDP and RCD collapsed when Rwanda withheld support. The AfSol approach needs to explore appropriate interventions that can pressure states to sever ties with the insurgency conglomerates.
- v. The old agenda for security dominates the GLR security complex. Whereas other regions are shifting to a ‘new agenda’ discourse for security, that comprises of non-traditional and non-military issues (low politics), this region is unfortunately still trapped in the abyss of the ‘old’ security agenda and is still bogged down by predominantly military threats (high politics). The legacy of armed rebellion is an anti-thesis to the recommended style of democracy. Experiments with democratisation and elections are frequently accompanied by tensions and renewals of historical ethnic rivalries (DRC, Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda have all been affected as such). It is therefore premature and needless for AfSol to engage with the ‘new’ when the region is still reeling from the ‘old’ issues of security.

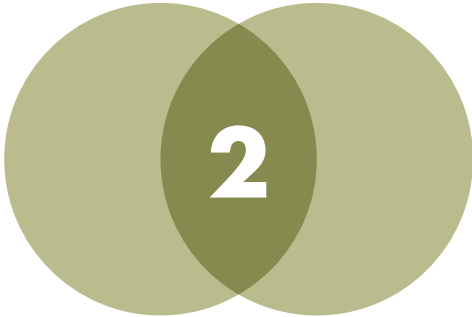
Conclusion

Applying the RSCT to the GLR shows that the sub-system/region is in security distress because of structural and proximate factors that exploit geographical proximity in order to spread insecurity and conflict. The multiplicity of actors, the four states and their respective rebel movements define the dynamics of security. The resultant patterns of enmity are prominent and those of amity are rare, only emerging for aggressive intents. This gives rise to a security complex that is typically a conflict formation characterised by fear, suspicion, rivalry and mutual perceptions of threat. The GLR is thus a regional insecurity complex more than it is a security complex. Therefore, Africa is faced with the realities of a region with conflicts that are complex, seemingly intractable and have for long resisted intervention efforts. The existence of AfSol, however, continues to offer some modicum of hope if lessons are learnt. As such, five lessons have emerged in this paper and are shared: i) Common factors exploit geographical proximity to socialise the GLR states into a relationship of insecurity; ii) The GLR is a conflict formation security complex; iii) Ethnicity may not be the cause of insecurity in the GLR; it may be instrumentalised by political elites; iv) The rebel problem is linked to state actors; and v) The old agenda for security dominates the GLR security complex.

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‘The Ambivalence of the Sacred’: Religion and Mediation in Northern Nigeria, 2000-2005

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Keywords

Religion; Faith-based Actors; Mediation; Northern Nigeria

Abstract

It is generally believed that the position, influence and commitment arising from the moral and emotional credentials of religious actors serve as advantages over other actors when it comes to third party intervention, particularly in the realm of mediation. The question then becomes to what extent can these qualities promote successful mediation i.e. conflict transformation, which is the ultimate goal of mediation efforts during conflict. This study is a qualitative analysis of the levels of success achieved by faith-based mediation in three outstanding conflicts - the Yelwa, the Jos and the Kaduna conflicts in Plateau and Kaduna States of Nigeria between 2001 and 2005. This analysis is anchored on the three levels of success, namely process or output level, outcome or short-term level, and impact or long-term level. The position, influence and experience of mediators, as well as other factors such as timing, neutrality, external influence and the process of mediation are some of the explanations for the potential success or failure of mediation efforts at the output level and short-term level in the three conflicts. However, beyond these two, mediation's success at the level of long-term impact, as recorded in Yelwa, is tied to (i) the engagement of the real owners of the conflict and peace dynamics and (ii) the willingness of the latter to engage in peace. It is therefore the position of this paper that no matter the influence, appropriateness and acceptability of a religious actor involved in conflict resolution, the responsibility to transform conflict largely remains with the parties to the conflict.

Introduction

Religious actors are generally believed to possess certain specific qualities that enable them to positively influence a peace process, more so than politicians. This is because they are often perceived to have stronger moral and emotional credentials as well as a certain professionalism that commands the respect and confidence of conflict parties (WFDD, 2017; Stensvold, 2017; Thistlethwaite Brooks; 2012 Haynes, 2009; Appleby, 2000; Johnson & Simpson 1994). According to Weingardt (2008), although all actors involved in conflict resolution would ideally have the above features, religious actors often possess this credit of trust more so than others. In other words, the position, influence and perhaps commitment of religious actors gives them a unique space within peace processes and may, arguably, account for their success in conflict resolution efforts.

Nigeria is one of the few countries in Africa with a record of resounding success in faith-based interventions in conflict (Berkley Center for Religion, 2013; Umaru, 2013). Indeed, the roles of religious actors in resolving conflict in northern Nigeria, particularly in Plateau and Kaduna states, have become a reference point to both academics and practitioners within and outside Africa (Smock, 2009). To what extent can it be argued that faith-based actors have succeeded in their interventions in these two states of Nigeria, two states that continue to exist as centers of conflict? What were the underlying factors that contributed to their success? The current study is set to analyze these questions from both short and long term outcomes as well as to address the success basis of faith-based mediation in Yelwa and Jos conflicts (in Plateau State) and Kaduna conflict (in Kaduna State) from 2001 to 2005.

The United Nations Secretary General's report to the Security Council in 2009 served as a major landmark that renewed interest in international mediation as an

effective instrument of conflict transformation and turned it into an international policy framework (UN, 2009). Before this period, several mediation efforts had either failed or garnered little success. From the UN's records for instance, three out of every four mediation efforts between 1989 and 2002 had failed (High-Level Panel of Threats, Challenges and Change (HLP), 2004). This implies that only twenty-five percent of all mediation efforts succeeded during this period. The new interest in mediation can be explained from a multiplicity of factors, such as today's limited peacekeeping capabilities, failures of military crisis responses, the increased need to address internal asymmetric conflict, a broader and more transformative understanding of mediation and a shift in the normative approach to human rights violations (Chaziza, 2018; Putz, 2017; Griessmann & Oliver, 2011). Despite the renewed interest in mediation, however, not much has changed with regards to patterns of mediation (Brahimi, 2008; Jagans, 2006). Mediation is still generally conceived as a mediator(s)-driven process that conflict parties are to be invited into (Griessmann & Oliver, 2009, 2011; Greig, 2008). Consequently, scholarly attention is still focused on traditionally accepted determinants of mediation success; these include ripeness, timing, power, bias, credibility, the nature of conflict, the efficiency of mediation processes adopted by the mediators and the appropriateness and acceptability of the mediators (Bercovitch & Simpson, 2010; Bercovitch & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2009; Svensson, 2009; Kydd, 2003; Zartman, 2000; Rubin, 1991; Bercovitch & Langley, 1993). If the target of mediation is long-term peace, i.e., conflict transformation, attention should move beyond the success of the mediators and mediation process and instead turn towards the development of long-lasting compromise between conflict parties.

The focus of this study is to examine the involvement of faith-based actors in the mediation process in three outstanding conflicts – Yelwa, Jos and Kaduna, in Plateau and Kaduna States of Northern Nigeria, between 2001 and 2005. This is in order to: (i) identify some of the conditions that promoted or hindered successful faith-based intervention in these conflicts, and (ii) find out the extent to which these conditions helped in transforming the conflicts.

Conceptual and Historical Frameworks

Conceptualizing Successful Mediation

There are two major approaches to understanding successful mediation. Success can be achieved at the process and outcome phases of an intervention. At the process level, success refers to what transpired during interventions i.e, the output of the intervention. It includes, among other things, the acceptability of the mediation efforts, the capacity of the mediator(s), the rules or terms of mediation, the venue of mediation as well as meaningful and active representation of the various concerned parties during the mediation process. Success on the outcome level implies what is achieved at the end of the mediation process. This is usually compartmentalized into short and long term outcomes or what Church & Shouldice (2002) refer to as “outcome and impact” respectively. At the level of short-term outcome, successful intervention occurs when the destructive elements of a conflict are reduced or removed in what Pearson d’Estree et al (2001) refer to as “settlement”. This implies that the conflict in question is not resolved but that its negative effects are neutralized through a ceasefire, an agreement or any other form of settlement that does not imply a permanent end to said conflict.

In terms of long-term outcome or impact, mediation is considered successful when the root causes of conflict are addressed in such a way that the threat of further conflict is forestalled (Bercovitch & Simpson, 2010). In other words, when the effect of a mediation process and its subsequent outcome leads to conflict transformation, thereby generating long-term impact (i.e. peace), it is referred to as long-term success. It is pertinent to note that success at the process-level does not amount to successful outcomes or an overall impact. In the same vein, a successful mediation outcome does not always imply hundred-percent success at the process level. Thus, success can be achieved if the parties, despite disagreements at the process level, are positively affected or empowered from the overall outcome of a mediation process (Bercovitch, 2006). It is equally possible to describe mediation as successful when the parties and mediator feel that the process of mediation was itself fruitful, although no positive outcome occurred. Satisfaction, fairness, effectiveness and efficiency are, as identified by Jameson et al (1999), four major attributes which can be achieved at any appropriate level during successful mediation efforts.

Beyond process and outcome models of assessment, success in mediation can be measured from the goals and expectations of an intervention. Where an intervention is meant to reduce the destructive effect of a conflict or to forestall conflict from escalating, a settlement is seen as a full success even if the root causes of the conflict might not have been addressed. In the same way, where the effort of the mediator is to assist in opening up a communication channel, such endeavors (if achieved) are recorded as successful despite the fact that the parties may not reach a negotiated settlement. Therefore, when the actual goal is a major determinant factor in the assessment of mediation success, it can cut across all levels: process (output) as well as short and long term outcomes. For the purpose of this study, the goals of religious actors at both the process and outcome levels are included to determine the success of mediation in Yelwa, Jos and Kaduna.

Historicizing conflicts in Plateau and Kaduna

For a stronger analysis of faith-based actors in mediation in Plateau and Kaduna states, especially for a clear assessment of the factors behind their successes and failures, it is important to understand the nature and development of these conflicts. Based on that, this segment of the paper is devoted to a brief historical development of the Jos and the Yelwa conflicts in Plateau; and the Kaduna conflict in Kaduna.

Located in the North Central Zone of Nigeria, Jos is the capital of the present day Plateau State of Nigeria. It is made up of five local governments, of which Jos North is the beehive of economic and political activities in the state. Although it is a cosmopolitan city with virtually all the major ethnic groups in Nigeria heavily represented, it is generally taken to be the ancestral home of the Berom (in majority), the Afizere and the Anaguta - known as the indigenous group. There is also the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group whose presence, like the Igbo, Yoruba and Urhobo, dates back largely to the colonial period. Fanned by other disputes such as the issuance of certificates of 'state of origin' from the Local Government Area (L.G.A.) as well as elections, ethnicity, religious diversity and many others, the Jos conflict largely revolves around contestation for ownership of Jos Town between the indigenous groups who are dominantly Christians and the majority Muslim Hausa-Fulani who are referred to as settlers.

Though traceable to the pre-colonial era, the creation of Jos North Local Government Area in 1991 by the military government of Ibrahim Babangida inaugurated the violent phase of this conflict. Beginning with the 1994 eruption of violence over the appointment of a perceived non-indigene as the Chairman of the Caretaker Committee of the Jos North L.G.A., Jos formally known for its peacefulness gradually turned into a volatile city in Nigeria. The first major violent eruption to occur after the 1999 re-democratization was in September 2001 over the mishandling of a Christian woman from among the indigenous community, by a Hausa-Fulani Muslim paramilitary group guarding a mosque during Jumm'at prayer on a Friday afternoon. This developed into a crisis that spread to other parts of Jos and beyond, leaving the city devastated. From 2001, Jos and its environs became the epicenter of violent clashes between Christians and Muslims.

Another major conflict in Plateau which erupted during the period under review is the Yelwa conflict. Located in Shendan Local Government of Plateau State, Yelwa was inhabited by the Goemai ethnic group of Plateau and the Jarawa of Bauchi. As in Jos, both groups claimed ownership of Yelwa. The Jaarawa, a predominantly Muslim community supported by other Muslim groups like the Hausa-Fulani, Boghom and Pyem in Yelwa and its surroundings, claimed ownership of the traditional political administration of the town. Arguing that they had always lived in the town independent of any other group, they blamed the British for the subordination of Yelwa to Shendan District (Best, 2008). Dismissing this claim, the Goemai community, backed by other Christian ethnic groups particularly the Taroh and Sayawa in Yelwa and its surrounding areas, maintained that the Jarawa were settlers who moved from Bauchi. While this was the basis of the Yelwa conflict, there were some other factors that fanned its embers. Among them were the political crisis arising from an attempt by the two groups to manipulate the 2002 ward chairmanship election; frustrations from the Jarawa's quest for the creation of a separate district; cattle rustling; ethno-religious divide and the Jos 2001 crisis (Best, 2007). The sudden release of the Taroh traditional masquerade on the night of June 26th 2002 sparked off a round of violence that engulfed the town, producing killings and destruction along religious lines. The 2002 violence was followed by the February 2004 killings, in which 47 Christians in a church lost their lives to a group of unidentified mercenaries. Since the February attack appeared to have been masterminded by Muslims, a reprisal organized by the Christians in May 2004 claimed the lives of more than 600 Muslims. It was this development, among others, that led to the declaration of a State of Emergency in Plateau State.

Like Jos, Kaduna metropolis is another major city in the study area that is known for violent eruptions since 2000. The Kaduna conflict, which equally pre-dated the colonial period, seems to have centered on the determination of the non-Hausa-Fulani of the old Zaria Emirate-Province to throw off what they perceived as the yoke of economic and political domination by the Hausa-Fulani. While their agitations had earlier produced violent encounters in 1946 and 1966 (Suberu, 2001), politicization of religion during military rule heightened the rate of violent clashes in the state. Although these eruptions were suppressed by the military, the transition to democracy, as Nwaka (2012) argues, threw open a new wave of violent encounters between the two groups in the Kaduna metropolis.

As a sequel to re-democratization, some states in northern Nigeria adopted the Sharia legal system. This generated further tensions between Christians and Muslims in the north. The plan of the Kaduna State House of Assembly to pass the Sharia Bill into law provoked a peaceful Christian mass protest in February 2000, which degenerated into a bloody clash between Christian and Muslim youth in the city. From Kaduna city, the crisis spilled over to Kachia and Birnin Gwari in Kaduna State, where unemployed youth and social miscreants destroyed shops and residential houses. Between 2000 and 2005, Kaduna City, in addition to the Sharia crisis, witnessed some other major eruptions of ethno-religious character. Among them were the second Sharia crisis, which occurred in May 2000 following the murder of a Christian woman purported to have defiled the Quran in a Muslim-dominated community; and the 2002 Miss World crisis generated by an allusion to Mohammed in *This Day* newspaper by the fashion journalist, Isioma Daniel.

Beginning in the year 2000, a number of measures were adopted by various groups to address these conflicts. The relative peace in Jos, until recently, has partly been attributed to these measures (Ogbonna, Personal Communication (P.C.), Sept. 27, 2016). Similarly, the fragile peace in Kaduna, amidst tension and residential segregation, and most importantly, the twelve years of interrupted peace in Yelwa (2004-2016), were both credited to series of moves made by individuals and groups in the search for peace (Kazaure, PC. Sept. 26, 2016; Nmadu, PC. Sept. 4, 2016; Ibrahim, PC. Sept. 17, 2016). Among the groups that have been conspicuously present in conflict resolution efforts were faith-based actors. Unfortunately, their involvement, especially their post-conflict activities, has not been given adequate scholarly attention in terms of critical analysis (Best & Homlong, 2011). Literature on conflict in these two states largely pays attention to the role of the state and security agencies in conflict management and peacebuilding (Lamorde, 2018; Omotola, 2006; Best, 2007; Nwaka, 2014a), an analysis of conflict situation (Ndubuisi, 2018; Danfulani & Fwatshak, 2007; Nwaka, 2012; Imobighe, 2003), the causes and effects of conflict (Alozieuwa, 2011; Boer, 2003; Nwaka, 2014b; Best, 2008) as well as the conflict dynamics and trends (Plateau Indigenous Association Network (PIDAN), 2010). In trying to shift the focus from the above, this study critically analyzes the levels of success in faith-based mediation in these states between 2001 and 2005.

Data and Method

Data collection for the research combined field-based primary sources from qualitative methods of data collection: In-person, in-depth interviews (IDI), focused group discussion (FGD) and official/documents, with extant secondary source materials. Data for IDI was generated from first-hand informants. These included religious leaders and other representatives of faith-based organizations, participants at various peace meetings, workshops, conferences and dialogues as well as ordinary men and women knowledgeable on the topic of study. About 31 IDIs were conducted in the study area. These informants were accessed using purposive samplings and snow-balling. Their views on the conditions that explained the success or failure of mediation were elicited. 5 FGD sessions were held. Primary information was also generated from official documents. Chief among them were reports of peace dialogues, peace meetings, training workshops with conflict parties and various communiqués at the end of peace conferences. Data presentation and analysis was done using content analytical tool.

Result and Discussions

Faith-based Actors in Mediation

Although conflicts in the study areas during the period under review appeared to be of complex nature, their entanglement with religion as well as their destructive nature informed the involvement of faith-based actors in the search for peace (Petek, PC. Sept. 26, 2016). Mediation featured prominently from 2001 as a strategy of conflict resolution by religious actors. The increasing volatility of the region called for proactive measures to address the issues in and around the conflicts. About six outstanding mediation attempts were identified between 2001 and 2005. The table below, created by the authors, captures the interventions undertaken by faith-based actors in the study areas during the period under review. It is pertinent to note that some of these interventions involved secular actors who either collaborated with religious actors in the process or were used as resource persons. While some of these interventions yielded positive results at various levels, as could be seen in the table, others partially failed.

Year	Mechanism	Conflict	Actors	Aims	Output	Short term outcome	Long term outcome
2001-2002	Mediation	Kaduna	Inter-Faith Mediation Center (IMC)	To get stake holders from the two sides of the divide to declare their commitment to peace in Kaduna and through this put an end to violent eruption in the city	22 persons (11 from each group) targeted were all present	Kaduna Peace Declaration in 2002, which was based on the Alexandria Declaration for peace in the Holy land	Intermittent / fragile peace, tensions and city polarization
2001-2002	Facilitative mediation	Jos	Christian Association of Nigeria – CAN	To bring the two groups together for a reconciliatory meeting	Hausa-Fulani Muslims in poor attendance. Absence of opinion leaders.	No outstanding outcome recorded	Not identified
2002	Mediation	Jos	Inter-faith Mediation Center Kaduna-IMC	To find a solution to the Jos conflict by bringing the two sides together at various levels for meaningful discussion	Opinion leaders of the indigenous group in poor attendance. About 60% of the youth responded	Harmonized the position of the youth in a signed document but failed to reach concrete agreement	Not identified
2004	Facilitation/mediation	Jos and other conflicts in Plateau	IMC	To find solution to persistent conflicts in Plateau state	Hausa-Fulani group in Poor attendance	Plateau Peace Accord produced and signed though without the major Hausa-Fulani stake holders	Short lived peace. Failed to forestall future violence in Jos
2004	Facilitation/mediation	Yelwa Shendan	Catholic Archbishop of Jos and the Emir of Wase	To open up a channel of communication for the parties in the conflict by bringing the stake holders together to discuss the issues in the conflict	85% of the expected participants turned out	Made some recommendations, Peace affirmation, and acceptance of the Long Goemai(chief of Goemai) as the traditional authority of Yelwa by Muslims and Christians	Relative peace in Yelwa that prepared grounds for subsequent interventions
2005	Mediation	Yelwa Shendan	IMC	To bring various factions: together to address the conflict issues and find a workable mode of living together in Yelwa	All the expected groups were represented through their leaders in the five days sharing and negotiation	A joint peace affirmation signed by all the participants on the 19 th of February 2005 after the two groups had willingly apologized to each other	Restored peace in Yelwa (10 years -2005 to 2015 - of uninterrupted peaceful cohabitation)

Five outstanding Faith-Based Interventions in Plateau and Kaduna between 2001 and 2005

Explaining the Levels of Success in Mediation

Mediation was one of the prominent strategies of conflict resolution utilized by religious actors between 2001 and 2005 in the study areas. While it succeeded beyond the output and short-term outcome levels in Yelwa, success of faith-based actors in Kaduna and Jos was limited to these two levels. From our findings, the success of mediation at the process and short-term levels in Yelwa as shown in the table above is attributed to a number of factors. Prominent among these factors was the mediators' experience, influence and commitment, which were largely underscored in the success of mediation at the levels of output and short-term outcome (IMC, 2016). The Catholic Archbishop of Jos, Ignatius Kaigama, and the Emir of Wase, Alhaji Abdullah, were not only the highest religious authorities in Plateau; the two have earned themselves reputations as respectable and honest advocates of peace. Their unusual friendship, orchestrated by their responses to violent conflicts, endeared them to both Christians and Muslims. Kaigama, who already had a history of successful conflict intervention in Jalingo before his transfer to Jos, proved himself a lover of peace long before his involvement in the Yelwa case. As the presidents of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and Jama' tu Nasri Islam (JNI) respectively, Kaigama and Abdullah co-chaired the Inter-Religious Council in Plateau where they both worked to improve Christian-Muslim relations (Kaigama, PC. Sept. 30, 2016). In addition to this, Kaigama had gained popularity among Muslims in Jos and beyond for giving protection to Muslim faithful during the September 2002 violence in Jos. The past records of these actors endeared them to people, who did not only oblige their invitation to peace meetings but also opened up their bottled-up grievances with confidence in and commitment to a final solution to the conflict (Focused Group Discussion (FGD) 1). In the same vein, Imam Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye of the Inter-Faith Mediation Center (IMC) in Kaduna were religious leaders of high repute. Having led opposing camps in a violent clash in Zango-Kataf in 1991, they later re-channeled their energies away from violence and towards the search for peaceful relationships between Christians and Muslims in Kaduna and beyond. With support from funding bodies, they set up the IMC Kaduna, which has championed interfaith conflict resolution and peace-building in Nigeria (IMC, 2013). With their wealth of knowledge and experience, they committed themselves to measures and processes that gave the people an upper hand in determining a framework for their future relationship in Yelwa. In an expression that showed their determination to lead the people through all the necessary steps needed for peace, Wuye (PC. Oct. 1, 2016) revealed that they spent 17 days in a programme that was slated for 5 days, bearing the cost and other inconveniences generated by that decision, including sharing accommodation.

Taking the conflict parties through many days of continuous interactions, the two were able to generate a peace affirmation which they signed after they had willingly and publicly tendered apologies to each other.

In addition to the influence and commitment of mediators, timing was another factor underscored. Some key informants were of the view that the two mediation teams came at a time when the two parties had tested their strength and were ready for peace (Byang & Philip PC. Sept. 7, 2016). A widely held opinion was that Yelwa would have witnessed another outburst if the mediation teams had come before the revenge attack in May 2004 (FGD 2). Other factors in the success of mediation at the levels of process and short-term outcome in Yelwa include the support from

the state government and its agencies, the process of mediation as well as the presence and influence of other non-state actors such as traditional rulers, cultural groups and NGOs. For instance, the Plateau State Government, as Kaigama (2011) noted, provided adequate security that convinced one of the parties that had earlier declined involvement in Yelwa peace process on grounds of insecurity, to adjust its position. Additionally, some members of the University of Jos Peace Studies Center were engaged as resource persons.

Beyond these two levels, the long-term success of faith-based actors in the Yelwa mediation effort can be explained from the relatively low interest of external actors or shadow parties in the conflict. Compared to Jos and Kaduna cities, which are regarded as microcosms of Nigeria (Zuwau, PC. Sept. 7, 2016), Yelwa is a small town of limited significance. Although the two sides had their backers both within and outside the town, ownership of the conflict and peace was largely that of the local people. This view was further affirmed by some informants, who decried the lull in commercial transaction during the period of crisis, insisting that they needed peace to protect their businesses (Danladi & Puwal, PC. Sept. 8, 2016). According to Puwal, “nobody will pray for a repeat of what happened in 2004. It affected us severely here in this market (sic). We could not open our shops for weeks for fear of attacks. I used to have a fuller shop than what you are seeing here now”. Local ownership of the Yelwa peace was also visible in the joint vigilante group set up on the heels of the peace affirmation, to guard against developments that may generate further crisis in the town. At the time of this research in 2016, the group was still very active in the town. Furthermore, the determination of the people to maintain and keep active the Peace Initiative Committee formed during the intervention is partly proof that Yelwa's peace was the people's peace. Some members of the committee referred to the group's usefulness in keeping Yelwa peaceful since 2005. One of the leading members of the Yelwa intervention in 2005, Wuye (2016), confirmed the local ownership of peace in Yelwa, noting the presence of spoilers from outside who pressed for the termination of the peace process. “We brought them to Kaduna. While in Kaduna, some spoilers were calling them not to agree. But the people said ‘no no no, there is no double standard in what these guys are doing. It is our process” (Wuye, 2016). Arguably, there was willingness on the part of those who owned the conflict to prioritize peace and sustain such prioritization.

We were to work with the parties for five days. When the process started, it did not move as planned. There were a lot of back and forth negotiations and sub-negotiations. Even when we extended it to ten days, we could not leave until after seventeen days. It got to a point where we had to share rooms to save cost.

Kaduna city was another area where mediation appeared to have recorded substantial success. However, in terms of long-term impact, there are two opposing interpretations of the Kaduna Peace Declaration of 2002. The first school of thought argues against the success story associated with the declaration, noting that the city recorded a series of eruptions after the Sharia riots (Petek, 2016). The second school of thought, on the other hand, maintains that the city has recorded 14 years of relative peace since the Declaration, irrespective of the 2002 and 2011 crises (Onoh & Maduekwe, PC. Oct. 2, 2016). Based on the model used in this study for determining successful mediation, the Kaduna Peace Declaration could be viewed as successful since it brought together different stakeholders to proposed meetings and produced a document which was signed by all the parties involved. Thus, at the level of output and short-term outcome, mediation in Kaduna recorded success. But unlike Yelwa, it appeared the Kaduna Peace Declaration was influenced by suspicion and pretense. A majority of respondents were of the opinion that the Declaration was a product of window dressing because participants were eager to tell the world that they desired peace in Kaduna, whereas the opposite appeared

to be the case (FGD 3). Deductively, success of mediation in Kaduna was limited to the levels of output and short-term outcome because none of the parties wanted to be seen as the source of the problem. It, however, failed to bring about long-term peace because in such situations, issues at the root of the conflict are unlikely to be fully addressed. Expressing his view about the failure of the Peace Declaration to ensure peace in Kaduna, Petek (2016) remarked “you do not tell me to sign that we will live together for us to live together; there are conditions that must be met. Unless those conditions are met, we are wasting our time”. On the signing of the document, Petek (2016) reasoned further:

As to why these issues have not been addressed, Zuwau (2016) argued that Kaduna is a miniature Nigeria and thus manifests all the problems bedeviling the nation. The perspective of external actors’ involvement was equally emphasized by Nmadu (2016), who observed that both sides were backed by powerful actors whose interests appeared to be different from the issues manifesting in the conflict. The signing of the Declaration was further linked to the desire of the mediators to produce a positive outcome by all means (FGD 4). With the presence and sponsorship of a foreign religious organization from Britain that was in collaboration with the IMC, the mediators were not ready to fail. In this sense, the peace associated with the Declaration further lost its owners as well.

In Jos, the two interventions of CAN and IMC in 2002 produced little success only at the process level. Most of our informants were of the view that the Hausa-Fulani party was in poor attendance in CAN’s move to facilitate a reconciliatory meeting between Christians and Muslims because the venue of the meeting, the Fellowship of Churches of Christ in Nigeria (FCCN) Conference Hall, lacked the required neutrality (FGD 4). FCCN is a Christian body while CAN is an umbrella body of all Christians in Nigeria. Both the convener and the venue were said to have accentuated suspicion in the minds of Muslims who interpreted the move as an attempt to undermine their interests. Thus, the Muslims that attended were few and were not viable opinion leaders who could not arrive at any tangible decisions with their Christian counterparts. Similarly, the intervention of Inter-Faith Mediation Center in Jos 2002 partially succeeded only at the process level. The main representatives of the indigenous group failed to honour the invitation. The indigenous groups, especially the Berom, were absent from the meeting because they were said to be mourning the death of their traditional ruler.

Although further attempts by the IMC (in conjunction with other actors) to facilitate peace talks in Plateau in 2004 equally witnessed partial success at the process level, they produced a peace accord which was signed by representatives of all parties to the conflict (FGD 5). However, unlike Yelwa, the Plateau Peace Accord failed to produce lasting peace in Jos. Within three years of its documentation, Jos witnessed another major violent eruption. Most of our informants were of the opinion that the issue of the ownership of Jos hampers efforts at long-term peace (FGD 5). Although the Jos conflict, like Yelwa, is largely over the indigene-settler question, the centrality of Jos in north central Nigeria makes the city the hub of all resistance to perceived Islamic expansionism. As one of the first colonial cities in Northern Nigeria, Jos was and continues to be not only the commercial nerve center of Central Nigeria, but also the seat of Christian religious activities in the north as a whole. Given its historical resistance to the flag bearers of Islamic Jihad in the 19th century, it seems to have assumed the center of resistance to Islamic expansion in north central Nigeria. According to Elder Dung (PC, August 16, 2014),

“Though religion is largely manipulated by the political class and conflict entrepreneurs, beyond religious exploitation is a question of Islamic expansion and domination, which Jos stands against. If Jos becomes a Muslim state, Abuja is only a question of time”.

“Two parties are involved in a conflict, you call them to sit on a table to sign that they will live in peace, if you do not sign, that means you are the problem. No one wants to be identified as the problem....so you will sign not because you believe in what you are signing..., that is why we do not uphold the Declaration because people have issues that have not been addressed”.

Arguably, parties to the Jos conflict are located within and outside Jos. It is therefore not surprising that the Jos conflict is generally subjected to strong influence of shadow parties and spoilers whose inputs contribute to frustrating efforts aimed towards lasting peace in Jos. The failure of the IMC's 2002 peace move, according to Abdulrahman (PC. Oct. 4, 2016), was linked to external pressure on one of the groups to decline participation in the meeting using the death of Jos' traditional ruler as an excuse. Similarly, the presence of external parties was identified as partly responsible for the failure of some other peace efforts that were subsequently made in Plateau. Narrating why the Saminaka peace effort of 2014 failed, Wuye (2016) pointed out the influence of some spoilers from Bauchi and Kano who pressed party representatives so much that their attempts ended in stalemate, thereby frustrating the Alternative Road to Peace in Plateau programme.

In addition to external influence, the Plateau Peace Accord, much like the Kaduna Peace Declaration, suffered the effects of peace on the gallery. Although the IMC and other actors were to facilitate mediation, the third parties were said not to be fully in-charge of the process. According to Dangiwa (PC. Sept. 30, 2016), the government subtly dominated the process, reducing the representatives from IMC and other non-state actors to mere resource persons. Arguably, in a bid to justify its six months mandate in Plateau under the State of Emergency, the military government of Chris Ali was not ready to fail in the 2004 peace initiatives. Thus, the popular “Plateau Resolves” (Plateau Peace Accord) could neither resolve the conflicts in Jos in particular nor other ones in Plateau in general. It was hastily produced with little or no input from those who ought to have been its owners. Suffice to argue here that unlike Yelwa and Kaduna, neither the parties nor the mediators were the owners of the peace that was produced in Plateau in 2004. In other words, the Plateau Peace Accord, as Nwaka (2014a) argued, talked so much about peace without talking to peace.

Conclusion

There was obvious involvement of faith-based actors in mediation in Plateau and Kaduna States during the period under review. Success or failure in mediation at the levels of output and short-term outcome result from the mediators' influence, experience and commitment as well as the timing, ripeness and neutral nature of the intervention. These variables accounted for the nature of representation during mediation meetings and the signing of peace agreements in the case studies of this paper. For example, the presence and commitment of highly reputable religious leaders from both sides of the conflict in Yelwa restored the peoples' confidence in the peace process, thereby producing fruitful output and outcome. CAN's move to mediate in Jos and the choice of location for the meeting, however, denied that mediation effort success and instead afforded it the perception of bias. The factor of “peace on the gallery” equally accounted for the dynamics of success at these two levels. The Kaduna Peace Declaration was signed by both parties because none of them wanted to be tagged as an obstacle to peace in the city. The mediators working in collaboration with a foreign body were eager to produce a document that would justify the resources that had been pumped into the process. Hence, the declaration for peace in Kaduna by the two sides, which was indeed popular, was followed by another violent clash only a few months later. In the same vein, the Jos Peace Accord was hastily produced by the military head of state, who was eager to showcase his achievements within six months of placing Jos under the State of Emergency.

Arguably, success beyond these two levels, as recorded in Yelwa, was linked to the engagement of the real owners of conflict and peace. The relatively low-profiled Yelwa conflict, compared to Jos and Kaduna, attracted fewer shadow parties and spoilers, and so allowed the parties the chance to determine the course of the peace process and its impact. Such ownership appeared to be lacking in Jos and Kaduna. The Kaduna Peace Declaration, as noted earlier, was signed by those who, from all indications, did not want the world to view them as the problem. It was equally the mediators' peace. In Jos, the Peace Accord signed in 2004 could be regarded as the peace of the state's military administrator, who needed to showcase his achievement within a six-month mandate. The peace agreement of 2002, although signed, lacked ownership. The Berom, the major stakeholders in the conflict, were not really part of the process. Although youth were represented, the Berom youth leader, as noted by Best & Homlong (2011), confirmed that they were not able to enter any tangible agreement because the Berom had no chief then who would have negotiated such agreement on behalf of his people.

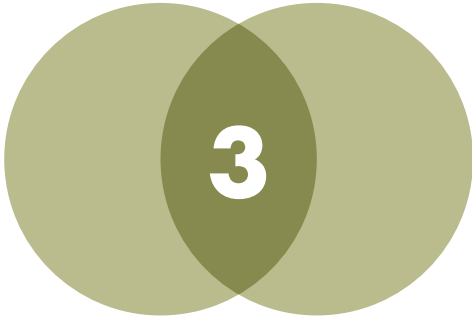
Although timing, ripeness, credibility, power, conflicting issues, the process of mediation, mediators' influence and position all do determine success in mediation, mediation as an instrument of conflict resolution is likely to succeed beyond the output and short-term outcome where: (i) there is willingness on the part of the conflict owners to engage peace; and (ii) the willingness and readiness of the conflict owners for peace is engaged not necessarily by the mediators but by the involved parties themselves. Thus, no matter the influence, appropriateness and acceptability of religious actors in mediation as a means of conflict resolution, the responsibility to transform conflict largely lies with the parties involved. Indeed, local ownership, as Martin & Bojicic-Dzelilovic (2016) and McCann (2015) argue, should be a guiding principle for successful African peacebuilding in contemporary times.

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Fragility and the State: Current Debates and Historical Perspectives

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Keywords

Fragile states;
Development;
Institutions

Abstract

This paper examines fragile states from a historical and policy-focused context. It analyses both fragility and the state as complex phenomena with specific history and logic. International debates are introduced, from the 'failed states' narrative to more sophisticated frameworks on fragile contexts. Modern state-building is placed in a historical perspective and analysed through a political economy framework, while rents and patronage are explained as standard forms of social organization. Modern state-building and economic development is analysed, together with the impact of colonialism, further exposing the features of fragile states and placing them within the context of the contemporary world economy, making fragility appear as a dysfunctional form of governance.

Introduction

The number of people living in extreme poverty has consistently declined in the past 200 years, and most spectacularly in the last few decades. Literacy, health and life conditions in general have also vastly improved (Roser, 2017). On the other hand, inequality is rising, demographic growth and urbanisation rates are producing major transformations and climate change looms large. Overall progress notwithstanding, Paul Collier (2007) argues that a limited number of countries have been left behind in these developments. The 'bottom billion' of the global population has not benefited from widespread improvements in income and living conditions. In his analysis, he points out that this is due to 'development traps,' or vicious cycles that are difficult to break and are borne out of conflicts and poor governance. Absolute poverty may be declining globally, but violence persists in pockets of conflict, poverty and instability all over the world. By the same token, prospects of interstate wars have diminished but protracted crises still affect countries like Somalia, the DRC, Afghanistan, Iraq and Haiti, among others. New man-made emergencies have further engulfed Yemen, Nigeria, Libya, Syria, Venezuela and Myanmar.

The intrastate nature of these complex crises is often complemented by their regional spill-overs in the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and Southern Asia. Besides armed conflicts, drug-related violence and high homicide rates are endemic in Central America, and human trafficking thrives in North Africa. Criminal transnational networks operate across and within borders, incentivized by the relative impunity they enjoy against weak national security forces, in the same way as terrorist organizations like Boko Haram, ISIS or Al-Qaeda do. Domestic instability has regional and global externalities, as almost all of the networks operating within and across borders have transnational, regional and global elements.

Current debates on fragile states have their origins in the 1990s, when state institutions collapsed or were involved in the facilitation of ethnic cleansing and economic pillage. The next decade began with the 9/11 attacks on America, orchestrated by Al-Qaeda under the protection of the Afghan government. Organised corruption and violence, crony capitalism and warlords are nothing new. However, domestic situations now have international security implications and fragile states have risen to the top of the global agenda.

This paper gives an account of the context and debates surrounding state fragility.

The first section examines the development of these debates among scholars and policy-makers; it traces their evolution from the concept of 'failed states' to more sophisticated frameworks currently in the literature. The next sections place state fragility in a historical perspective using a political economy analysis. Rents and patronage are shown as the historical norms, rather than exceptions, while the modern state and the globalized economy emerge as closely interconnected phenomena. Regional competition in Europe had global implications, with colonial institutions affecting post-colonial development. The last section introduces some common features of fragile states in the context of the contemporary world economy. It examines pertinent issues and ways forward in the global effort to address state fragility.

An Outline of the Debate: From Failed States to Fragile Contexts

The debate on state fragility has its origins in the 1990s and early 2000s. It has largely evolved in response to policy-makers' and donors' initiatives in the security and development sectors. This practical focus helps explain why there are no agreed-upon definitions of what constitutes fragility, nor on the states that are to be considered 'fragile'. The issue is also politically sensitive, as states are reluctant to be labelled as fragile. It is feared that this negative status might invite unwelcome external intervention or might discourage potential investors from engaging economically. On the other hand, governments play the fragility card to secure foreign aid. These political considerations have prompted several shifts in the narratives around state fragility. As such, in the past 25 years ongoing debates have moved from 'failed states' to fragile contexts.

The first use of the expression 'failed states' was in a 1993 article on Foreign Policy magazine, which reflected on the experiences of the wars in the former Yugoslavia, in Eastern and Western Africa and in Cambodia (Helman & Ratner, 1993). Central governments were unable to assert territorial control within their borders; in Yugoslavia and Somalia state institutions collapsed entirely. In October 1993, US forces suffered 18 casualties during the 'Battle of Mogadishu'. Soon after the US withdrew from the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II), whose mission was to ensure humanitarian access and support peace-making, the mission itself was shut down. These events are of paramount importance in understanding the US involvement in multilateral engagements in forthcoming crises (Brock et al., 2012; p. 103-107). As a result of the 1993 failure in Somalia, the US was reluctant to join international intervention efforts in Rwanda and Bosnia in 1994, where a timely and determined intervention would have prevented genocides. Between April and July 1994, an estimated 800,000 people were slaughtered in Rwanda, while in July 1995, around 8,000 Bosniaks were killed in Srebrenica. Continued failures to prevent these genocidal acts strengthened the voices in the US administration calling for more resolute action. Madelaine Albright was the US Secretary of State under the Clinton Administration between 1997 and 2001, and she was a strong advocate of military actions to force Serbian forces out of Kosovo. Following many such calls for action, NATO eventually carried out a bombing campaign against Serbia in 1999, without UN backing.

Appalling death tolls, mass-scale violence against civilians and a large mediatisation drew a lot of attention to the Balkan wars from scholars, policy-makers and the public at large. Mainly focusing on the Balkans, Mary Kaldor (1999) called those post-Cold

War conflicts that were typically sub-state in nature “new wars” juxtaposing state and non-state actors under the ‘politics of identity’ and featuring close links with global markets and criminal networks. The pillage of local resources for personal enrichment and for financing war operations was also noticed in contexts as diverse as Bosnia, Liberia and Colombia. Local resources, including human labour, were looted and exploited. They were then sold on global markets, where vast arm procurements took place. As a result, a fierce debate on the role of political grievances and economic greed in civil wars ensued (Berdal & Malone, 2000). For instance, the warlord Charles Taylor made an estimated gross profit of USD 400 million per year during the 1992-1996 civil war in Liberia (Berdal & Malone, 2000; p. 5). In turning Liberia into his personal enterprise, warfare became part of a profitable business model. Another case where domestic instability fuelled looting of local resources was the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the mid-1990s; Uganda and Rwanda ganged up with local armed groups and entered the lucrative business of mining in DRC’s eastern regions. In these and other cases, war and business went hand in hand, and this provided powerful incentives for opposing forces to keep fighting and looting, instead of sitting at negotiation tables and working towards peace (Ladini, 2010a).

Reflecting on the complexity of conflicts of the 1990s, new concepts appeared in policy and academic debates, such as ‘Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development’ (LRRD), or the idea that there can be no development without security, and no security without development. The latter came to be known as the ‘security-development nexus’. Duffield (2001) critically argued that these views would lead to politicized humanitarian interventions, with the risk of humanitarian and development objectives playing a support function to Western security interests. Discussions on ‘human security’ attempted to extend the notion of security from the traditionally military-focused one to being viewed through a more comprehensive lens (Ladini, 2010b). The concept of ‘Responsibility to Protect’ (R2P) also emerged in the late 1990s as a genuine attempt to frame legitimate external interventions in countries suffering from violent conflict. In 2000, the Canadian Government set up the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. Failure to prevent genocides and ethnic cleansing in Rwanda and Bosnia sparked the debate on what could be done to avoid the same mistakes in the future. The Commission came up with the 2001 ‘Report on the Responsibility to Protect.’ They argued that sovereignty entailed first and foremost the responsibility to protect state citizens. This responsibility falls on state governments. However, the international community should step in, should the state be unable or unwilling to fulfil its responsibility. Multilateral actions could take the form of monitoring, assistance and capacity building activities, resorting to armed interventions as a last resort and with the backing of the UN Security Council.

The real breakthrough on the notion of failed states came with the attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11) on the US. The Taliban regime had given Osama bin-Laden protection, hence it constituted a direct threat to US and international security. This was the narrative that, in the aftermath of 9/11, made domestic state structures a matter of international security concerns. The US Administration became a vocal advocate of the failed states concept, in their attempt to frame their ‘war on terror.’ The 2002 US National Security Strategy, for instance, argued that 9/11 “taught us that weak states, like Afghanistan, can pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states. America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones” (US, 2002; p. 1). The European Union followed suit. In the first document outlining a security strategy for Europe, Javier Solana (the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy at the time) stated that “state failure is an

alarming phenomenon, that undermines global governance, and adds to regional instability” (EU, 2003; p. 4). The concept of failed states has been criticized for both its theoretical limits and political implications (Nay, 2012; Grimm et al., 2014; Brock et al., 2012; Call, 2008). Chomsky (2007) argued that the US itself should be regarded as a case of a failed state, and a threat to international security. Strong backing from US administrations notwithstanding, the concept of failed states has largely disappeared from policy and academic debates. It has instead been replaced by a more nuanced idea of state fragility, with donors and international organizations proactively engaged in articulating this new definition.

A second line of policy interest in fragile states stems from the donor community. Debates on aid effectiveness started earnestly in the late 1990s. They led to the ‘Monterey Consensus on Financing Development’, approved during a UN conference in 2002. Official Development Assistance (ODA), it was argued, had to complement other sources of funding, including domestic revenue. ODA had to enhance the ‘absorptive capacity and financial management of the recipient countries’ to utilize aid effectively. In a shift from previous development thinking, aid flows had to support poverty reduction strategies, and not simply economic growth. A perverse effect, however, was to concentrate aid on good performers (Grimm et al., 2014; p. 200). In the mid-2000s, the World Bank reacted to critics by setting up two units in charge of informing policy-making: the Fragile State Unit and the Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit. During the 1980s and the 1990s, a lot of emphasis was placed on redressing public finances through cuts in public expenditure, then to further tie ODA to aid effectiveness. In the following decade, the World Bank brought the state back, in the sense that state-building was identified as a key measure for effective programming and delivery in ‘low-income countries under stress’.

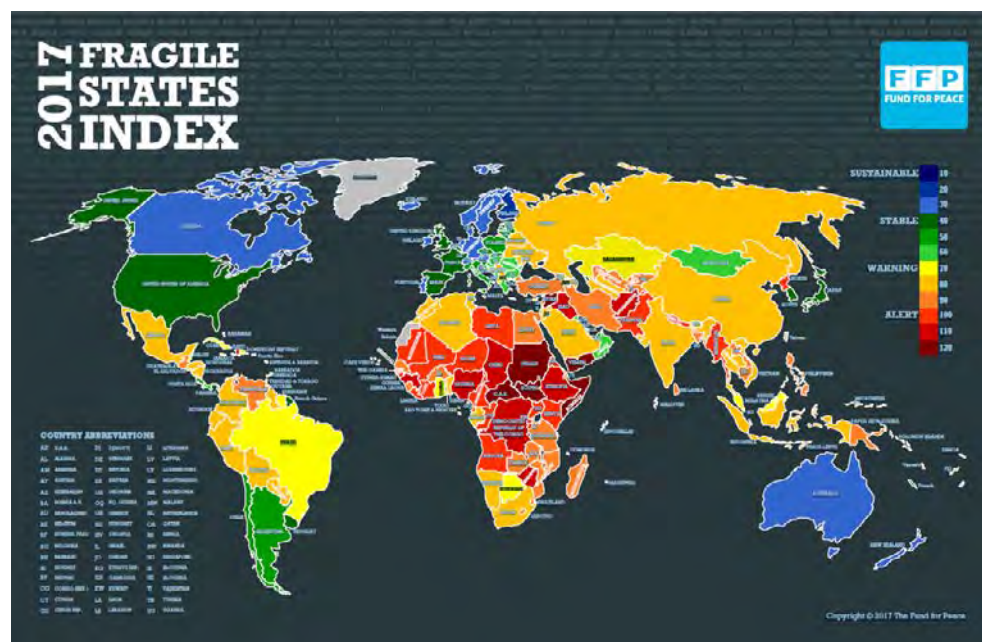
This was broadly in line with UN thinking on peace-building. In his 1992 Agenda for Peace, UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali stated that “for peace-making and peacekeeping operations to be truly successful, they must come to include comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people” (par. 55). UN initiatives on peace-building started from there, and the strengthening of state institutions was as important as the involvement of non-state actors (Ladini, 2009; p. 40-45). Similarly, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) included state-building in its ten ‘Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States & Situations’ (2007). In 2010, the G7+ group was formally created and brought together countries affected by fragility and conflict in a common platform for political dialogue and advocacy. The G7+ and donors sat together at the International Dialogue on Peace-building and State-building, where they negotiated a set of principles for international engagement in fragile situations. These principles were officially endorsed on 30 November 2011 during the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, Korea. The ‘New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States’ represented a global policy agreement, and was developed in consultation with states, development agencies and civil society actors. It was signed by more than 40 countries and organizations and was based on three pillars: (i) Peace-building and State-building Goals (PSGs) including legitimate politics, security, justice, economic foundations, and revenue and services; (ii) structured engagement, from fragility assessments to progress monitoring based on PSGs and political dialogue; (iii) aid effectiveness through transparency, risk-sharing, strengthening country management systems, and timely and predictable aid flows.

Following this, several fragility indexes appeared in policy and academic circles. The aim or rationale was twofold. On the one hand, state fragility's trappings had to be more clearly specified. On the other, lists and rankings could better support policies and programmes, including decisions on aid disbursement. Fragility indexes, as Ziaja and Mata (2010) note, can be useful to fine-tune aid approaches, to monitor trends in global political stability, to evaluate the impact of development aid and to investigate the dynamics of state fragility in general. The Fragile States Index, formerly Failed States Index, was one of the first to be published in 2005 by the Fund for Peace and Foreign Policy magazine. It ranks countries according to social, economic and political indicators.

Figure 1
Fragile States
Index 2017

Source:

<http://fundforpeace.org/fsi>



The World Bank's (WB) Harmonized List of Fragile Situations is an example of donors' need to assess fragility for disbursement programming. The WB's statute prevents it from allocating funds based on political considerations. The Fragility, Conflict and Violence group in the World Bank releases an annual list of fragile countries based on (i) a Country Policy and Institutional Assessment, and (ii) whether the country hosts a peacekeeping or a political and peace-building mission. The former assesses the capacity of countries to implement development policies, and to manage International Development Assistance (IDA) effectively. It is used to allocate IDA to eligible countries. The latter is meant to take political conflict and violence into account in an objective and apolitical manner.

In line with their policy dialogue mission, the OECD has also invested great resources on fragile states, releasing 12 reports between 2005 and 2018. The OECD began working on fragile states in the mid-2000s, with the limited scope of monitoring official development assistance to countries. In 2007, the 'Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations' were published. In advocating for fragile and conflict-affected countries not to be left behind in aid

flows, the OECD used indexes and definitions developed by others. In 2015, they set up the first wave of expert consultations aimed at producing a multidimensional fragility framework. This process resulted in the ‘States of Fragility 2015’ report (2015), followed by the ‘States of Fragility 2016’ (2016). To date, the latter represents the latest version of the OECD Fragility Framework, revolving around five dimensions of fragility: economic, environmental, political, security and societal. Here, fragility is defined as “the combination of exposure to risk and insufficient coping capacity of the state, system and/or communities to manage, absorb or mitigate those risks” (OECD, 2016; p. 21). In terms of numbers, over 1.6 billion people, or 22% of the global population, currently live in fragile contexts, and these figures are expected to increase to 3 billion people, or 32% of the global population, by 2050 (OECD, 2016; p. 20-24). The OECD framework is currently the most widely used internationally: the EU, for instance, employs it for programming purposes.

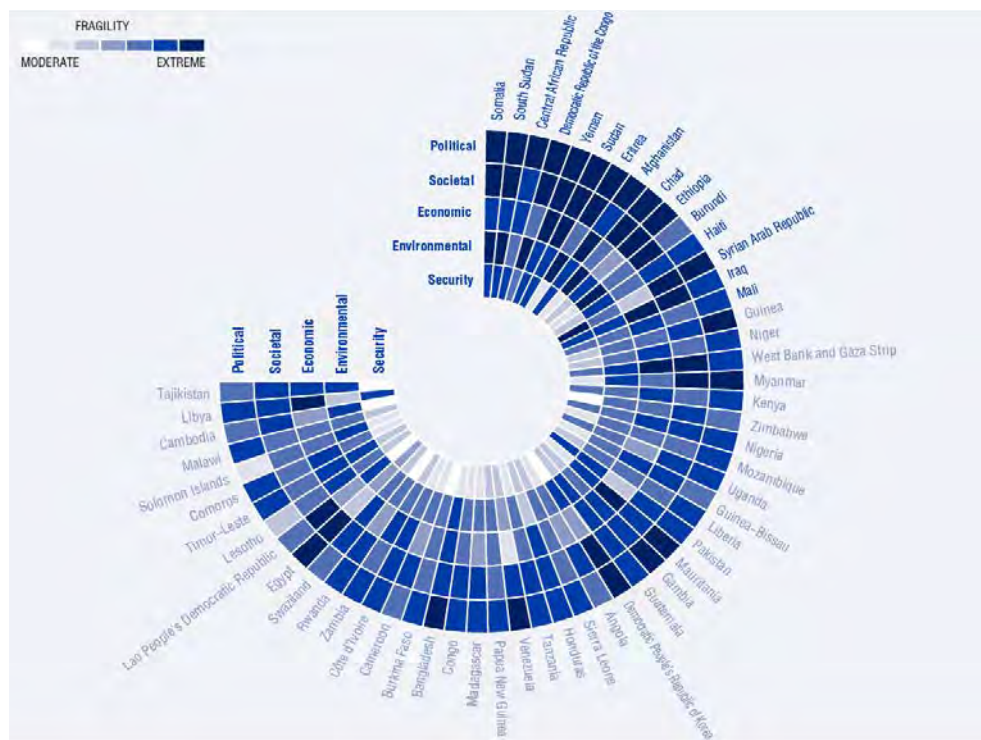


Figure 2
The 2016
OECD
Fragility
Framework
diagram

Source:
OECD (2016)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG, 2015) have given fragile states renewed attention, especially SDG 16 ‘Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions’, where “effective, accountable and inclusive institutions” are mentioned. The debate continues on the theoretical merits of fragile state concepts. These concepts are here to stay, however, because they are instrumental in designing and delivering policies and programmes. To a large extent, therefore, the concept of ‘fragile states’ can be seen as a political concept (Grimm et al., 2014). Labelling countries as ‘failed’, ‘collapsing’, ‘weak’ or ‘fragile’ also risks reflecting more of our ideas and expectations on what a state should do and be, rather than the realities of what governments do and are (Brock et al., 2012). This notwithstanding, debates on state fragility have shown remarkable evolution and, it could be argued, genuine progress. The shift from state failure to fragile contexts, as Putzel puts it, “moves away from a tendency to pathologise states, so common in the failed states discourse, and argues against

applying uniform ‘governance templates’ without taking into account the historically and spatially specific dimensions of fragility” (2010; p. 2-3). All the debates outlined above have resulted in a broad consensus around the fact that fragility is complex and multidimensional, can affect only localized regions within countries and tends to have spill over effects. Rich and middle-income countries can and do suffer from shock or stress factors the same way as poorer countries do. Latin America, for instance, suffers from the highest levels of homicides (OECD, 2016). States of south-eastern US are exposed to environmental hazards like hurricanes in a similar way Caribbean countries are. Also, trends have been identified that show fragility as more localized in big urban settlements, suggesting that debates on fragile states could move to fragile cities (de Boer, 2015). Some projects are also ongoing that aim at producing fragility indexes based on people’s perception at the sub-national level, and these could be better adapted to practical development programming (Hoagland, 2018).

Every country can face fragility concerns. However, not every country withstands stress and recovers from shock the same way. The key to understanding this difference lies in institutions. These provide the framework governing the distribution of resources within a society. Ideally, resources are mobilised from prevention to recovery by predictable institutional mechanisms; decisions are taken and implemented at local, national or international level. Fragility becomes a problem either when decisions are not taken, or when institutions are not adequate to implement them. To investigate these phenomena, the next sections place institutions in a historical perspective.

Methodological Note: Development, Institutions, Political Economy

Research on development and economic growth has been wide, rich and diverse in the past few decades. One broad conclusion emerging from this wealth of knowledge is that institutions matter; they constitute decisive factors for sustained growth and development. Debates have increasingly focused on policy choices, institutional structures, forms of governance and how these respond to colonial legacies, conflicts, geography or natural resource endowment (Adam & Dercon, 2009).

Economic growth and development require functional institutions, and institutions emerge and evolve in specific political and economic environments. The acknowledgment of this fact has served as a call to realism in development thinking. The value for money garnered from the billions of USD of development aid has been contested and critically reviewed, not only by authors like Dambisa Moyo (2009) but within the donor community itself. ‘Political Economy Analysis’ is now widely incorporated in donor programming and guides the delivery of interventions. The idea is that politically informed programmes help ensure better development outcomes, and a wide range of tools and case studies in this regard have emerged in recent years (Mcloughlin, 2014).

The following sections constitute a political economy analysis of institutions and institutional change. This analytical framework has been developed in particular by North, Wallis and Weingast (2009) and previous work, like North (1990). The framework considers political and economic institutions as forms of social order that structure interaction within societies and between communities. These orders evolve through the competition and cooperation of social organisations representing the interests of individuals, elites and other groups in society. The development of accountable institutions is regarded as a question of access to political and economic organizations

within society at large, i.e. not limited to specific groups and elites. The framework is of great interest to development theory in general, and to the analysis of fragility in particular. Acemoglu and Robinson (2012), for instance, employ this framework in their analysis of inclusive vs extractive institutions as factors of relative power, wealth and poverty. The analysis in this paper is based on these premises. It starts by introducing rents and patronage systems as the standard form of governance in recorded human history. It continues by examining how the modern state and world economy emerged and got structured in Europe and elsewhere. It further illustrates the links between colonisation and state fragility and it ends with an overview of fragility today, with pertinent issues and recommendations for the work on resilience as a pathway out of fragility.

Violence, Rents and Patronage: The 'default social outcome'

The Neolithic revolution is perhaps the biggest turning point in the history of mankind. Around 12,000 years BCE, small communities of 20-50 nomadic hunter-gatherers began to settle down in different world regions and to rely more and more on farming and breeding for their subsistence. At the end of the Neolithic revolution, as Keeley (1996) notes, the homo sapiens sapiens ceased to be an endangered species and became a threatening one. Over the course of several thousand years, as more food became available and stocked, communities began to increase in number, reaching hundreds, and to trade more systematically with each other.

These communities also had to be wary of one another. In his account of primitive wars, Keeley (1996) shows that defence and aggression were a shared responsibility within the community; farmers were warriors too, and war was a constant feature of life. Archaeological findings suggest that societies used to live in a constant state of low-intensity conflict, marked by episodic raids and pillages, more likely during economic downturns. Prehistoric wars were "total wars with limited means" (Keeley, 1996; chap. 5). The difference between WWII and prehistoric wars, in this account, lies essentially in logistics and in the productive capacity that societies can mobilize for the war effort. The image of war as a chess match between armies, indirectly involving societies and economies, is both very recent and essentially limited to the conflicts between modern states and their armies. In prehistoric societies, military assets were dispersed and military responsibilities were widely shared.

Innovations in food production, combined with organizational advantages opened up by the development of writing, led to the possibility of structuring a society that consists of more than a few hundred people. Specialization and division of labour within larger and more complex societies led to differences in wealth, status and power. It also meant that military assets could be put under the control of violence specialists. Defence from external threats and aggression against external enemies remained paramount concerns for the group's survival. A new problem arose, however, on how to deal with violence from within. The issue, in other words, was how to ensure that competition between powerful individuals and groups within a society did not result in its collapse.

North, Wallis and Weingast (2009) argue that the standard way societies have dealt with this problem in history is to limit access to economic opportunities and political representation to specific individuals and groups, namely the elite with the power to influence a given society's organisation and possibly its disruption. 'Limited access orders' are thereby generated, where economic opportunities are created and distributed among the elite (or the 'dominant coalition', as they put it) in the form of rents. The same elite is widely represented in political decision-making processes. North (1990) defines institutions as the "rules of the game"; they provide a set of rules for the interactions of elites taking place through specific economic and political organizations. Wealth, and the possibility to translate it into political influence, gives the dominant coalition credible incentives to support the system and to refrain from violence that would disrupt it. The state slowly emerges as an organization of organizations, sustained by an institutional architecture that, in turn, it guarantees and enforces. This elite-based framework does not prevent forms of social inclusion. These, however, follow patron-client patterns based on personal contacts and trust. The trickle down of wealth and opportunities through patronage helps ensure social stability and some form of legitimacy.

Elite politics, rents and patronage represent the 'default social outcome' in recorded human history: institutions can evolve in their complexity, impersonality and inclusion, but they tend to go back to default after internal or external shocks. Rents and patronage proved compatible with sophisticated forms of governance and with technological and scientific progress. For thousands of years, elites in city states, kingdoms and empires sustained their power by controlling trade routes and methods of production and exchange through effective administrative systems. Wealth and power were translated into complex art, architectural and engineering works. Science and technology flourished in leading research centres like Baghdad, Cairo or Samarkand. Frankopan (2015) argues that Central Asia and the Middle East provided the engine for global historical developments. The region was a hub of networks where luxury goods were traded, armies clashed and diseases spread across continents. This region gave birth to the biggest land empires in history; the Caliphate and the Mongol empires controlled vast territory and the region also hosts the most ancient polity, China. The stability ensured by these regional hegemonies allowed transcontinental exchanges to flourish, science and philosophy to be cultivated as well as art, architecture and engineering to be showcased.

The wealth and power base of these systems, however, proved incapable of withstanding the hegemonic rise of Europe. The political landscape of the European continent, unlike elsewhere in Eurasia, had been highly fragmented and competitive since the fall of the Roman Empire in the 5th century AD. Fragmentation and competition brought about conflict and war, but also growth and innovation in technologies and institutions. Still in 1500, Europe had no substantial strength compared with the Caliphate, China and the Moghul Empire (Kennedy, 1988; chap. 1). Through successive waves of expansion and colonisation, however, a handful of European countries took control of world trade routes and strategic territories. History offers a rich showcase for the rise and fall of empires, and Europe is no exception in this regard. European exceptionalism was the fact that a regional competition resulted in the expansion of a normative and institutional order, from one limited region to the entire world. The next sections look at the development of the modern state and global economy, two interconnected phenomena with a strong European footprint.

State-building and World Economy: The European Footprint

The Thirty Years' War, waged by all major European powers between 1618 and 1648, was a mass-scale bloodshed of exceptional proportions. Roughly one-third of the entire German population was wiped out by violence, famines and epidemics, and whole regions were almost entirely depopulated. The war effort exhausted all economies, and although it was fought mainly in Central Europe, military operations were extended outside the continent and stretched from South America to Asia. Some scholars speak of the war as the first world war in history (Kennedy, 1988; chap. 2). The war ended with a system of treaties known as the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which sanctioned the principles of state sovereignty and of non-interference in a state's internal affairs.

The formal recognition of this territorial decision-making authority lies at the heart of modern statehood and at the center of the world's political division into sovereign units called states (Schmitt, 1950; p. 141-147). Concerned in preventing another total war in Europe, and conscious that no power was strong enough to reach continental hegemony, the Europeans set the stage for a world order based on sovereignty, national interest and the balance of power (Kissinger, 1994; chap. 3, and 2014; chap 1). Power was given legitimacy regardless of any moral or religious assumption, as was the case in China or in the Caliphate at the time. Sovereigns were those who controlled a given territory and whose authority was recognized by other sovereigns with the same characteristics. In his classic formulation, Max Weber (1919) defines the state as "a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory". The historical significance of the Peace of Westphalia lies in the fact that state sovereignty still constitutes the legal basis for the world's political organization (Murphy, 1999; Ruggie, 1993).

In reconstructing the historical trajectory of modern statehood and sovereignty, however, the system of interstate relations is only one side of the story. In fact, the emergence of territorial units under centralized control had to pass through long processes of domestic consolidation. The competitive international context provided domestic actors with immediate incentives, as funds and soldiers were permanent stays in military planning. On the one hand, this facilitated the emergence of centralized tax and administrative systems. On the other, it led to the dependence of royal governments on external sources of funding. The emergence of an independent financial system in Europe, which then contributed to the structure of the modern world economy, was strongly boosted by European kings' need for credit. With notions and practices of public finance management still in the making, there were few other options outside of relying on financial markets for credit. Kings could, and often did, declare bankruptcy and ruin their creditors in the process. As soon as further credit was needed, however, their reputation made it less easy to obtain, and they would often do so at higher interest rates. Kennedy (1988) shows that the evolution of the modern market economy and the dynamics of state centralization were symbiotic processes; states provided law and order, businesses ensured public revenue and armies and navies were employed by mercantilist policies. Power and trade complemented each other, the distinction between economics and politics was blurred: Europe's rise to world domination was essentially a public-private partnership.

In the 19th century economic development became a matter of national interest. Economic policies were designed to strengthen the position of national economies on the international arena: domestic tariffs were removed to harmonize internal

markets; infrastructure was developed; strategic industrial sectors were protected; banking systems were reorganised for national investment and mass education improved human capital and labour productivity (Allen, 2011; chap. 1). Boosted by the UK example, the world economy became increasingly sophisticated and interdependent. In the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution, Western states achieved what North, Wallis and Weingast (2009) call the “incorporation of the masses”. Not only were voting rights progressively extended to larger segments of the population, but access to economic and political organizations ceased to be a privilege enjoyed only by elites. Workers could form trade unions and social conflicts were progressively institutionalised by parliamentary representation. Welfare state policies are direct results of the inclusion of the masses in politics and economics. They helped sustain the legitimacy and stability of the existing order even in the context of rising inequalities.

The emergence of Western democracies represented a substantial departure from previous institutional frameworks based on rents and patronage. Elite and great power competition, business interests as well as national and class conflicts intertwined over the course of several centuries to produce a relatively stable and inclusive social order. Different historical legacies place fragile states in a different position, with institutions instead facilitating predatory politics and economics.

The Global Economy, Colonialism and Decolonisation

Colonialism was another major factor in the trajectory of the global economy. South America experienced Spanish and Portuguese occupation in the 16th and 17th centuries, as the European powers needed it for its mining resources. In Asia and Africa, Western powers competed mainly for monopoly through coastal bases. Large-scale territorial occupations began only in the second half of the 19th century. Different systems of colonial governance were based on the same objective: the extraction of resources, labour and essentially anything providing value. The organisation of this extractive enterprise resulted in political and economic institutions that outlived specific dominant groups. Institutions are path-dependent, North (1990) argues, because they frame people’s expectations and arrange sets of constraints and opportunities for social interaction.

Institutions change incrementally through an evolutionary process, and are often adapted to new circumstances. This explains why post-colonial institutions reflected colonial realities and were generally adapted to new conditions and opportunities. Spanish conquistadores, for example, used the institution of the *encomienda* to organize slave labour: Spanish settlers – the *encomenderos* – were allotted a town, and the indigenous people had to give them tribute, labour and crops at fixed prices. These institutions persisted until the 20th century (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012; p. 13-19). Guatemala provides another case in point: the *Consulado* was the organization in charge of economic development there. It actively blocked the building of roads and infrastructures; far from irrational, it was an effective form of rent management based on price control over agricultural commodities. When coffee became a valuable staple in the 1870s, the *Consulado* reverted to land grabbing and forced labour for coffee production (*ibid.*, p. 345-351).

State-building in post-colonial contexts used former colonial organizations as a starting point. Nowhere more than in Africa did this process unfold more clearly.

Before 1500, African societies were less politically centralized than those in Europe, Asia or Latin America. There were rich and powerful kingdoms all over the continent, ones that did not necessarily compete extensively for the control of territory, resources or trade. Sub-Saharan Africa was linked to the outside world mainly through the trade of gold and slaves. In Western Africa, the Ghana, Mali and Songhai empires exported gold to Europe through Arab middlemen. In the South, the city-state of Zimbabwe (which gives the current state its name) prospered by controlling the gold trade on the Indian Ocean (Coquery-Vidrovitch, 2011; p. 87-94).

Perhaps nothing like the transatlantic slave trade had a deeper impact on Africa. Between 1700 and 1850, an estimated 11 million people were exported as slaves, countless others suffered the raids of slave suppliers. The slave industry became by far the most profitable business, affecting the political economy of the whole continent (Coquery-Vidrovitch, 2011; chaps. 6-7). The slave trade was not a European invention. The Arabs had traded slaves across East and West Africa for centuries. The revolution in the slave business, however, came with the huge demand from the European sugar industry in South America and the Caribbean. Western and Central Africa were soon integrated into the world economy: African rulers were quick to jump onto this business opportunity, and converted themselves into slave suppliers. The Kingdom of Kongo in Central-East Africa, Oyo in Nigeria, Dahomey in Benin and the Asante in Ghana became essentially slaving states, whose elites' fortune and survival depended on their performance on the slave market (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012; p. 250-260). The end of the transatlantic slave trade route in the 19th century did not end slavery. The business was reorganised and adapted. The West African state of Asante, for instance, stopped selling slaves and began settling them in large plantations. Their agricultural outputs were then sold in legitimate commerce. Slavery appears to have expanded in Africa in the 19th century, and continued into the 20th century (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012; p. 250-258, 58-60; Bales, 1999; chap. 3).

European powers were scantily interested in the political control of Africa before the second half of the 19th century. The 'scramble for Africa' was essentially an extension of European conflicts (Lowe, 1988; p. 49-63). About 10,000 polities were divided into 40 colonies that Europeans distributed among themselves and whose boundaries they negotiated at the Berlin conference of 1884-85. There were differences in colonial systems. However, in much of Africa, Meredith (2005; p. 5-6) notes that the colonial imprint was barely noticeable: in the Nigeria of the 1930s, less than 400 UK colonial administrators ruled over a population of 20 million people; a staff of 385 officers served in the whole French West Africa with a population of 15 million; in 1936 the Belgians ran the Congo with 728 administrators. The provision of basic services was poor to non-existent. As such, non-state actors like religious missions often provided basic education.

The development of local elite was generally opposed and locals were excluded from public administration. One consequence of this was the lack of competent staff once the Europeans left. In Congo at independence, for instance, there were 30 university graduates and 136 children that had secondary education, out of a population of 20 million (Meredith, 2005; 93-115). Until the 1940s, colonial powers subcontracted authority and territorial control to local chiefs they could trust, and they were given extensive power over land management. This was, literally, empire on the cheap. Infrastructure was built only for natural resources to reach ports and international markets; neither infrastructure nor fiscal policies were put in place to develop modern economies and social services. The inclusion of the local masses

“The lines of patronage radiated out from presidencies to regions, districts and villages. At each level, ‘big men’ worked the system, providing followers and friends with jobs, contracts and favours in exchange for political support (...). Throughout Africa, the politics of patronage and patrimonial rule became a common political pattern” (Meredith, 2005; p. 169).

into political and economic life, as was slowly taking place in Europe, did not extend to Africa.

Newly independent countries in Asia would rely on institutions and traditions that supported public administration. South America witnessed slow yet substantial reduction of inequality and exclusion in the second half of the 20th century. None of this was to be found in Africa after centuries of depredation by external actors and local partners. Since the political movements of the 1940s, student associations and trade unions mushroomed throughout the continent, demanding equality, accountable government and self-determination (Cooper F., 2002; chap. 2-3). Decolonisation offered genuine hopes for justice and development. However, these hopes were soon to encounter the harsh realities of strongmen and patronage networks. Democratic institutions were proclaimed but parliaments were filled with party supporters; government jobs, contracts and licences were given as a result of personal ties; the allocation of infrastructure and development projects followed similar considerations and trends.

Particularly disliked in colonial times were the marketing boards, where agricultural products were sold at fixed prices. The justification was that farmers were protected from price variations on volatile international markets. The reality was that these boards were an indirect taxation on food production and dwarfed incentives to invest in agricultural productivity (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012; p. 338). Trade unions and political movements fought hard against colonial marketing boards. Post-colonial governments maintained them, declaring national development as their progressive aim. The possibilities offered by marketing board revenues were fully exploited by autocratic leaders, from idealist Pan-Africans like Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah to ruthless dictators like Sierra Leone's Saka Stevens (Cooper F., 2002; chap. 4).

Colonial legacies do not bring about deterministic outcomes. Botswana, Costa Rica, Singapore or, more recently, Rwanda prove that relatively stable, accountable and legitimate orders can evolve from colonialism. In a common pattern for fragile states, however, decolonisation resulted in a change of guard, not in institutional change. Those presiding over the extraction of national resources were now locals, instead of foreigners, but the institutions they use largely kept a colonial footprint.

Post-colonial and Fragile States

Newly independent states were created in critical conditions. New elites inherited weak administrations and poor infrastructure, but also the control over national resources, assets and customs. The sovereignty of these new states was sanctioned and protected internationally by the UN system, the two Cold War superpowers and, in its former colonies, by France (Verschave, 1998). The Cold War engaged the US and the Soviet Union in a global competition, where newly founded states were encased in their sphere of influence. It was not a difficult task to find interested partners, as friendly regimes received substantial economic and military aid. As Brock et al. note, "the international society, led by the UN, and backed by the United States and the Soviet Union, in effect issued a life insurance policy (...): no matter how weak you are, no matter how comprehensively unable you may be to create order, security, welfare and freedom, we confirm your right to independence within existing colonial borders" (2012; p. 37).

As for Europe, however, the international context was only part of the story in the development of the state. Domestic factors were equally important. The two dimensions, international and domestic, cannot be understood in isolation. In particular, the bargaining power of local elites was further empowered by their sovereign status. This gave them access to international organizations, economic aid and mining licences. African leaders became 'gatekeepers for foreign companies', providing businesses with access and legitimacy (Meredith, 2005; p. 698; Brock et al., 2012; p. 35). Their services would not come free of charge. The Cold War provided security rents while international markets offered economic opportunities. To some extent, this had a stabilizing effect. Ruling elites could get revenues for public and private consumption, and patronage networks could be sustained. There were disruptive effects too, however: gate keeping states provided incentives for infighting because controlling the government meant managing the gate. While the elites in power struggled to keep their monopoly, competing groups, regional movements, criminal networks and rebels engaged to disrupt it (Cooper F., 2002; p. 361-365).

The struggle for the gate turned the state into a source of domestic insecurity in an international context of relative peace. In a reversal of the European experience, anarchy and insecurity were moved from the international to the domestic level. The search for security was pursued either by attempts to control the state or through secession. Whenever the state becomes a danger, then a security paradox emerges where weak national armies cause less insecurity. Self-help becomes the norm for public service delivery, often along community or ethnic lines as sources of trust. These processes consolidate the weaknesses of public structures and state fragility evolves as a self-reinforcing mechanism.

African governments faced serious troubles in the 1970s and 1980s. The oil crisis of 1973 abruptly decreased Western demand for commodities, and security rents declined substantially in the 1980s with the Cold War slowly coming to an end in 1991. 36 African governments signed agreements with the IMF or the World Bank. More than USD \$200 billion reached Africa in the 1980s and the 1990s (Meredith, 2005; 368-377). Financial aid was tied to reforms and austerity measures. There is little doubt that 'structural adjustment' programmes corroborated pre-existing stress fault-lines and had negative long-term impacts on economic growth, political stability and social cohesion (Stiglitz, 2002). Budgetary crises forced leaders to focus on short-term survival by fomenting divisions and manipulating the reforms. Privatisation became an innovative instrument of rent distribution, as public assets were sold to political cronies. The same institutional set of constraints and opportunities that led to market failures provided ample ways to avoid reform. These measures were short-lived, as central governments grew weaker and incentives consolidated to challenge them. (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012; chap 22; de Waal, 2015; p. 44-46, 182).

De Waal (2015) calls the 1990s an "inter-rentier period", when Cold War security rents had elapsed but post-9/11 rents, linked to the 'war on terror,' were yet to begin. The weakness of central governments decreased the costs of fighting them. Competitors would seek to replace them in their centralized, monopolistic position, or they would try to dismantle the monopoly altogether by disrupting central authority. What emerged in the 1990s was then a deregulated bargaining over access to government rents and public resources. As de Waal puts it, "patronage-based political orders should not be treated as a phenomenon that is passing into history, then contrasted with globalization as the way of the future. Patronage and globalization are not in fact opposites: the two evolve together" (2015, p. 195).

Situations of fragility and the collapse of state institutions emerged in the 1990s because the monopoly of central governments over state assets and financial flows could be challenged. And challenged it was. In some cases, state collapse turned into a profitable business. Charles Taylor's estimated turnover in Liberia was USD \$400 million per year between 1992 and 1996 (Berdal & Malone, eds., 2000; p. 5). Elsewhere, warring parties set up quasi-feudal economies based on tight control over exchanges and the disruption of wider market integration, on the looting and trading of natural resources and on the appropriation of humanitarian aid. These resources were commodities on globalized markets where licit and illicit arms procurement also take place (Cooper N., 2002; Duffield, 2001; p. 156-159; Duffield, 2000; Collier, 2007; chaps. 2-5; Ladini, 2010a). Moreover, an estimated USD \$50 billion evades Africa each year through commercial tax evasion by multinationals, money laundering, corruption and theft of state assets (De Waal, 2015; p. 177-179).

These predatory behaviours are possible and profitable because institutional mechanisms are not in place to keep them in check and increase their costs. State fragility and collapse emerged in the 1990s as a functioning form of governance for the appropriation and trade of resources. The problem with this form of organization is that it sustains short-term gains for power groups at the expense of structural, long-term needs of wider populations. In particular, fragile states are dysfunctional with regards to protection from violence, economic shocks and natural hazards.

Conclusion: Fragile States Today, Pertinent Issues and Ways Forward

The fragility indexes highlighted in Section 2 of this paper include different African countries. This paper has attempted to explain this phenomenon as a result of poor institutions and historical legacies. Sections 3-4, in particular, outlined a political economy framework for the analysis of institutions and institutional change. To understand fragility concerns today, it is worth looking into the conditions that led to their emergence. The next sections examined modern state-building and the structuring of the world economy as symbiotic phenomena.

Modern state-building followed a very different path in Europe than elsewhere. In all contexts, however, local and global governance were closely linked. In Europe and the West, the interaction between local actors and global factors evolved into relatively stable, inclusive and legitimate orders: modern democracies (Section 5). In typical fragile states, sections 6-7 argued, colonial legacies facilitated predatory behaviours on local resources by domestic and external actors. Institutional fragility represented a return to the 'default social outcome' of rents and patronage introduced in Sections 3-4. This return to default takes a most violent form when state structures collapse altogether. Violence and predation notwithstanding, institutional fragility and state collapse represent forms of governance. Additionally, differences in history and geography notwithstanding, current fragile states share some common features:

- i. Domestic insecurity. They are exposed to credible risks of violence and armed conflict, affecting personal safety and investment decisions.
- ii. Lack of government legitimacy and poor public service delivery. Public trust towards government institutions is low, and the delivery of order and justice, health, education and social protection is weak. Situations of high polarization

result when governments play an active role in conflicts, or limit access to public resources to specific groups.

- iii. Poor business environment. Weak access to justice and contract enforceability makes doing business in fragile states a risky enterprise. Access to credit, if any, is reduced and those allowed abide by higher interest rates. Poor institutions and infrastructure dwarf local initiative through high transaction costs.
- iv. High exposure to economic shocks. Economic vulnerability extends from macroeconomic indicators down to micro-level household circumstances. This has a negative impact on the state's capacity to withstand economic, environmental and political shock events. Likewise, households cannot cope with reduced income or displacement caused by natural or man-made crises.

The last point was made apparent in the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008-2009. The crisis originated in the US and quickly extended to Europe. Fragile states were thought to be less affected by the crisis, thanks in part to their low level of integration with US and European capital markets. These conclusions proved wrong. The crisis was transmitted to the real economy through a reduction in exports, lower migrant remittances, decreased foreign direct investment and a reduced tax base. Jobs were lost and households were put under increased stress. The EU, among other donors, reacted in 2009 by setting up the Vulnerability Flex mechanism. For the period 2009-10, EUR 500 million were allocated for grants to fragile countries, in particular to allow for priority spending in social sectors (European Report on Development 2009, chap. 6). The magnitude of the economic crisis was amplified by a food crisis and a hike in fuel prices. It could not be countered with the limited resources available for short periods of time, itself received from donors also facing the crisis domestically.

A point that this paper has stressed is the global dimension of fragile states and their integration in the world economy. Not only are fragile states dependent on external aid because of weak capacity in domestic resource mobilisation, they also suffer from poor global governance. It was noted that USD \$50 billion is estimated to leave Africa illegally every year. This is made possible by flaws in international regimes set up against illicit financial flows and corruption. Similarly, the looting of minerals and natural resources is profitable because these goods are able to reach global markets and get accounted for as legitimate commerce. Agriculture provides the main source of income for fragile states' populations, but subventions and terms of trade have historically favoured European and US farmers. Counter-terrorism efforts provide support to governments without considering how those governments were perceived by their respective public. In all these cases, fragility sources extend beyond fragile states and have ripple effects globally.

External and global factors, however, should not obscure the relevance of domestic agency. Political economy frameworks, introduced in Sections 3-4 and employed in Sections 5-7, show the active role of domestic actors in responding to constraints and opportunities, and in shaping and adapting institutions in the process. Global environments and historical legacies are contextual factors that do not determine domestic outcomes. There are example of states and regions that, based on colonial legacies, natural resources and low income levels, 'should' be trapped in downward spirals of poverty, corruption and predatory behaviours like their neighbours. But they are not. Botswana, Costa Rica, Singapore or Rwanda all emerged successfully

from colonial rule, some of them from war and ethnic cleansing. They now constitute islands of relative stability, growth and increasing accountability. The reason for this relative success is that their institutions provide incentives for cooperation and nonviolent competition; virtuous circles are so sustained where inclusion and representation, accountability for public service, growth and wider tax base link up. External development actors can assist and support the process but domestic constituencies and political leadership are in the driver's seat of reform efforts. It seems worth mentioning that, according to the economist Hernando de Soto (2000), the value of assets and savings among the poor in low-income countries is significantly higher than foreign investment or development aid. Due to poor legal systems, however, these assets and savings cannot be used as collateral to access proper credit: in de Soto's terminology, the result is 'dead capital', funds that exist but remain untapped. Critical work seems then to be needed domestically to build better institutions, reliable legal systems as well as wider and innovative access to credit.

Debates on fragility show that fragility issues are here to stay, and that additional risks are coming from demographic and environmental changes. It can be argued that, following these debates, policy responses to state fragility have improved since the early 2000s (von Einsiedel, 2005). It is now commonly accepted that complex and context-specific combinations of political, economic and environmental risks call for equivalent coping strategies. Resilience frameworks have emerged as the natural response to fragility across all its features: domestic insecurity, government legitimacy, public service delivery, business environment and economic vulnerability. The OECD 'Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States & Situations' (2007) and the 'New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States (IDPS, 2011) are examples of positive international efforts in this sense. Budget support programmes for fragile states, like the EU's State and Resilience Building Contracts, are also interesting forms of engagement as they aim to reinforce the capacity of the state in meeting public needs and expectations by focusing on accountable public spending. Working with, not around, governments seems the key to reach home-grown and incentive-compatible solutions with local coalitions of political, business and social organizations (Commission on State Fragility, Growth and Development, 2018).

There is more than state-building in the resilience agenda, however. As indicated above, tackling fragility and resilience would require substantial changes in how the global economy is organised. In a more limited yet still challenging setting, international donors have to learn to better cooperate and work with each other, especially when they come from different corporate cultures, principles of engagement, procurement and contractual frameworks. Discussions on policy coherence, linking relief rehabilitation and development, disaster risk management, conflict-sensitive programming, the 'humanitarian-development-peace nexus' all reflect a shared understanding that aid has to be thought of and delivered differently, in a more integrated manner, to ensure positive outcomes. One way or another, these outcomes should point to the graduation of vulnerable states, communities and households out of fragility into self-sustainable resilience. Fragile states, this paper argues, are forms of governance that are dysfunctional in their efforts to meet public needs and to deliver public services. Working towards resilience as a pathway out of fragility means promoting a different form of governance. This would be based on better access to global markets, on accountable political institutions and on inclusive economic systems.

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Agentic Governance in Africa: Managing the Tension between Dependence and Self-Reliance

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Keywords

Agency in
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Abstract

Several governance discourses on Africa are fraught with lamentations about how Africa is being manipulated to remain dependent on the Global North (and more recently, parts of the Global East). This viewpoint is complemented by assertions on why Africa should instead isolate itself in order to be self-reliant, giving no room for external influence. This stands in counterpose to the globalist prescription which argues that Africa's development lies only in its greater integration into the global political economy, resulting in various forms of dependence on and interdependence with other systems outside Africa. Seen from some perspectives, each of these positions is an extreme option and the pull towards either of them results in tension. But how practical and sustainable is isolationism in the massively globalized and almost technologically borderless 21st century in which several existential challenges are shared across continents? Additionally, how best can Africa manage the fears of vulnerability and the need for interdependence in the same century of increased options for the continent's self-reliance? This paper demonstrates how more agency in governance is necessary for a careful management of the tension between dependence and self-reliance in 21st century Africa. It argues that the degree of dependence, vulnerability and self-reliance of Africa varies from one sector to another, with the implication that to manage the perceived tension, Africa needs to (i) maximize obvious opportunities of self-reliance without waiting on external assistance; (ii) accept its vulnerability, weakness and dependence when those are the only available options; and (iii) leverage available opportunities of interdependence and partnership.

Introduction

Several contemporary discourses on governance and development in Africa have focused on illustrating how pre-colonial principles of governance in Africa were very unique (Nyerere, 1971; Wiredu, 1980, 1998, 1999, 2007, 2008; Masolo, 1994; Metz, 2007, 2015, 2017; Ajei, 2016; Lauer, 2017). What has largely remained unassessed and therefore poorly articulated is the question of agency in terms of self-efficacy and performance of the continent. This paper presupposes that the time has come to move from discourse on identity presentation and justification, to discourses of self-efficacy and performance of Africans in Africa for Africa and the world. The first type of discourse invests massive efforts to craft and describe who Africans are and what unique cultural heritages they have; whereas the second assesses what Africans should do, as well as why and where they should be held responsible for their developmental state.

This paper theoretically assesses the question of agentic governance in Africa and applies the results of that assessment to respond to the fact that most discourses on governance in Africa are fraught with lamentations about how Africa, instead of being self-reliant, is being manipulated to remain dependent on the Global North (and more recently, parts of the Global East). This stands in counterpose to the globalist prescription and pull towards greater integration into the global political economy, resulting in various forms of dependence and interdependence on agents outside Africa. Seen from some perspectives, each of these positions is an extreme option, and the pull towards either of them results in tension. But how practical and sustainable is isolationism in the massively globalized and almost borderless 21st century in which several existential challenges are shared across continents?

Additionally, how best can Africa manage the fears of vulnerability and the need for interdependence in the same century of increased options available for the continent's self-reliance? To respond to these questions, this paper demonstrates how more agentic governance is necessary for a careful management of the tension between dependence and self-reliance in 21st century Africa.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Conceptualizations of the terms “agent” and “agency” cut across at least three disciplines: Philosophy, Sociology and Psychology. It is particularly within these three disciplines that scholars have tried to address the questions about rational theory of action, normativist theory of social order, degree of autonomy of individual actors, the interface between actors and their environment(s)/ social structures, the extent actors can change/alter their environment(s), and so on. The term ‘agentic’ is derived from ‘agent’ which itself is rooted in a Latin word, *agere*, *agens*, which means ‘to do/act’. The term agency is related to other such terms as self-determination, capacity (Meyer & Jepperson, 2000), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), causal conception and recognition of the self (Haggard & Tsakiris, 2009), creativity (Joas, 1996), purposiveness, intentionality, goal-directedness (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998), freedom and choice (Sartre 1996), responsibility (Sartre 1996; Haggard & Tsakiris, 2009), willful and undetermined to make decisions and enact them (see Campbell 2009) among others. Dietz and Burns (1992: 187) defined agency as “effective, intentional, unconstrained and reflexive action by individual or collective actors”. According to Haggard and Tsakiris (2009), it refers to a person's ability to control their actions and, through them, events in the external world, suggesting that it is “a special case of causation in which one is oneself the cause of an external event” (Haggard & Tsakiris, 2009: 243).

What is common in most discourses about agency is that it is conceptualized as a given, whereas it is instead a construct and continues to be constructed (Dietz & Burns, 1992; Meyer & Jepperson, 2000; Bandura, 2001). Meyer and Jepperson (2000) gave a historical assessment and perspective to the issue of social construction of agency from the angle of what they termed ‘modern actor’. According to them, many social theories of action take it for granted that modern actors – either as individuals, organizations, nation states, and so on – are “autochthonous and natural entities, no longer really embedded in culture” (Meyer & Jepperson, 2000: 100). Against this view, they contend that the development of the ‘agent’ in Europe is traceable to the taming and demystification of nature through the extraordinary development, expansion and authority of science, which in turn resulted in the marginalization or purging of animist and spiritual forces and the birth of a scientific outlook. This whole process, according to Meyer and Jepperson, can be understood as a rationalization process in which pictures of the natural world, the spiritual world, and the society are constantly expanded to recognize sets of entities and relations with functions and legitimate interests. The whole process boiled down to a situation Meyer and Jepperson (2000: 105) describe as:

God took leave of time and space as its anthropomorphic qualities decline. God does not so much die (contrary to Nietzsche), but is deadened in the sense of greatly reduced agency... With the increasing transcendence and inertness of god, agency and authority are relocated immanently in society's structures and rationales. Some agency is built into [the] modern picture of the agentic authority and responsibility of the state and other organizations; much devolves to the modern individual, who is empowered with more and more godlike authority and vision.

The whole process in Western ontology described above is such that the human actor – individuals, organizations, states – carries the responsibility of the human project since the gods, other spiritual forces, ancestors and/or an animated nature had been drained of agency through the process of rationalization.

Rationalization led to differentiation, while differentiation at the levels of the individual, organization and state resulted in the construction of various modes of agency and of the agent. Thus, for instance, global and regional complexities, differentiations and conflicts are the roots of what is understood today by nation-states acting as rational actors. Similarly, as social and individual actors gradually attain recognition as entities, they acquire some standing, function and responsibility and then become “agents of higher principles”, just as “structured social organizations arise to pursue with great legitimacy such validated individual and collective purposes and responsibilities” (Meyer & Jepperson, 2000: 105). These responsibilities result in various features of the modern agentic actor. These features are:

- i. Agency for self: This involves being an agent for oneself and for one’s own interest. It is the idea behind actorhood;
- ii. Agency for others (or otherhood): This is the form of modern agency in which individual actors shift from being actors for themselves to become actors/agents for others, whereby these ‘others’ can be other individuals, states, organizations and so on. Good examples of this are circumstances in which individuals agree to serve as consultants to others; organizations offer agentic capabilities to groups and states; and nation-states are willing to provide assistance to relatively weaker states, all of which result in collaborations for collective activities;
- iii. Agency for entities that are not actors: This feature of modern agency involves the mobilization of actors – individuals, organizations and nation-states – on behalf of non-actors such as the ecosystem, animals, plants, dying languages, fetuses, species with risk of extinction etc; and
- iv. Agency for principles: In this case, modern actors take up legitimized responsibilities to act as agents for an imagined natural and moral law/order. This feature of agency involves becoming “purely agents of principles”, and Meyer and Jepperson (2000:108) further described it as a “priestly stance”, with the implication that “moral and legal theorists pursue and develop abstract models independent of any practical interest”.

These classifications provided the basis for the position that, as nature continues to be rationalized, there is the constant discovery of new collective problems. The latter complicates the agentic pursuit of solutions to these problems as much as it fuels “the sweeping collective action of the modern system” (Meyer & Jepperson, 2000: 114). For the above reasons, Meyer and Jepperson (2000) held that agency is not a given, but necessarily socially constructed such that within the image they created of the origins for collective agency, there is a firm ground for the logic of collective action that then itself grounds regional, international and continental cooperation. The African Union is one such cooperation, and its treaties, agreements, instruments and structures are meant to enhance the realization of its goals as an agent.

The question of collective action is not as simple as it may seem. Gilbert (2010) explained that there are three approaches to it: there is the 'personal' approach, which involves each of those involved in the collective action appealing to the intentions of the others, such that in relation to the joint goal, each person is able to say 'I personally intend to/that'. Secondly, there is the 'we-intentions' approach, in which in unison those involved in the collective action make statements such as 'we intend to' or 'we intend that'. The third approach, championed by Gilbert, holds that rather than the personal or we-intentions, what lies at the heart of collective action is the idea of 'joint commitment', which is in several senses a contractual approach to the issues that necessitated the coming together in the first place. In this last approach, each of those involved in the collective action make decisions in relation to their reasons for coming together. By making such decisions, which are to be expressed mutually as common knowledge, those involved impose a kind of normative constraint upon themselves such that the commitment is binding unless it is intentionally revoked. One of the mutual expressions that can be involved in a joint commitment is the process of agreement. Thus, the joint commitment approach to collective action implies that "the making of an agreement is the making of a particular kind of joint commitment", which should remain valid and binding on the ground that "which the parties create together they must revoke together" (Gilbert, 2010: 72). It also comes with the implication that as long as it cannot be unilaterally rescinded by any of those involved in the commitment without some general common understanding, the parties owe each other conformity to the commitment. This commitment can become a type of structure that then guides actions.

Most discussions about the question of agency in the field of sociology, since Max Weber and Talcott Parsons, have carefully delineated between agency (or the agent) and structure. Whereas the agent was mostly conceptualized around the individual actor, the structure or environment is conceptualized to include whatever factors that can limit, influence, enable or constrain the opportunities that actors have in order to control or guide their behaviors. In response to the view that human actions are particularly determined by their environments, Joas (1996) drew attention to the idea of creativity in human actions. According to him, the two predominant models of human actions, namely "rational action and normatively oriented action" in several ways over-emphasize the influence of structures, and in the process downplay the ability of humans to creatively surmount these structures thanks to a third dimension of human actions, called the "creative dimension" (1996: 4). In related but more elaborate terms that emphasize this creative and structure-surmounting perspective to agency, Emirbayer and Mische (1998: 964, 970) defined agency as:

an internally complex temporal dynamic... [t]he temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments – the temporal-relational contexts of action – which, through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgement, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive responses to the problems posed by changing historical situations.

These contexts of construction or embeddedness constitute various structures that can, at different points, constrain or enable contexts of action. The temporal features/dimensions of human agency imply various 'agentic orientations.' Hence, actors can be said to be oriented toward the past, the future, or the present; they can, however, switch between or recompose these orientations such that one who at one point in his/her life orients towards past experiences can, at another moment, orient towards the present, and so on.

The temporal orientation of social agents in terms of the past, future and present also implies that there are three distinct but interconnected structural contexts of action. The first is the cultural context. The second is the social-structural context; and the third is the social-psychological context. The first context encompasses symbolic patterns, structures and formations such as cultural discourses, narratives and idioms, which constrain or enable action by structuring their normative commitments as well as their understandings of the world and their possibilities within that world. The second context, the social-structural context, encompasses networks of social ties and relationships that define interpersonal, interorganizational or transnational settings of action. The third, the social-psychological context, is made up of psychical structures that channel the flow and investment of emotional energy, including structures of attachment and emotional solidarity. Each of these contexts can either constrain or enable action in different ways, at different times, based on the preferred orientation of the author at the particular time (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) conceptualization of agency is rooted in the background of a concept of agency in which scholars have, in the effort to explain how the concept relates with structure, ended up flattening and impoverishing the concept and/or making it so tightly linked with structure that "one loses sight of the different ways in which agency actually shapes social action" (963) as well as how the said "structural environments of action are both dynamically sustained by and also altered through human agency – by actors" (964).

This paper uses the term 'agent' here to refer to a person who performs an action and is attributed as the subject of the active verb in the sentence which describes the action. The term agency goes beyond the performer of the act (the agent) to look, philosophically, first at the capacity to and the actual act of being responsible for performing the said action. It is the capacity, condition or state of acting or of exerting power, action or activity/operation. Additionally, whereas both terms (agent and agency) are nouns, 'agentic' is an adjective that qualifies the process of acting to affect/produce a result. 'Agentic' implies that human actors are producers and products of the social systems that they are part of. What is central in the idea of agency is the fact that the producer of the effect is supposed to have chosen the action and is therefore responsible for the effect (Sartre, 1996) even when the effect is not particularly what was intended. Being responsible is a necessary component of being an agent, whereby to be responsible for an action or its effects is to be praise- or blame-worthy for that action or its effect. In view of this, Sartre conceptualized the human actor as the original cause of his states and acts: "I apprehend myself as the original source of my possibility, and it is this which ordinarily we call the consciousness of freedom" (Sartre 1996: 41). To further explain this link between the agent and the products of his actions, Sartre added that the act goes beyond the acting self but along the same road with that same self. It preserves this self; it is irreducible with that self; the self is recognized in his/her acts as "a father can recognize himself and find himself in the son who constitutes his work" (Sartre 1943,1996: 42).

To use the adjective 'agentic' to qualify a human activity, therefore, is to particularly emphasize that the human beings involved in that activity are linked to the results of the activity; that they are preserving themselves in those results; that they should be recognized in those effects and that they should hold themselves or be held responsible for those effects. This is the sense in which we use the term 'agentic governance' to differentiate it from and put it against the idea of governance which holds an 'outsider' responsible for the results of governance choices, practices and results.

Governance is an abstract and broader concept in relation to government. It includes the human beings who control the process, the system of controlling and the results of the control. Mo Ibrahim Foundation (2017: 9) defines governance as “the provision of the political, social and economic public goods and services that every citizen has the right to expect from their state, and that a state has the responsibility to deliver to its citizens”. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM 2019) held that the concept of governance is traditionally linked to ruling and control; specifically, the manner of exercise of power. On the basis of this ‘exercise’ of power, it defined governance as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. Governance in Africa involves human beings who represent individual countries; those who control what happens to their countries and the continent, the process of controlling events and circumstances on the continent by means of protocols, rules, charters etc., and the results of active or inactive implementation of these control mechanisms towards events and circumstances on the continent.

What has been largely ignored in most discussions on African governance is how African states are made up of human agents who should take control of their governance and development processes, practices and outputs and be praised or blamed for the results of their chosen practices. One of the issues that has been exaggerated is the cultural identity creation and justification for Africa, including how the governance system and process in pre-colonial Africa was better than what was available in the Global West and everywhere else (see Metz, 2007, 2015, 2017; Lauer, 2017). Additionally, the exaggeration includes how corruption is also an invention of the Global West to keep the picture of the African as ‘morally lower’ (Apata, 2018; Hoffmann & Hendricks, 2018). Positions like these distract attention from more important assessments of African leaders as proxy agents who should take control of what happens on the continent, and therefore be praise- or blame-worthy for the results of acting as control agents. These positions continue to ignore what is empirically and theoretically substantiated about human agency and actions.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that guides this paper is Agentic Theory of the Self, which is traced to Albert Bandura (1997; 2000; 2001; 2006). It is linked to a social cognitive theory which conceives individuals as producers of experiences and shapers of events. The theory conceptualizes three modes of agency: personal agency, proxy agency and collective agency. The first has to do with the direct exercise of agency by individuals, for themselves. The second has to do with situations where people either do not want to face the difficulties of taking responsibility, do not want to acquire certain new skills/expertise or do not have direct control over social conditions and practices that affect their lives. For such reasons, their wellbeing will be largely dependent on others who have a certain expertise or who wield some influence or power, to mediate on their behalf. These experts/mediators therefore exercise people’s agency in proxy. The third, collective mode of agency, is rooted in the fact that many of the results people seek are achievable only through interdependent efforts such that they have to agree “to work together to secure what they cannot accomplish on their own” (Bandura 2000: 75). According to this theory, the most focal mechanism and foundation of human agency is the belief in personal efficacy (Bandura, 1997; 2000) because “unless people believe that they can produce desired effects and forestall undesired ones by their actions, they have little incentive to act”, with the result that

“perceived collective efficacy fosters a group’s motivational commitment to their missions, resilience to adversity and performance accomplishments” (Bandura, 2000: 75).

The interest in Albert Bandura’s agentic theory of the self is, among other things, because it provides a theoretical basis for collective agency and collective action which are taken for granted when one talks about action in relation to a group. Hence, the term ‘agentic governance in Africa’ is rooted in the fundamental idea of Africans who agree on specific goals and therefore collectively decide (that is, commit) to pursue those goals. Margaret Gilbert’s (2010: 67) explanation of collective action is useful here: “it may refer to a situation in which people act within what has come to be known as a ‘collective action problem’, whereby the ‘payoff’ to each depends on what is done by the others”. Gilbert argued, however, that two other related terms – ‘joint action’ or ‘joint activity’ - are rather less ambiguous than collective action. However, what is central about collective action is that the individuals who decide to come together and to work together to solve collective problems such that the results of their efforts will benefit all, “have a special standing to rebuke one another for inappropriate action” (Gilbert, 2010: 68). This ‘special standing’ is rooted in the idea of ‘owing’, by which “those who do something together owe each other actions appropriate to the action in question. They also owe each other correction of inappropriate actions” (Gilbert, 2010: 68). To what extent, therefore, have the Member States that have collectively committed to make up the AU controlled their activities to consolidate or reduce their dependence on outsiders? How can governance in Africa be improved with a heightened sense of agency and responsibility to realize continental self-reliance?

Between Dependence and Self-Reliance: The Case of Africa

Arguments about whether Africa can/ should be self-reliant, and whether the continent is vulnerable and too dependent presupposes that nation-states in Africa are conceptualized – although only very weakly - as agents. This section focuses on how more agentic and responsible governance in Africa will balance the issues of dependence, vulnerability and self-reliance.

Agentic Governance...

The AU Agenda 2063 is titled ‘The Africa We Want’ (African Union Commission 2015). The third item on that Agenda highlights the initiative’s focus: mobilization of the people and their ownership of continental programmes; the principle of self-reliance and Africa financing its own development; the importance of capable, inclusive and accountable states and institutions at all levels and in all spheres; the critical role of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as building blocks for continental unity taking into account the special challenges faced by both island and land-locked states; and the need to hold ourselves and our governments and institutions accountable for results. The Agenda, generally, is both a call to action and a commitment:

A call to action to all Africans and people of African descent, to take personal responsibility for the destiny of the continent and [serve] as the primary agents of change and transformation. A commitment from citizens, leadership, governments and institutions at national, regional and continental levels to act, coordinate and cooperate for the realization of this vision (African Union Commission, 2015: 13).

The articulation of what is meant by ‘The Africa We Want’ brings to mind all the core characteristics of agency and collective action, particularly, intentionality of and commitment to the chosen goals (see Gilbert, 2010). Yet, the realization of the goals and the coordination of said commitment can be achieved only in the context of governance. The Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), provided yearly by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation since 2007, contains one of the most robust lists of components for measuring and monitoring governance performance in Africa. For instance, Table 1 outlines the four main components of governance and their sub-components.

Safety & Rule of Law	Rule of Law
	Transparency & Accountability
	Personal Safety
	National Security
Participation & Human Rights	Participation
	Rights
	Gender
Sustainable Economic Opportunity	Public Management
	Business Environment
	Infrastructure
	Rural Sector
Human Development	Welfare
	Education
	Health

Table 1
**Components/
Indices of
Governance**

Source:
Adapted from
Mo Ibrahim
Foundation,
2017

This paper is primarily interested in the first (Safety & Rule of Law) of the four components because it is the precondition for all other components. Without accountability and security, there is no basis for participation and respect for rights, neither for providing economic opportunities, nor for making such opportunities sustainable, and none for the broad goal of human development. This justification for focusing on these two components of governance is related to the view of Mo Ibrahim: “The Index results confirm that Rule of Law and Transparency & Accountability are key to progress in governance and are strongly related to improving economic opportunities” (in Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2018: 6). More specifically, the focus of this contribution is on ‘Transparency & Accountability’ (with a particular focus on anti-corruption mechanisms) and on ‘National Security’. For reasons of enhanced measurability, the IIAG further divides these two sub-components into further components as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Sub-components
of Transparency/
Accountability
and National
Security

Source:
 Adapted from
 Mo Ibrahim
 Foundation,
 2017

Transparency & Accountability	Access to Public and Legislative Information
	Access to records of State-owned Companies
	Accountability of Government and Public Employees
	Sanctions for Abuse of Office
	Absence of Corruption in Government Branches
	Absence of Corruption in the Public Sector
	Absence of Corruption in the Private Sector
	Absence of Favouritism
	Anti-Corruption Mechanisms
	Absence of Government Involvement in Armed Conflict
National Security	Absence of Domestic Armed Conflict or Risk of Conflict
	Absence of Violence against Civilians by Non-state Actors
	Absence of Cross-border Tensions
	Absence of Internally Displaced Persons
	Absence of Refugees

According to Mo Ibrahim, “governance on our continent [Africa], on average, is slowly improving. Approximately three out of four African citizens live in a country where governance has improved over the last ten years” (in Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2018: 6). A similar position was reiterated by the African Peer Review Mechanism: “the state of governance in Africa has generally improved” (APRM, 2019: 12). In specific terms, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation submitted that “looking back over the last decade (2007-2016), the average African score has improved by +1.4 score points from 49.4 (out of 100.0) to 50.8, reaching in 2016 its highest score since IIAC’s first data year” (Mo Ibrahim Foundation 2017: 18). According to the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, ‘Safety & Rule of Law’ is the first and primary component of governance, with an overall African average of 52.6 (out of 100) in 2017 and a reduction of 2.5 points between 2008 and 2017. The report revealed that 19 countries had improved in their performance in the areas of Safety & Rule of Law; 33 deteriorated; 1 experienced no change, and there was no information available for 1 country. Despite the improvements, the urgency of the need to look at governance in Africa from an agentic perspective can be highlighted by the position that governance on the continent “lags behind population growth and youth expectations” (in Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2018: 6). Closing the gap between the massive population growth and the governance deficit in Africa requires that governance should be more agentic: those governing should see themselves as controllers of events and circumstances on the continent, in the various regions and within the Member States on the continent. In the following sections, this paper focuses on two of the four sub-components of Safety & Rule of Law, namely Transparency & Accountability and National Security in the African context.

i. Transparency & Accountability - Anti-Corruption

Data from the Mo Ibrahim Foundation (2017; 2018) shows that the 2017 overall African average for 'Transparency & Accountability' is 35.3 (out of 100). When assessed within the timeframe of 2008-2017, the continent made a zero-point gain on Transparency & Accountability and this was characterized by the Foundation as 'slowing deterioration'. In this regard, particular attention is paid to illicit financial flows (IFFs) as avenues for loss or mismanagement of funds that should have been utilized to realize good governance on the continent. According to AU/ECA (2015), illicit financial flow refers to money that is illegally earned, transferred or utilized. These flows typically originate from one or more of the following three sources: (a) commercial tax evasion, trade mis-invoicing and abusive transfer pricing; (b) criminal activities such as the drug trade, human trafficking, illegal arms dealing and smuggling of contraband; and (c) bribery and theft by corrupt government officials. APRM (2019: 66) agrees that "illicit financial flows (IFFs) have an impact on good governance and Africa's development priorities". It also agrees that one of the drivers of IFF is poor governance, and that IFFs "undermine Africa's goals of self-sustainability and domestically financing its development priorities at the continental, regional and national levels" (67). APRM (2019) also submitted that: (a) the development impacts of IFFs from Africa are numerous; (b) corruption facilitates IFFs; (c) weak governance facilitates IFFs; and (d) lack of political will from governments sustain IFFs. The last two items (weak governance and lack of political will) over-ride corruption; those two are intentional, goal-directed and planned activities of agents on the continent. So, what has the AU done to revert the loss of funds that continue to negatively affect development priorities on the continent?

Evidences point to a supposition that the African Union has, over the last two decades, stepped up agentic governance roles in the areas of accountability and anti-corruption mechanisms. Two AU instruments that are of particular importance here are The African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (CPCC) and The African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration. The CPCC was adopted on 1 July 2003, entered into force on 5 August 2006, and last updated (that is, date of last signature) on 27 June 2019. The Convention was based on an acknowledgement that corruption undermines accountability and transparency in the management of public affairs, as well as on a concern about the negative effects of corruption and impunity on the political, economic, social and cultural stability of African states, along with its devastating effects on the economic and social development of the African people (AUC 2003: 2). Hence, in tones expressing agency, the state parties to the Convention were adopting a joint commitment (see Gilbert, 2010) to achieve the following objectives using the Charter:

- i. To promote and strengthen development in Africa by each State Party, as well as to support mechanisms required to prevent, detect, punish and eradicate corruption and related offences in the public and private sectors...;
- ii. To promote, facilitate and regulate cooperation among State Parties to ensure the effectiveness of measures and actions to prevent, detect, punish and eradicate corruption and related offences in Africa;

- iii. To coordinate and harmonize the policies and legislation between State Parties for the purposes of prevention, detection punishment and eradication of corruption on the continent...;
- iv. 4. To establish the necessary conditions to foster transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs. (AUC 2003: 5/6)

On the other hand, The African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration (2011), also known as Public Service Charter, was adopted on 31 January 2011, entered into force on 23 July 2016, and last updated on 14 May 2019. It emphasizes the need to strengthen professionalism and ethics to ensure, among other things, that transparent service delivery is promoted. According to AUC (2019a), as of 28 June 2019, out of the 55 Member States of the AU, 49 have signed the CPCC, 41 have ratified it, and 41 had deposited it. With regard to the Public Service Charter, as of 20 May 2019, 38 Member States have signed it, 19 have ratified it, and 19 have deposited it (AUC 2019b). In addition to these, the conference held under the theme “Towards a Common African Position on Asset Recovery”, taking place from 7th to 15th October 2019, was a move in the right collective agentic direction.

ii. Security

The 2017 overall African average for ‘National Security’ is 75.1 (out of 100) (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2018). When assessed within the timeframe of 2008-2017, this score indicates that the continent lost some points between 2008 and 2017 (-4.4) and as such, this sub-category is characterized as showing ‘slowing deterioration’. Demands are made from several quarters as to what the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) can and should do to ensure Africa’s self-reliance in the area of security. Available evidence shows that there are increasingly more agentic roles for the AU and RECs in crisis management, peace operations and consolidation of peace on the continent. For instance, there were the AU/REC-led peace operations in Mali (AFISMA), Somali (AMISOM), Guinea Bissau (ECOMIB), Central African Republic (MICOPAX/MISMA), Democratic Republic of Congo (SADC Brigade within MONUSCO), Dafur (UNAMID Hybrid Mission of UN and AU), and so on. Even the AU-led Security Architecture is another broad framework indicating efforts towards security self-reliance on the continent.

There is also the AU Peace Fund. Established in 1963 under Article 21 of the Protocol establishing the AU’s Peace and Security Council (PSC), the Peace Fund is meant to finance the AU’s peace and security operations, covering operational activities namely mediation and preventive diplomacy, institutional capacity and peace support operations. Kagame (2018) admitted that from its establishment in 1963, the African Union lacked a credible mechanism to fund its priority operations via the Peace Fund; it “depended too extensively on external resources”. It was in an effort to change the trend of extensive dependence and attain some level of self-reliance that the AU Assembly decided in 2015 to finance 25% of the Union’s peace and security activities as a way of revitalizing the Peace Fund, with a target that the Fund should reach \$400 million by 2021. According to the Chairperson of the AU, the recently revitalized Peace Fund is a demonstration of the commitment to African ownership of peace and security operations on the continent (in Yambou & Feleke, 2019). There were also such documents as the January 2015 Addis Ababa Decision 561 (XXIV), and the June 2015 Johannesburg Decision 578 (XXV), both of which directed Member

States of the AU to fund three budget lines: (i) 100% of the operational budget, (ii) 75% of the programme budget, and (iii) 25% of the peace support operations budget. These and related efforts were aimed at ending dependency and creating more ownership and self-reliance.

However, the fact that the same AU Security Architecture is heavily dependent on external support reiterates another fact, namely, that self-reliance alone is not enough to tackle the security challenges that gradually and continually acquire globalized features. This thus emphasizes the almost inevitability of dependency, or at least, interdependency. Report has it, for instance, that as of February 2019, the African Union has only managed to collect \$89 million for the Peace Fund. This amount was collected from 49 Member States and is a shortfall from the total amount needed. The initial plan was to collect \$325 million towards the Peace Fund in 2017, rising to a total of \$400 million by 2021 from the 0.2% levy. The difference in the shortfall warranted the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, to emphasize that any failure by Member States to finance the Union's peace and security operations is tantamount to leaving the issue of peace and security in the hands of others (Melkamu, 2019). As if in response to the Chairperson's words, on 22 July 2019, the European Union provided an additional €800 million to boost African Union peace and security operations (Yambou & Feleke, 2019). The purpose of this fund is to promote peace, security and stability in Africa, within the context of the continued implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). In the words of the EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, "Europe remains Africa's first partner in the area of peace and security. Since 2004, the African Peace Facility has provided €2.7 billion to support African solutions to African problems. Most of the additional €800 million announced today will go to peace support operations led by our African partners" (in Yambou & Feleke, 2019).

The detailed objectives of the EU's additional €800 million assistance to the AU's security apparatuses are to support: (i) the strengthening of conflict prevention, management and resolution structures and mechanisms of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA); (ii) AU efforts to establish a continental human rights and international humanitarian law compliance framework; (iii) an Early Response Mechanism (ERM) which will provide the AU with quick funding for preventive diplomacy initiatives, mediation, fact-finding missions and the first stages of peace support operations; (iv) the financing of African-led peace support operations, such as the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram, the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) or the G5-Sahel Joint Force specifically, with regard to capacity building, troop allowances and non-lethal equipment. It will also support efforts of the AU to promote gender equality and human rights principles and practices in peace support operations (in Yambou & Feleke, 2019). This level of support from the EU is explicable from the perspective of the features, structures and dynamics of current global security trends which are characterized by four features, namely, (i) Multiplicity, (ii) Complexity, (iii) Unpredictability, and (iv) Volatility. These features are linked to three underlying structures of the 21st century, namely, the ever globalized economy, globalized security threats as well as localized security threats with global reach and impact. Multiplicity as a feature of global security trends implies that at every point in time, there are multiple security threats. Complexity implies that the structure and connectivity of the sources and agents of global security threats make the process of tracking and addressing them complex.

Unpredictability follows from the two previous features – multiplicity and complexity – such that global security threats, coming from various sources at different times, and from various interconnected sources, are becoming quite unpredictable. The last feature, volatility, implies that the trend of global security threats is becoming more dangerous, more extreme, out of control, and in relation to unpredictability, very sudden. These features are inter-related; they complicate one another and result in unprecedented security dynamics, as 21st century security threats occur within a globalized economy in which some countries provide security support for other countries simply for economic reasons. The sense of being under threat or in conflict can boost defense spending on countries and continents in order to secure business/ trade routes and commercial interests.

The implications from the above features of global security threats dovetail into one fundamental implication: only interdependent societies and regions can withstand the sweepingly destructive consequences of global security threats that have the aforementioned features. What this means, therefore, is that in the face of current global security threats, the only security architecture that can manage to keep citizens and nations safe is one that is primarily interdependent and goes beyond self-reliance. To some extent, therefore, it could be said that on issues such as security, the need for self-reliance has been overtaken by the greater need for interdependence. This last point is necessary in circumstances, as are present in most of Africa, where the technology (for instance, drones, helicopters, jet-fighters), skills (underground skills such as those found among the US Navy SEAL teams), and frameworks required to match the sophistication of highly connected security-breaching groups (such as complex networks of terrorists and criminals), can only be accessed from outside the continent.

The primacy of the interdependent approach to managing global security threats is even more evident when one considers other layers of security threats. These include environmental degradation, climate change, cyber security, health security, nuclear proliferation, massive migration and displacement, energy security and resource wars, religious extremism, international terrorism, organized crime, and so on. There is yet a third layer of security threats, namely, the new forms of radicalism: religious radicalism, political radicalism and ideological radicalism. These features and structural components of global security dynamics also imply that security efforts are no longer issues of solitary individual nations, regional economic communities or continents. Rather, they have become issues of shared global responsibility in which relatively more vulnerable countries can be assisted by stronger ones.

Agentic governance requires a closer look beyond the fears of vulnerability that define the clamour for self-reliance. It requires looking towards leveraging the partnerships that interdependency provides. This is particularly important because responding to global security threats and development demands are intertwined in relationships that could be summarized by a “visible back and forth movement between dependency/ vulnerability (that is, Africa vis-a-vis external actors) and self-reliance (that is, Africa’s desire for more ownership in dealing with its own security [and development] challenges)” (Ndiaye, 2019). This vulnerability is inevitable. It is a necessary part of partnership, as it involves an appreciation of the currently irreplaceable roles of external actors in strengthening and empowering African security infrastructures. For instance, since the past ten years, there has remained massive external support for the operationalization of the Africa Peace and Security

Architecture (APSA) as well as at the levels of RECs. There has also been external support that focuses on crisis prevention in the areas of early warning and response, preventive diplomacy, post-conflict reconstruction and development, civilian and police components of the African Standby Force (ASF), operationalization of ASF, border demarcation and cross-border cooperation, and so forth. In both crisis prevention and the operationalization of the APSA, the external support involved has been aimed at improving the mediation capacities of Africa at the continental and REC levels, as well as at the prevention of the proliferation of small and light weapons (SALW), which is itself a serious cause of crisis in several parts of Eastern and Western Africa. Partnership, therefore, has become a critical element of general governance structuring, development dynamics and of Africa's agency within the global security landscape (Ndiaye, 2019). The degree of dependency involved in such partnerships is different at continental, regional and national levels. To achieve this and more, there is need for a more demanding and impatient AU that also balances the sovereignty of its Member States with an overarching insistence on respect for the objectives outlined in its several conventions and charters.

Conclusion: Resolving the Tension

Sidibé (in Jere, 2019) was correct to have noted that to build healthy societies, Africa must be health self-reliant. In this case, financial dependency is a very serious concern. This linkage between self-reliance and finance is relevant in the discourse that has engaged this contribution: security as a dimension of governance in Africa is also heavily dependent on transparent and accountable management of finances by Member States. To be security self-reliant, Africa needs to be financially independent. Can the continent achieve the latter if accountability remains very low in the governance index and corruption remains high? As long as funds from Africa are diverted outside Africa for selfish purposes, there will continue to be shortfalls for the funds needed to ensure security on the continent; there will continue to be signs of inefficacy/ inefficiency; and there will continue to be needs for financial dependency, allowing the current cycle to continue. Agentive governance is the route to a largely self-reliant Africa, and it requires deep commitments that respect documented common positions and agreements. On the other hand, only proven evidences of self-efficacy result in a strengthened sense of agency and self-reliance. As long as Africa is not able to show that it is self-efficacious, it will not even believe itself when saying that it can be self-reliant. A positive sense of agency depends on self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 2001), just as "the perception of one's own agency depends on detecting spatio-temporal correlations between one's actions and its effects" (Haggard & Tsakiris, 2009: 243).

After a 2016 assessment of the experiences of AU's governance structure and intervention in two fragile African states, South Sudan and Lesotho, Martin Rupia (2016: 21) submitted that there are specific issues that need to be addressed before governance can improve on the continent. The three most significant factors are:

- i. the generation of incumbents not willing to relinquish power and allow democratic processes to take root; b) the leaders' penchant to render marginal the executive, cabinet, governmental and legislative while concentrating power in their hands; c) the creation, by leaders, of partisan military capacity for power retention.

Even a shallow assessment of these challenges points to the fact that they are issues of agentic choices and preferences of African leaders. These challenges are not results of impositions and manipulations by external influences, but of the preferences of said leaders/ incumbents to remain in power for their own personal and selfish interests. This interpretation of Rupia's position is a criticism which many Afrocentrists would be unwilling to accept. A rejection of such criticism is based on an ignorance of the idea that as far as Africa is concerned, John Dewey's words are particularly germane in this time and era: "creativity is our great need, but criticism, self-criticism, is the way to its release" (in Joas, 1996: vii).

Based on the theoretical conceptualization of the term 'agent', the AU and RECs on the continent are examples of collective modes of agency. As much as an individual agent can be assessed, criticized and held responsible (praised or blamed) for a choice and its consequences, so can also the AU and the RECs be held responsible for poor governance and underdevelopment in Africa. As such, if holding an individual responsible implies criticism, Africa as a collective unit deserves to be criticized in order to make it more creative. There is a particularly strong tendency for any Pan-Africanist to look at Africa's agency in international relations in terms of what Africa is doing: the flagships, the charters, the protocols, and so on. Whereas this perspective on the issue of agency is good and encourages feelings of self-efficacy, it is however one-sided and not enough; Africa can do even more. Conceptually, agency involves taking control, but it necessarily includes taking responsibility (being blamed or praised) for the results of the set of choices, actions and inactions that are involved in the process of 'taking control'. To be blamed in this sense involves being criticized. This then serves as a form of demand for better choices.

Africa has not been criticized sufficiently, and several scholars who are supposed to provide the theoretical basis for this criticism have rather preferred to romanticize about Africa in the name of finding solutions to the problems of governance faced in the 21st century. Without a thorough criticism of the continent from within, creative approaches to the many problems on the continent will not be availed and the continent will continue to lag behind in verifiable indices of good governance and improvements in human wellbeing. More agentic governance in Africa will involve an AU that is authorized, among others, to stipulate the tenure of political leaders in individual Member States, to call to order incumbents who marginalize important arms of government in order to concentrate power in their hands, and to over-ride the effort of leaders who may try to use partisan military personnel to retain power. These points can be justified based on the idea of collective action explained earlier, which implies that each of the entities involved in the African project own the project and therefore "have a special standing to rebuke one another for inappropriate action" such that "those who do something together owe each other actions appropriate to the action in question. They also owe each other correction of inappropriate actions" (Gilbert, 2010: 68).

The saying that 'no man is an island' has never been more valid than in the 21st century, when all aspects of human needs and aspirations have developed one form of a global character or another. This is particularly worrisome on issues of security, where threats are consistently manifesting their interconnectedness both in their nature, evolution and response needs/ structures. At the moment, the only correct approach to these issues is for them to be assessed with four features in mind, namely, their multiplicity, complexity, unpredictability and volatility. One of

the prevailing dynamics is that all efforts towards achieving self-reliance, particularly for the African continent, are appearing to be elusive, with the implication that the quest for self-reliance is seeming less important when put side-by-side with the urgency for interdependency and partnership as the fundamental surviving option. Seen from this perspective, a fruitful, agentic and development-enhancing governance framework in Africa is dependent on looking beyond self-reliance for its own sake, and the fears of vulnerability, to access and make the best use of all options for partnership and interdependence among African countries and RECs, and with partners from around the globe.

On a more general note, interdependent and agentic governance seem to be the single option for managing the tensions and the disconnect that are culled up around the issues of dependency, vulnerability and self-reliance for Africa. On a more particular note, however, the degree of dependence, vulnerability and self-reliance of Africa varies from one sector to another, and it will continue to be so. This implies that in areas such as 'Transparency & Accountability', where individual Member States and RECs can actually improve governance and development by maximizing their self-reliance, the AU should continue to make consistent demands to ensure that human lives and wellbeing are improved without delay. However, the current situation of the continent warrants that in some other areas where the possibilities of self-reliance are particularly low, Africa should look beyond the sense of pride that results from self-reliance, and the fears of vulnerability, to wholeheartedly embrace dependency, interdependency and partnership as each circumstance demands. Thus, in the context of agentic governance, issues such as financing of continental/regional health and security architectures as well as technology transfers, will, for the meantime, not just require some level of dependence on external support but also demand a sense of engaged or agentic vulnerability, which makes the vulnerable party still responsible for whatever assistance it may receive.

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The Effectiveness of Peace-building Efforts and the Legitimacy of Actors: An Exegesis and Reflection of “The Local” in Myanmar and Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper contributes to the growing debate within the peace-building literature on who and what constitutes “the local”. It explores the challenges associated with attempts to arrive at a universal framing for the particular groups that make up ‘the local’. Scholars, practitioners and policy makers have developed different peace-building interventions that have focused on improving and sustaining peace among different populations. However, evidences continue to show that these actions target specific groups who are identified through processes of mapping, specifically with reference to their relevance, impacts and abilities to enforce and influence long-term changes within societies. These actors leverage and consistently engage the population to strengthen the effectiveness of diverse peace-building efforts. Drawing on examples from Myanmar and Nigeria, this paper conceptualizes “the local” as a product of individual constructions and experiences, particularly by demonstrating a clear understanding of conflict zones and how different actors influence actions and inactions that affect the overall process of peace-building.

Introduction

The debate on ‘the local’ in peace-building discourses has emerged due to the relevance and need to improve the approach and delivery of peace-building interventions, which is further linked to promoting the positive impact of peace-building actions on populations most affected by violent conflicts. Considering the dilemma and criticisms which the liberal peace model has encountered, particularly in its approach and goal i.e. the promotion of free markets, democracy and ‘negative peace’ – the idea of ‘the local’ can be seen as a critical attempt to rethink the design, implementation and sustainability of peace-building interventions. The notion of ‘the local’ demonstrates a paradigm shift from the liberal peace’s top-down approach to one that puts local agents and groups as critical components of peace-building debates and actions. Moving peace-building debates and programs to ‘the local’ reveals an emphasis on the relevance of establishing bottom-up approaches to building and sustaining peace. However, while the concept of ‘the local’ appears attractive, gaining recent prominence in academic and policy arenas, its conceptualization is problematic, thereby raising concerns about its application to the sustenance of peace-building efforts. While it is important to engage with the debate of increasing the legitimacy, power and agency of local populations involved in peace-building, it will be reductionist to then overlook the importance of the liberal peace agenda in conflict de-escalation.

The liberal peace model, which has gained a normative stance as “the most powerful method” of halting high-intensity violence, has not been most effective in its approach to institution and nation building with regards to promoting inclusivity, i.e. engaging different ‘local’ populations in conflict transformation and understanding the intersectionality that exists between them. Hence, the politics associated with the liberal peace model, while showing the power and influence of international actors in determining the fate of in-conflict and post-conflict societies (local populations), has demonstrated the challenges involved in institutionalizing peace-building in order for it to be strategic, transformative and sustainable. Peace-building that emphasizes liberal values as a normative and strategic perspective is unsustainable (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013), because its translation into practical efforts within a local context may not reflect the lived experiences and daily realities of the conflict-

affected population. However, even though ‘the local’ turn in peace-building has been advanced as a critical agenda for the sustainability of peace-building actions and efforts, its operationalization is constrained by what Mac Ginty & Richmond (2013) call “the margins of orthodox-dominated peace-building thinking and practice”. It is important to also acknowledge the complexity, politics, oppression, resistance and variability that exist within different locals, which in turn significantly influences the outcomes and effectiveness of peace-building. Evidently, the liberal peace and “the local turn” are not without their own dynamics, themselves playing adversely into the conceptualization and realization of peace-building, thereby necessitating the demand for collaborative forms of peace-building that represent hybrid models.

This paper acknowledges the need to ensure the sustainability of peace-building efforts. Therefore, it seeks to provide an exegesis on the concept of ‘the local’ and its relevance to the design and implementation of peace-building interventions. The paper provides an overview of ‘the local’, followed by the application of the concept to the design of peace-building interventions by drawing upon examples from Myanmar and Nigeria (to better understand the politics and influence of local agency) and finally offers an expansive debate on the concept. The paper also argues that ‘the local’ has contexts, contradictions and paradoxes, which require deeper attention, understanding and a nuanced appreciation in order to determine the specificity of the groups and populations of which it is comprised. Paying close attention to this concept (i.e. the local) allows peace-building practitioners and scholars to unpack the specific or different categories that form ‘the local’. Deeper reflections into the concept of ‘the local’ will induce a shift in how the concept is discussed, thereby opening up opportunities for understanding its dynamism and intricacies. The paper, however, submits that the concept of ‘the local’ emerges as a product of both personal and group experiences/understandings and not just particular geographies. This view helps us to delve deeper into analyzing the concept, rather than to present it as a concrete and readily visualized cartographic entity.

Overview of ‘The Local’

The concept of ‘the local’ is a contested term that has been defined in multiple ways by both academics and practitioners alike. The complexity of what and/or who constitutes ‘the local’ has created a multiplicity of definitions, in which many have presented it as a rather concrete concept. Hughes, Ojendal & Schierenbeck (2015) noted that “the local is inherently defined through relationships to other political scales and spheres, primarily the national and the global”. It is comprised of “codified relationships, practices and sites that are somehow below the level of the national state” (Hughes et al, 2015). Following this perspective, ‘the local’ can be an ideology formed to resist hegemonic systems that constrain the possibilities of increasing or achieving social change. This definition of ‘the local’ alludes to the existence of a concrete presence of powerful actors or groups within specific territories, each having distinct boundaries, languages and structures of authority as well as political, economic and social influence.

As an ideological construct, the concept of ‘the local’ can be said to emanate from the need to raise awareness of injustices and structural violence, as well as to challenge schemas that offer a particular strategy for interacting with different environments affected by violent conflicts. Consequently, it is better understood when it is neither portrayed as a betrayal of the liberal peace approach, nor as an independent

alternative to achieving peace and sustaining peace-building, nor debated as a linear and formulaic model for categorizing group agency and influence. Instead, the epistemological understanding of 'the local' should focus on the mapping of actors who are strategically positioned within specific locations of power necessary in influencing strategic peace-building outcomes within a given locality of conflict. These actors are better characterized through their individual experience and knowledge of local contexts, their consistent engagements with a broad range of actors, their adoption of reflective practices and a critical juxtaposition of divergent 'analytical framings' that allude to the capacity and resources that different groups possess towards ensuring significant outcomes can emanate from peace-building efforts.

Donais (2009) advises that 'the local' presents a collision between two competing visions of peace-building; the local and the international. The conceptualization of 'the local', in Donais' view, focuses on pursuing a communitarian vision; an agenda that emphasizes the emanation and sustainability of peace-building as 'bottom-up' rather than 'top-down', which is the current practice of the liberal peace model. Following this paradigm, 'the local' is reflected as concrete agency that presents as an organized [political/social] structure which is responsible for implementing initiatives that reflects the exact needs, interests and capacities of a legitimate population. This local population takes leadership and ownership of actions that are prescribed or developed locally or collaboratively towards ensuring collective social good. Meanwhile, his assessment of 'the local' depicts liberal peace as a very limited perspective that neglects and disempowers effective forms of ownership by local populations co-existing in the contexts where conflicts occur. The point of ownership is to ensure that the local population directly affected by conflicts makes the decisions on peace-building because they are experts on their own issues. The more that local agency is empowered to contribute to the conceptualization of its own peace, the more local populations become responsible and accountable to the operationalization and sustainability of peace. The political and social influence that exists within the local agency, when leveraged, guarantees the success of peace-building actions and the creation of multiplier effects within the local domains in which peace-building efforts are undertaken.

In contrast, 'the local' could also reflect a range of agencies that are locally-based and present in conflict and post-conflict environments. These agencies identify and create the necessary conditions, processes and mechanisms needed for achieving long-term peace, perhaps with or without international help. The manner in which these mechanisms are framed constitutes a way of promoting the legitimacy of 'the local' and of creating a locus for the convergence and complementarity of international efforts that aim at achieving peace. In this case, the local is an emancipatory group where power, rights and the redistribution of legitimacy are slowly rethought, mapped and reflected in institutional and international architecture (Mac Ginty & Firchow, 2015; Mac Ginty, 2014; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013).

Furthermore, Hughes (2015) highlights that "the concept of the local operates both to distinguish the 'sub-altern' from dominant and oppressive social forces and to designate a collection of possibilities that are separate from the liberal peace". When translated into practice, Hughes' assertion justifies why peace-building and conflict transformation strategies should develop in a manner that empowers indigenous populations; allowing for a resistance to a monolithic and hegemonic agenda of the liberal peace, increasing recognition and legitimacy for cosmopolitan agencies

and promoting an evolution of group power to determine the outcomes of peace-building actions. This status induces resistance, which in turn creates a resultant need to hybridize or modify peace-building interventions, albeit displaying the complexity embedded in the very conceptualization of 'the local'.

The local-turn needs to be explored not as a "culturally-based approach" (Hughes, 2013), but as a complement to the liberal peace agenda. Even though the normative framing of liberal peace is one that portrays executive authority, thereby distorting or relegating the capacity of indigenous agencies, it remains important to draw a link of complementarity between both approaches in order to establish the importance of ensuring hybridized forms of peace. It is crucial that peace scholars and practitioners highlight, understand and define the interplay between the various factors that contribute to the production of hybrid peace. Local and international actors are frequently unable to act autonomously. Thus, both local and international actors become compelled to operate in environments shaped by the dynamism that they each embody (Mac Ginty, 2010).

Providing legitimacy to the agency of 'the local' and incorporating its capacity into the strategies of the liberal peace prevents distortion of peace-building strategies and instead encourages the development of comprehensive and participatory frameworks that deliver effective, transformative and long-term peace in societies. International actors operating in local contexts would achieve stronger impacts when their actions are supportive of the agency and initiatives of the local, primarily because of the latter's familiarity and knowledge of local domains and ability to navigate indigenous population and politics at the community level. While unpacking the identity and power of 'the local' in peace-building is important, considering the place of indigeneity or nativity is itself very crucial. Analyzing 'the local' through the lenses of indigeneity or nativity allows peace scholars and practitioners to understand how power – its relationships and asymmetry – is developed and operated within local groups that are organically linked together. Such analysis also reveals the political complexity that occurs in local domains. Hughes (2015) summarized that although indigeneity is itself constructed, it is subject to power operations within local contexts. Even though all groups share a collective identity, it is noteworthy to highlight that different forms of contestations continue to persist within the agency of 'the local', especially over the authenticity and identity of the group's culture and ties to its environment. Unvaryingly, actors are engaged in "political maneuvering both internally, over the nature of 'culture', and externally, over the practices and meanings of intervention" (Hughes, 2015).

Although Mac Ginty (2010) and Cooke & Kothari (2002) argue that the rhetoric of local ownership and participation may not easily mask the power dynamics associated with the planning, design, funding, timeframe, implementation and evaluation of peace-building programs, it remains realistic to recognize that the overall goal of peace-building programs is to promote and maintain positive social change that will in turn be sustained by local populations. This vision, when considered and pursued sternly and consistently, ensures that the goal of peace-building is jointly achieved by external and local actors that are operating collaboratively within a conflict-affected context. However, problematizing the concept of 'the local' in a manner that reveals the capacity gaps of international and local groups allows scholar-practitioners to assist a broader range of actors. This also increases regard of peace-building interventions (whether local or international) as not fundamentally

domineering, but as a potential source of strengthened partnerships that support the efforts and struggles of both the international and local communities to promote and institutionalize peace.

Even though there exists divergent opinions on the definition of 'the local', there are points of convergence among peace scholars and practitioners on what the concept should represent. When the conceptualization of 'the local' targets the influence of regional authorities, sub-national institutions and local governance structures, the ownership and effectiveness of peace-building, therefore, reflects a clear understanding of how liberal peace is built and translated into practices within domestic systems. This translation could be based on templates with which local actors are familiar and can adequately operationalize, to reflect the shared values and needs of the diverse groups that make up the population, particularly as it refers to peace in their everyday lives (Mac Ginty & Firchow, 2015; Mac Ginty, 2014; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013; Brinkerhoff, 2011; Schou & Haug, 2005). Additionally, when there is attentiveness to the variations and specificities of the individuals, groups and agencies that make up 'the local', it offers an integral opportunity to conceptualize and operationalize peace within diverse societies (Austesserre 2014; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013). Judging by the position of several scholars, practitioners, and commentaries given on 'the local', it becomes clear that the concept is not an absolute solution to complex social problems – especially those that are associated with political contests for power and legitimacy at national levels, particularly during elections and to a large extent, during the distribution of federally allocated resources like oil revenues to the federating units, as in the case of Nigeria. Subsequently, even though the local could offer emancipatory and effective methodologies and mechanisms to deliver sustainable peace, there are divergent notions as to how this could be achieved.

The categorization of actors and the 'patterning' of peace-building in societies (in-conflict or post-conflict societies) by external or international actors, who consider themselves experts in the best interests of local populations, more often than not affect the effectiveness of peace-building efforts as well as the ownership of said efforts by domestic elites. It is imperative to note that ownership of peace-building actions and efforts does not take place spontaneously because it is neither developed nor handed-down by international actors. Acknowledging local agency and capacity harnesses contributions to peace-building interventions by creating space for constructive interactions that foster complementarity. This is a significant step towards effective peace-building. While local actors in post-conflict societies may require intensive efforts and accompaniment to disintegrate the post-conflict political structures that impede the possibility of nurturing a new peace agenda, international actors can help ensure their effectiveness when they combine "capacity-building with 'capacity-disabling' – by the deliberate marginalization of domestic political forces that obstruct peace" (Donais, 2009). This process of building local capacities by external actors should, however, remain modest and be based on a clear understanding about what can be realistically achieved by and within the local context.

Despite the risks and complexity present within the conceptualization of 'the local', local ownership cannot be circumvented because it is an integral element for promoting and sustaining peace. Experience reveals that externally-driven processes of reform within conflict-affected societies are not always durable. For instance, Myanmar's internal armed conflict has continued to protract since 1948, starting just after the

country gained its independence from Britain. Different armed actors, especially Myanmar's military (also called Tatmadaw) and ethnic armed organizations (EAOs), have continued to engage in fierce lethal combats (ISDP, 2018). As a pluralistic state, other factors such as religion also play a crucial role in fueling unrest across various regions. The upswing in the use of religion to mobilize pockets of violence also influences the relationships among different actors, including Buddhists, Muslims, Christians and Atheists. With many communities displaying allegiance to ethnic and religious leaders, inter-communal tensions are easily mobilized. These religious actors, who often display a significant level of influence over their immediate constituents, have been leveraged by international and regional organizations like the Muslim Aid to transform inter-communal conflicts, which also have religious rhetoric associated to them. The high level of respect and prestige given to these local actors and the religious institutions they emanate from allows them to be a major entry point for international peace-building efforts that seek to transform relationships affected by religious conflicts, such as the MaBaTha (969) Movement.

Hence, the experiences relayed through this example reveal the need for external interveners to give rapt attention to specific actors who both affect peace-building processes and their outcomes. While 'the local' may appear in several debates as an indicative space where actions and efforts of peace-building can be sustained, it does not serve as a cure-all remedy to the different issues faced particularly at the national level. Rather, 'the local' can present an opportunity to consider and understand relations between the agency of groups, their freedom and underlying power dynamics. The importance of understanding how agency and the power differential between groups (most often between national governments and local communities) is formed enables peace-building practitioners to predict how resources can be better allocated, considering the level of need and power asymmetry across various groups. Despite these contesting views, continuous capacity building of local communities will enable them to engage in peace-building themselves and make its outcomes sustainable. Additionally, while it is important not to over-romanticize 'the local', it is crucial that international actors who provide external resources should not be overwhelmed or distracted by the complexity that exists within local communities. Consistent efforts should, instead, be made to build capacity in order to harness local abilities and allow them to gain mastery of their own solutions, while also assisting in the definition of elements that would represent peace in their communities.

For peace-builders, if 'the local' is to have agency, then it becomes important to note that 'the local' has both symbolic and apparent functions. It reminds peace-builders that the decisions taken for and on behalf of 'the local' should be true reflections of their needs, demands and realities. These decisions should not demonstrate a "universalist prescription". In other words, the decisions of peace-builders on 'the local' should be specific to a context or group and not be generalized. Supporting 'the local' and local ownership of peace-building can be a highly politicized process; one that involves mediating the tensions between internal (domestic) and external (international) visions of governance, institutions and the forging of relationships.

Engaging with 'the local' also requires a clear understanding of the political dynamism of this category. The local continues to remain a contested space, where there is continued demand for access and control of power and resources. Hughes et al. (2015) assert that "the local resides below the national, with more visible struggles for power, positions and control, which often occur through imperfect elections that

are contested under heavy conditions”. This reveals that the desire for local actors to seek prominence, legitimacy, authority and the control of wealth and other resources also explains the extent to which they are willing to go in order to achieve their goals. When locals are able to achieve their goals, they tend to become more influential and can contribute to the development of their communities and the maintenance of overall peace in a manner that is sustainable. Thus, failure to understand the complexity of ‘the local’ and how its politics play into the overall structure, agency and peace of an environment can cause the collapse of centralized peace-building efforts. Therefore, instead of considering ‘the local’ in instrumental terms – as one side that can bring about greater engagement with other actors (Bojicic-Dzelilovic & Martin, 2016), scholar-practitioners should analyze the concept in full view. ‘The local’ should be seen as the overall capacities that can be leveraged (positive social capital) within the relationships of local and external actors operating to achieve long-term strategic peace-building in a conflict or post-conflict context.

Application of ‘The Local’ to Peace-building Interventions

To operationalize ‘the local’ in peace-building, there is need for a deeper understanding of the various peace-building structures and networks that exist within the location of an intervention. This understanding should include conducting an assessment of the comparative advantages and challenges of each structure and/or network. Too often, outsider interveners place priorities for peace-building on vertical relationships and the influence that national elites or international stakeholders can advance in institutionalizing peace. Inadequate or insufficient consultations with actors at the horizontal level or the lack of incorporation of local knowledge could create a major setback on ownership and sustainability. While it is important to recognize the impacts that national elites can have on peace-building, leveraging the significant influence and reach of local actors, including civil society organizations, traditional institutions and other informal groups also adds remarkable value to peace-building processes (Connolly, 2018). Efforts to consolidate or sustain peace require clear contextual understanding – the acknowledgement of local politics, actors and agencies – and a deliberate effort to adjust peace-building efforts to the changing dynamics that exist and emerge in an environment over time. Hence, paying close attention to the politics of ‘the local’ and the trajectories that it provides for peace-building remains pertinent to the sustainability of peace and the effectiveness of peace-building actions and efforts.

In terms of commonalities that can be drawn from Myanmar and Nigeria, there is a sense in which traditional community leaders have evolved over time, serving as both rallying points for local communities as well as primary points of contact for peace-building interventions. These commonalities are manifestations of the credibility and legitimacy that such leaders have built over time. For instance, across temples, shrines, churches, mosques and other places of religious practice or worship, religious leaders exert significant influence in determining the nature and character of responses to interventions. The same applies to local or traditional leaders in communities where customs and traditions are highly revered. Despite the wave of modernization that holds sway in developing countries, indigenous knowledge systems and practices are still prevalent and dominant (Kwaja, 2009). More practically, in Myanmar for instance, religious institutions are held in high esteem, with significant respect being accorded to Buddhist monks both within indigenous communities and nationally. Emanating from this respect, religious institutions

continue to play a significant role in conflict escalation and de-escalation. This significance of Buddhist monks influences the outcomes of peace because, often, some of these religious leaders seek to uphold practices and systems that are not easily influenced by broader politicized peace-building actions. Several peace-building efforts in the country acknowledge this tension and work constructively with both types of local actors to implement their strategies in a conflict-sensitive manner. While this dynamic also exists in Nigeria, traditional and religious institutions hold significant power in deciding the forms and outcomes that peace-building takes. The religious and traditional institutions in Nigeria are constantly engaged (and more often incorporated into national frameworks of peace-building) because of the reverence that many communities have for these institutions and the influence that they hold on their constituencies.

In Myanmar, the Women Peace Initiative for Peace (WIN-Peace) has remained an effective mechanism for engaging women from diverse ethnicities within various war-torn regions. This community-level network creates the space for women to strengthen their agency, share their stories and raise awareness about issues of sexual violence and the importance of women's inclusion in peace-building. The group utilizes the UNSCR 1325 to lobby and advocate for women's peace and security concerns, and to further advance these demands. WIN-Peace has gained legitimacy and trust from local communities and CSOs in its efforts to facilitate grassroots women-led initiatives that build capacity and increase solidarity. Through collaborative and partnership approaches, WIN-Peace designs strategies that focus on building long-term relationships among various women's groups across several ethnicities. Its capacity to mobilize women has made it a valuable resource in the call for women's participation in national governance and peace processes in the country. Most international organizations have leveraged this structure to reach out to women and strengthen the capacity of their agency to undertake initiatives that promote effective peace-building, particularly within rural communities.

In the case of Nigeria, Community Based Organisations (CBOs) as well as other local-level actors that frame their emergence and activities along fault lines such as ethnicity, religion and politics have continued to play active roles in shaping peace-building interventions and outcomes (Kew & Kwaja, 2018). Though considered 'locals' in the sense of their location, the successes of externally designed interventions have been defined by the extent to which external actors utilize the local knowledge systems that these groups have built over time (Omeje & Kwaja, 2015). Under such circumstances, these traditional and community leaders represent what can be viewed as a bridge between external actors and 'locals'. In accepting these realities, many external actors have come to appreciate the value associated with adopting hybrid approaches (mixture of external and local frameworks), which are anchored on the core principles of mutuality, reciprocity and complementarity. For instance, the youth-led policy and security governance project of Conciliation Resources in Nigeria's Plateau State demonstrates the importance of identifying and building the capacity of youth leaders in local communities to constructively advocate for improved policing and delivery of local governance. The acknowledgement of the Youth-led Peace Platforms (YPPs) as a legitimate mechanism to advance project objectives and ensure ownership of future engagements was critical to the project's success. This platform has continued to remain on the forefront in the calls for improved governance and sustainability of peace in rural communities. More so, through different collaborative problem-solving platforms and policy-level engagements,

the YPPs are exposed to some of the challenges of policing, policy formulation and implementation respectively. Through effective capacity development and awareness creation, they are able to mitigate tensions that emerge between community youths on one side and security and policy actors on the other. This arrangement further strengthens the channels to demand accountability for actions and to complement the efforts of local governance authorities towards ensuring peaceful and progressive communities in Plateau State.

Meanwhile, in the design of many peace-building programs, there are claims that several international policies on peace-building are in conflict with the cultural norms and practices of local communities. Through these policies, international interveners often attempt to dominate or overturn local traditions (AP & PD, 2019; Hughes et al, 2015; Hughes, 2015; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013). Following these claims, it becomes imperative that international peace-builders adopt ethical measures in the design and implementation of peace-building programs. Strong rhetoric and representation that portrays external peace-builders as monolithic entities who are insensitive to 'local agency' can result in the mobilization of local support against peace-building efforts or other forms of external interventions. International peace-builders, who often operationalize a liberal peace agenda, should seek to understand contextual sensitivities by adopting conflict sensitive/Do No Harm methodologies to ensure that their programs do not threaten the agency of 'the local' or diminish its legitimacy.

Peace-builders need to be attentive to the particulars of what and who constitutes 'the local', thereby enabling local variations that are helpful for the implementation and sustainability of peace-building efforts. Giving attention to local contexts allows peace-builders to engage ethically and design programs that recognize and give power to local agencies. This demystifies power asymmetry or the notion of exclusion between 'external' interveners and 'local' actors, thus ensuring complementary roles in the sustainability of peace. Local people and mechanisms that are engaged in reducing direct forms of violence or its escalation within communities constitute a significant asset that is ineffectively tapped by peace-builders currently (AP & PD, 2019). Although it is important to identify the specific 'local' that peace-building programs are designed for, this process of identification often reveals the complexity of said 'local'. Peace-builders, especially external interveners, are then required to conduct a thorough assessment of their context in order to identify the specific 'local' that their peace-building programs ought to particularly target. These assessments also require knowledge of the power dynamics at play in the different levels and among the various groups that form 'the local'.

In most cases, it is imperative to study the institutions, politics and mercenaries of power, as well as competition for resources and exclusionary tactics that exist in 'the local', to justify how and why peace-building resources are allocated in a particular way. Simply put, assessing these dynamics are a *sin qua non* for peace-building programming within 'the local' context; it is an absolute necessity. Peace-builders' inability to demonstrate clear and critical knowledge of the culture and politics of 'the local' could provide a strong justification for local resistance to those same peace-building interventions. Peace-building is made strategic, sustainable and long-term through a combination of efforts by local communities, civil society groups, private and public businesses, national governments, intergovernmental bodies as well as regional and international organizations (Mac Ginty & Gurchathen, 2015; Pugh 2006b; Appleby & Lederach 2010).

The absence of a specific universal description for 'the local' could create a challenge for peace-builders in the design of interventions. Consequently, the multiplicity of descriptions for what and who constitutes 'the local' implies that international peace-building interventions should not be magnified or justified *a priori*. Rather, 'the local' should be discussed as a reminder of the limitations of international peace-building, which is often conceptualized as a normative project. Local mechanisms for institutionalizing peace-building and transforming conflict relationships should also be understood during the development of international peace-building projects, by drawing on indigenous practices that exist within grassroots societies (Hughes et al, 2015; Richmond, 2009a; Richmond, 2009b; Mac Ginty, 2008). Thus, the knowledge and push for 'the local' approach to peace-building is best made practical when it proceeds from a combination of theoretical deductions and individual observations or experiences. While this position could be contested based on its relativism, it commands a certain consciousness on the part of peace-building practitioners to understand the complexity of framing groups into different categories. The framing of groups, especially as 'local', then requires clear resonance and acceptability within a specific environment.

The concept of 'the local', therefore, reveals how groups can become 'local' due to the direct interactions that occur between them as mobile bodies (individuals) or as a result of interactions influenced by various factors, including forced migration or resistance to factors that threaten their 'original' cultures. This population of 'new locals' (maybe 'global locals') may emerge in many post-conflict settings. Hence, developing a peace-building intervention in areas where there are 'new locals' living side-by-side with the 'old locals' makes the achievement and sustainability of peace problematic and complicated, especially when interveners do not take into account the history and dynamics of the new group's relationship to the local community.

Expanding the Discussion on "The Local"

This paper lays out the complexity encountered in describing what and/or who constitutes 'the local'. This complexity makes it necessary for peace-builders to thoroughly assess, understand and justify what factors qualify the framing or categorization of specific groups as 'the locals' in the design of peace-building interventions. While there is an absence of a universal description for 'the local', it is important to highlight that whichever group(s) make up 'the local', various levels of agency, power and capacity exist within them and are added values to peace-building interventions. These capacities are required and should be leveraged to achieve and sustain the effectiveness of peace-building programs. In addition, it is crucial that in framing the local, peace-builders should provide clarity on the power structures and contextual politics that exist. Further, they should be made aware of how the levels of power present are able to provide entry points for their efforts to maintain the sustainability of peace.

It is incumbent upon peace-building practitioners to identify and understand how particular locales can reinforce existing structural violence and power asymmetry present in a given context. The idea of effective peace-building is to avoid doing harm as much as possible. Hence, attempts to reverberate power asymmetry through monolithic or hegemonic peace-building programs have tendencies to stir resistance from 'the local'. For instance, implementing peace-building interventions through top-down strategies in deeply divided societies may privilege ethnocentrism

and further increase the oppression of weaker groups by locally powerful actors. A peace-building intervention that presents the likelihood of affording privilege to particular (repressive) actors over others calls into question the depth and quality of the initial analysis conducted by peace-builders. It is crucial to take into account elements such as local context, familiarity with issues on the ground and a clear-cut understanding of the power play-offs that tend to emerge. Peace-builders, therefore, need to build and sustain their relationships with 'the local' in order to understand the compelling logic of exclusion and the dynamism of lived experiences that connect different spatial points and networks. Relationships with local populations allow peace-builders to visualize different temporal and spatial connections that reveal the strengths and weaknesses of individual and group agency within 'the local'.

Subsequently, while peace-builders' contextual knowledge of the local is required, the creation of spaces for 'the local' to interact with external actors (in this case peace-builders from the outside) is equally relevant. Acknowledging 'the local' involves allowing individuals with cultural appropriateness to use their voice; it requires recognizing their agency. While the liberal peace model has been identified as paying little or no attention to the voices of 'the local', an effective and strategic peace-building model recognizes the vocal agency of 'the local' because in many cases, peace-builders make decisions on behalf of people on whom they hold limited knowledge. There is need for peace-builders to deliberately create space for 'the locals' to make decisions about their own futures. However, a necessary question to ask here is: can peace-builders work without being monolithic or hegemonic? This paper argues yes, peace-builders can indeed do so. Adopting more collaborative and facilitative models as the fundamental strategies for working with 'the local' will help to ensure that power emerges (not devolves) from local actors. Although the positionality of peace-building interveners will not change, in terms of the power they possess, a conscious adoption of collaboration as a means to developing programs with and for 'the local' allows for the effectiveness and sustainability of peace-building efforts.

By expanding on the debate of 'the local turn' in scholarly literature, the question on what and who constitutes the local remains complex and unanswered. Within this complexity, this paper argues that the concept of 'the local' has contradictions and paradoxes that require deeper attention and understanding. Hence, paying close attention to the concept allows for peace-building practitioners and scholars to unpack the specificity or categories that form 'the local'. However, this paper submits that the concept of 'the local' emerges as a product of experience and understanding, and not just particular geographies. Viewing 'the local' as a product of experience enables peace-building actors to delve deeper into its analysis, rather than to present it in a solely cartographic perspective that is neither concrete nor readily visualized.

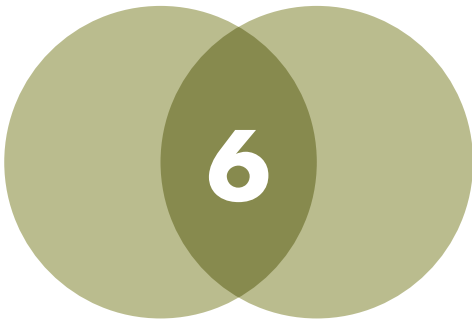
Conclusion

Peace-building, as a conscious and coordinated process of promoting social change, requires actors to formulate relationships (between external and local actors), to strengthen capacities for peace and to display a clear understanding of the context within which they intervene and operate. More specifically, effective peace-building delves into mapping and harnessing significant resources that will be instrumental for transforming conflicts and sustaining peace. Therefore, understanding and conceptualizing 'the local', based on the interactions and intersections that occur between interveners and a range of actors, structures and institutions, provides a clear path towards achieving the effectiveness of peace-building actions. 'The local' is a fluid concept that can be both misconstrued and misinterpreted when generalized. Thus, the pursuit of a universalist description or understanding of the concept of 'the local' becomes problematic because it limits the space for deeper analysis. While the debate in academic literature and among peace-building practitioners about 'the local' could impede opportunities to develop conflict-sensitive peace-building programs, clearer contextual identification and description of a 'specific local' increases the possibilities of implementing successful interventions that can sustain long-term peace.

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Gunning the Leviathans: Undying Presidencies, Term Limits, Changing Political Culture and the Mortification of Dire Political Transition in Africa

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Keywords

Democracy;
Political Transition;
Political Culture;
Democratization.

Abstract

The focal narrative in the literature on government and politics in Africa is sheathed with the credence that the region has been governed by tyrants, despotic regimes and political intrigues, abetting political transitions in belligerent awareness as a result. This paper attempts to make a significant departure from this account by interrogating the emerging political orders that deconstruct this primordial discourse on the African socio-political landscape. It argues that the locus of political transition has shifted from a long established political culture to a more mature democratic orientation. It demonstrates that some African nations have evolved from political pettiness to political adolescence. It concludes that the recent political transitions that took place in some African nations represent a different type of regime change that marks a momentous departure from the unwavering political culture previously present in Africa.

Introduction

Following the fall of the Berlin wall, many African nations underwent profound regime change. Indeed, some of these regimes were not without subversive political transitions - civil war, social unrest, civil protest and citizens' confrontation with the martial regimes that consequentially delineate African political taxonomy. It is on this basis that Africa was characteristically categorized on the global political map as a region mired in "armed conflict, insecurity, human right atrocities and environmental dystopia"¹ and expressed elsewhere as "soft, weak, swollen, rentier, illogical, underdeveloped, oppressive, powerless and so on – epithets that speak to the inability of these states to fulfill basic functions attributable to the modern state in political philosophy such as law and order, welfare, territorial sovereignty and totality of jurisdiction".² Nonetheless, to understand Africa in its empathetic nomenclature, dexterity in its languages and cultures become indispensable as no western scholarship could claim to have a cure-all explanation to Africa's socio-political dilemma.

During the Cold War, many African leaders were in search of ways to legitimize their political regimes through patrimonial crazes of governance. These efforts were supported by external resources and western powers, rather than leaders seeking legitimacy through representative democracy or other modes of governance. The end of the Cold War era made such political discretion more harangued, and this forced African leaders to search for alternative means of foreign support. The difficult environment posed in sustaining patrimonial or dictatorial regimes without substantial external support somewhat articulates the wave of democratization that cropped up in African political terrains in the late 1980s and early 1990s.³ By the end of the Cold War, most African states were being ruled by a hodgepodge of single-party, military and narcissistic big-man regimes. In 1989, only three countries south of the Sahara practiced electoral democracies: Gambia, Botswana and Mauritius – constituting less than 3.5% of the African population when combined together. The disintegration of the Soviet Union swiftly enlarged the scope of governance reform in Africa. The superpower contenders had formerly discouraged western powers from relating or connecting 'bilateral, government-to-government aid to democratization'. International organizations, like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), ensured that allocation of funds was based on conditional 'apolitical' nomenclature - institutional and policy reforms. Donors like the US

instituted 'political conditionality' with their aid. African states in search of external assistance, therefore, were required to host open and conventionally democratic governance structures.⁴

African nations accommodated the new political liberation in different forms, driving them towards more pluralistic political structures. The acknowledgment of popular democracy increased in 1989, especially during the notable bicentennial of the French Revolution held in July of that year. Within the subsequent twelve months, no less than twenty-one African nations had absorbed and adopted a political portico that would serve as a democratic façade. This epoch brought noticeable change in the political lives of everyday Africans. Notably, earlier in February 1989, the atmosphere for popular democracy had stretched to Algeria where the constitutional referendum was ratified, certifying civil liberties and the right to form political parties. Following this, a similar trend was seen during the signing of the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation held in Arusha and the release of Nelson Mandela from prison by the South African Government in 1990. A similar occurrence was observed in the Republic of Benin, where General Kerekou was compelled to conduct a National Conference; this was prompted by the threat issued by the labour union to go on strike. Benin's National Conference yielded positive results; the congregation suspended the national constitution and dissolved the National Assembly. This event led to the appointment of former World Bank official, Nicephore Soglo, as the country's new Prime Minister. The incident channeled the reconfiguration of multi-partyism, which later set Nicephore Soglo as President following the competitive election between Nicephore Soglo and Mathieu Kerekou.⁵ The significance of the democratization project which was achieved through the National Conference in the Republic of Benin served as a model and was extended to other African states.⁶ Consequently, this episode was eulogized in the media and helped to raise political awareness and to arouse the political consciousness of the African citizenry.

The aggregation of these trends reshaped the nomenclature of regional politics and served as a riding board for regime change in Africa.⁷ The regime changes from authoritarian regimes to multi-party democracies, underscored by the liberalization of political contestation through a people-oriented constitution, served as a political barometer for leadership succession, thus driving the region towards the pursuit for democratization. This then served as a socio-economic impetus for combating poverty and underdevelopment as well as a platform for the citizenry to enjoy basic political rights and accountable governance. Between 1990 and 1993, a larger percentage of African states have succumbed to domestic and international pressures to conduct presidential or legislative elections. The consequence of such electoral competition has been spotty; it had led to regime change and state fragility in some, while others have experienced fraudulent electoral conducts, election riggings and socio-political disorders that inflamed the vulnerability already present in their region.⁸ Thus, the quest for democratization and peaceful political transition was challenged by a pervasive belief among leadership to hold on to power for life. The epidemiological political transitions experienced in many African nations that journeyed through unsettled political loggia resulted in military takeovers, interim governments or pseudo-democratic leadership. The cases of Omar Bongo of Gabon, Lansana Conté of Guinea, Félix Houphouët Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire and Gnassingbé Eyadéma of Togo symbolized the rhetoric of tumultuous political transitions in the regional landscape of Africa.⁹

On various occasions, paternal political transitions from father to son took place so that power could continue to revolve around the political dynasty of one leader. Such dynastic politics have been identified in the case of Gabon, where the death of President Omar Bongo certified the transfer of power to his son. The political event that restored Faure Gnassingbé, the son of President Gnassingbé Eyadéma, was the latter's demise in the Republic of Togo, which enabled the former to establish a claim to power. Similar occurrences were observed in Guinea when Moussa Camara seized power following the death of President Lansana Conté. As Lewis (1996) further asserts, the challenges of peaceful political transition have degenerated into political catastrophes in Rwanda and state collapse in Somalia, Liberia and Burundi, thereby ensuing political decay, insecurity, economic stagnation and the search for alternative governments and political environments capable of promoting democratic principles in the region.¹⁰

Following the defeat of former authoritarian regimes, a weak commitment to democratic canons was demonstrated by African political leaders, in order to perpetuate themselves in office long beyond legitimate terms. This rebranded the nations towards authoritarianism.¹¹ "Some elected leaders have demonstrated perverse ingenuity in finding ways to bend constitutional democratic tenets so as to remain in power beyond ordained term limits and to restrict and sharply limit the activities of civil society organizations that have been instrumental in the continent's democratic progress"¹². African countries have been awestruck with 'Big-man' syndrome in which the president is considered as being above the constitution. One African scholar, Kenneth Kalu, explains it as "in most cases, the typical African big man is not subject to the same rules that guide every other citizen".¹³

Such practices make it nearly impossible for the ordinary African citizen to hold the 'Big Men' accountable for unlawful activities, thus promoting a culture of impunity among the political elite. Nevertheless, the political transitions in Zimbabwe and South Africa exemplified a new wave in African political culture, where traditional political culture was usually associated with violence, excessive use of force, bloodshed and killings of innocent citizenry during regime change. Here, political culture demands a "pattern of orientation to political action"¹⁴ that is culturally entrenched in communal, national and regional inclinations, including customs and symbols validated by local understandings of concepts such as representation, power and authority. These common understandings are available and accessible to both the ordinary citizens and political elites.¹⁵

This paper's analysis, therefore, shall be guided by this working definition and will attempt to provide insight into the contemporary political culture and recent political transitions in Africa. Using meta-analysis, this paper drew largely from secondary sources such as books, journals and publications with relevant information on the discourse. It explores research from the pool of studies on political transitions across countries in Africa, thereby categorizing them into both honorable and dishonorable exits. Data gathered was analysed using content analysis and the argument in this paper proceeds in five dimensions. The next section addresses politics and political culture. After that follows the examination of political transitions in Africa, followed by an account of the culture of term limits. The next section examines various political regimes that followed 'honorable' and 'dishonorable' departures. Following this

section is the account of regimes that successfully or unsuccessfully manipulated their national constitutions for tenure elongation as well as those who have not experienced such incidents. The succeeding section provides an argument on the dynamics of political transition and changing political culture in Africa. The final section is the concluding phase of this paper.

Politics and Political Culture in Africa

There was a strong allusion to politics in Africa prior to 1960, when most African countries won independence from colonial rule. While it might not be denoted as a debatable concept within the African traditional discourse, the operationalization of politics is reflected across all spheres of indigenous ways of life, structure and social activities on the continent. The inadequate debate, therefore, renders a somewhat obscure understanding of politics in Africa. The conceptual discourse on African politics began in 1960 when Almond and Verba (1963) opened up a debate on the politics of developing countries, and this behavioral revolution led to the re-thinking and evaluating of African politics. Another contemporary view was also that of David Easton (1957), who emphasized politics as the authoritative allocation of societal values. Subsequently, the study of African politics has progressed in an exceptionally slow pace with regards to reflecting trajectories and dynamics.

Politics in Africa is as diverse as the continent itself. Relative traits can not be attributed across all constituent nation-states of Africa. A good reason for this, one might argue, is that the explanation of African politics was very normative. There was no considerable level of interest on comprehensive and empirically-driven research on African politics, thereby slowing the advancement of theoretical propositions on the subject matter. This indicates why the context of African politics is still fraught with cleavages, as the segregated elements provide inherent lessons to be (un) learned, even by democracies, on political concession and stratification for nation-building.

Irrespective of the context ascribed to African politics, what is ideal in a divergent political space such as Africa, is, according to Rotberg (1999), reciprocal trust created mostly by a combination of formal and informal institutional efforts geared towards the achievement of common goods, social capital and effective governance. The benefits are abounding if these structured politics are ensued. At the periphery, it will facilitate the formation of genuine civil societies with clear interests and feasible end results. Subject matter knowledge of African politics was never given due prominence: a major reason for this being that interests were not directed towards theoretical and empirical engagements on the subject matter. However, African politics has been widely symbolized by concepts of identity politics and ethnic politics. These conceptual frameworks were able to sail through the available discourse, owing to the cultural reactivity of the people towards these components of African politics. Elections are, most often, characterized by highly pronounced rigging, wanton killings and socio-ethnic sentiments as well as electoral malpractices as noticed in many African countries during the early years after independence. The failure of early democratic concretization led to the insurgence of military regimes within the political landscape of Africa. This trend transcends across many Africa states, with the exception of a few countries with long-standing imperialism and non-reactionary measures to political dysfunctionality.

Theoretical factors may moderately explain the framework of Africa politics. In this regard, systems analysis or structural-functionalism are considerable epistemological foundations. Scholars have contended these theoretical approaches in an attempt to provide discursive templates and to place the African context into its proper perspective, upon which Africa's politics can be better prescribed and explained. A cross-section of these theoretical appraisals maintains that the informational nature of African politics appears to be only systemic. It assumes an understanding of politics across the globe, leaving a particular gap in African political institutions and political systems. In furtherance, the study of political culture is a complementary discourse with which the understanding of African politics can be well evaluated. Every insightful detail about politics in Africa maintains this position. Formisano (2001: 405) argued that "political culture is a dominant explanatory and descriptive theme".¹⁷ This contention is not without critique from historians who claim that political culture slights the issue of hegemony and power.¹⁸ Yet, this concept can not be assertively underpinned as it is of colloquial use, as observed from Pye's (1968) definition that "the mere term 'political culture' is capable of evoking quick intuitive understanding, so that people often feel that, without further and explicit definition, they can appreciate its meaning and freely use it".¹⁹

Nevertheless, the ulterior motive of this discourse is to situate the concept within the political arena and cross-examine its influence on the trends of politics in Africa. While it had been acclaimed that the antecedent of political culture appeared vague at its conceptual inception, Almond and Verba (1963), however, annotated that to every political action is an embedded pattern of political orientation. It is the typology of political orientation that is most often used to describe political culture. Simply put, politics in Africa can not deviate from its people's orientations. The inscriptions on African politics are clearly being dotted by the political culture of the people. In subsequent analysis, there are key sociological features that were earlier rejected but later acknowledged as intrinsic factors of political culture. This includes, according to Almond and Verba (1963), attitudes to politics, national character, political values and cultural ethos. Of course, these factors are not only essential; but constitute the explanatory variables themselves.

An upswing in these debate was noticeable in the 1950s and 1960s. Culture was given a dual efficacy; which is, what can be a causal factor to other events and what can be caused by inherent factors in a given society. Berkhofer (1994) thus drew assumptions on political culture as "a matter of underlying systems about patterns of ideas and value". The conceptual discourse on political culture gained more momentum owing to its possibility in evaluating attitudinal and behavioral differences among nations, thereby leading to classifications such as 'parochial' and 'civic' cultures.²⁰ The former represents relatively low individual and group attitudes towards the political system of their societies, while the latter is a representation of higher and informed attitudes and behaviors towards the political configurations of a state.

To this end, political dynamics are a function of the political culture of individuals and groups in a given environment. Thus, what politics entails, in Africa, is a reference point to its political culture. A good picture of African politics can be taken with the lens of the political culture of said society. This explains why politics, in respective African states, has been cloned in varying degrees to the prevalent group and ethnic

attitudes. For instance, women do not easily partake in political races in Northern Africa, as a result of domineering Islamic beliefs and attitudes. This patriarchal attribute represents, according to Nadine (2006), one of the more prominent cultural factors that have a lingering effect on the politics of the region and one that has somewhat minimized the level of women's political participation.

While this could be denoted on a regional scale, the diverse trend still does not completely hold as respective countries within the same region still exhibit different political behaviors and attitudes. As political culture is different from one state to another, so is the politics. This brings about the argument on state political culture – which examines the variations among states in government activities, administrative goals, innovative capacity, popular participation in elections and party competition. State political cultures could also be important determinants of differing rates of political representation in public institutions. These variations are still borne out of the same lineage of cultural, attitudinal and societal diversities. This, to a large extent, substantiates the premise that political culture is a harbinger of politics in Africa. These concepts are, according to Pye (1968), common terms among social scientists. Of course, they appear elusive and reminiscent of other many concepts within social sciences. However, due to concerted interrogations via epistemological and methodological approaches, these concepts are much clearer now than before. Furthermore, this debate continued to late 1990s, when scholars working with the concept were either searching for a causal middle ground on which political culture could serve as an intermediate variable (lobbying for an “interactive” relationship between culture and political structure) or rejecting this approach altogether in favour of a position that emphasized the primacy of institutions, political actors, or individuals' rational choice. Scholars were also turning to the increasingly influential perspectives of anthropology, interpretivism and symbolic analysis. The underlying assertion here is that political culture is the source of political preferences across nations in Africa.

Undying Presidencies: Term Limits and Constitutional Manipulation in Africa

In the first decade following decolonization, African political leaders were described as ‘Big Men’ – unrestricted by the formal rules that emphasized term limits. In this political epoch, leaders derived their authority from a permutation of military might, informal networks and intimidation. Leaders were appointed and withdrawn principally through the barrel of the gun. In this period, it was absurd for a political leader to relinquish power based on a constitutional clause. The plausibility of ignoring constitutional term limits allowed them to declare themselves ‘President for Life’ or to maneuver the legislature to make such pronouncements. Idi Amin in 1976 employed similar tactics, Kwame Nkrumah did in 1964 and Francisco Macías Nguema Jean-Bédél Bokassa did in 1972. Many other African political leaders adopted the same advancements in order to lengthen their tenures.²¹ The trend of lengthening presidential terms beyond the legal boundary was followed by Namibia in 1998, when its national constitution was amended to provide the opportunity for Sam Nujoma to rule for a third term.²² Other attempted manipulations of national constitutions took place during the political reign of Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Paul Kagame of Rwanda, Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi, Teodoro Obiang of Equatorial Guinea, José Eduardo dos Santos of Angola, Paul Biya of Cameroon and Omar Bongo of Gabon. The attempted constitutional amendment to lift term

limit championed by President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso in October 2014 triggered civil protest. This illustrates how African political regimes have utilized constitutional change to continue and perpetuate themselves in positions of power.²³

The President of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza, and the South Sudanese President, Salva Kiir, were elected through constitutional curvatures, while similar anomalies were found in 2016 under President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, who was re-elected following the completion of his constitutional tenure in 2016 and the removal of legal code, allowing him to govern for a fifth term.²⁴ Seven African leaders have triumphantly amended their national constitutions so that tenure elongation could be accomplished. These include Idriss Deby of Chad, Omar Bongo of Gabon, Lansana Conte of Guinea, Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, Sam Nujoma of Namibia, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo. It should be recalled that these leaders have been in power before the adoption of term limits in the 1990s. Their inability to adhere to constitutional tenures was highlighted when they refused to step down following the end of their legal term limits. For instance, President Omar Bongo of Gabon rebuffed the principles enshrined in constitutional term limits, as he became president in 1967 under a one-party system and then in 1991 under a multi-party system where two-term limits were introduced. After the completion of his two terms, he championed a constitutional amendment that put an end to term limits. Correspondingly, Lansana Conte, the President of Guinea, employed a similar tactic in 2003 through a referendum that purged presidential term limits from the Guinean constitution. In the case of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaore abolished term limits, which were later reinstated. However, a constitutional Court of Justice held that the reinstatement could only be employed in future elections and therefore could not be applied to his previous political tenures.

Despite the rampage of constitutional reforms, there are countries where this tactic has proved unsuccessful. In the Nigerian case during the political regime of President Olusegun Obasanjo, Obasanjo attempted to lure the National Assembly to abolish existing term limits, following his completion of a two-term constitutional tenure and his intention to embark on a third one. It was alleged that a large number of parliamentarians were bribed so that the needed two-third majority in the hallowed chamber could have passed the bill for assent. However, the bill suffered a setback as a result of the lack of consensual armistice among the parliamentarians. Following a similar pattern, in Zambia, term limits were stipulated in the national constitution and legal framework of the ruling party - the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD). President Fredrick Chiluba's pursuit for extension of political tenure witnessed severe retardation within his party and from outside the political arena - including from the side of civil society organizations, women's organizations, trade unions, religious organizations, senior politicians and legal practitioners. Strong condemnation by the general public was showcased when citizens mobilized for civil protest against the constitutional reform. While Fredrick Chiluba successfully achieved constitutional amendment of the party's protocols, the public resistance against the national constitution, however, forced him to stand down. Moreover, he did not relinquish power; instead he managed to outsource the seat of power to a loyal presidential candidate that he could easily maneuver. Levy Mwanawasa was handpicked as the MMD presidential candidate whose electoral victory in due course cut the ribbon of patriotic ties with Fredrick Chiluba. During the political administration of Levy Mwanawasa, political immunity for Chiluba was repealed which allowed the government to prosecute Chiluba for corruption charges.

Many constitutional reform campaigners in Africa have presented their arguments in several variations. They often underscore the necessity to sustain reforms as well as to manage the fear of instability (Vencovsky, 2008). Nevertheless, resistance to term limitation emphasizes the personalistic agenda of incumbent regimes, including fear of being prosecuted as a result of human rights abuses or corruption, fear of disconnecting with the patrimonial network, desire for continual power and the absence of future opportunities for erstwhile presidents. Conversely, the protagonists of term limits consider it as an approach to ease ethnic tension in the various regions of the continent. For instance, in Nigeria, term limits are identified as an alternative solution to ethnic political domination. It is important to observe that in an environment where divergent ethnic groups flourish, the feeling of marginalization, alienation and craving for power by an individual ethnic stratum can not be ignored. It has been suggested that power rotations among numerous ethnic groups from the various geo-political zones are capable of smothering burgeoning ethnic tensions and feelings of being marginalized. Thus, the term limit is capable of preventing habitual and lifelong presidencies in any given country. Moreover, the rationale for the implementation of term limits is the belief that the power of incumbency may garner more votes during an election, and thus, bestows the upper advantage to the political regime in power. Term limits consequently provide the prospect for democratic accountability and peaceful power transitions.

Term Limits: Attempted, Failed and No Attempt

In Malawi, President Bakili Muluzi took a objectionable step on constitutional reform to promote his third term agenda. The bill, sponsored by Muluzi, was whitewashed in the Parliament. Following this futile effort, two other bills were put forward to the Parliament. This triggered a wide range of popular uprisings, protests and criticisms from traditional rulers, churches, civil society groups, media, political parties, lawyers and the general public. After the two unsuccessful attempt, Muluzi trekked the path over to Zambia by nominating an obedient successor as the presidential candidate for the next election. However, while Bingu wa Mutharika was nominated as the replacement, subsequent to his inauguration as President of Malawi, the beneficial relationship between the political godfather – Muluzi - and the new president - Bingu wa Mutharika - experienced fallout due to changes in government policies regarding the anti-corruption campaign in the country.²⁵ The implication of incumbent power in such a scenario, as suggested by Cheeseman (2010), is that in an environment where the existing president contests an election, he maintains absolute control of the state apparatus as well as party structure, or in the case where the incumbent president single-handedly nominated his successor, state power may be employed in ensuring the political triumph of such candidate.²⁶ This pattern was also seen in Togo after the demise of President Gnassingbé Eyadema in 2005. The attempt to promote his son, Faure Essozimme Gnassingbé, to the seat of power experienced dramatic resistance from the opposition party. The nomination of preferential candidates by outgoing presidents is aimed at accentuating the existing rules of the political game. A similar occurrence could also be traced to Nigeria during President Olusegun Obasanjo's regime. Following the aborted third-term bid, Obasanjo handpicked Umaru Musa Yar'Adua as the sole presidential candidate under the political auspices of People's Democratic Party [PDP]. It is believed that the nomination of Yar'Adua was underscored politically, as Yar'Adua was not a strong

man in the party and hence needed the support of Obasanjo in determining public policy and conducting the selection of candidates for political appointments. In line with this assumption, Obasanjo mobilized resources to ensure victory for his candidate in a very controversial election.²⁷ Moreover, there are several cases when opposition parties have won the elections. The case of Nigeria under President Goodluck Jonathan, when he was defeated by Muhammadu Buhari, could be used to explain the trepidation of incumbent regimes. Such circumstances give rise to probes of the previous activities of past regimes, as Nigeria is now witnessing allegations of corruption, bribery, money laundering and diversion of public funds by the political cabinet of then President Goodluck Jonathan. Hence, this scenario demonstrates that in nearly all African countries, incumbent regimes would prefer to maintain the hegemonic power of their political party, so as to escape prosecution for any corrupt activities carried out under their reign.

In a recent work of Posner and Young (2018), the duo posit that “with few exceptions, leaders who chose to seek third terms attempted to do so by working through constitutional channels rather than around them.” It presents term limits as a potent driver towards democracy.²⁸ Term limits are offered as a mechanism through which regular elections are conducted, providing a ‘glimmer of hope’ for those in opposition to challenge the incumbency of the regime in power, thus fostering democratic change – even when there is a sitting president.²⁹ Recognizing the recent shocker in Gambia, Nigeria and Ghana, it can be noted that;

Mahama’s loss in Ghana plus the recent defeats of sitting presidents in Nigeria and (despite temporary resistance) the Gambia suggest that incumbents are also facing new threats to their holds on power. In particular, recent transfers of power have been driven by deteriorating economic conditions, opposition learning, more effective and dynamic electoral processes and increasingly assertive voters.³⁰

Contrasting the foregoing model present in different African regimes, Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete is one of a few distinctive African leaders who abide by constitutional term limits. After the completion of two-terms, Kikwete voluntarily stepped down from political leadership of the country. Unlike him, his Burundian counterpart President Pierre Nkurunziza initiated his third-term agenda which later degenerated into violence, and in Burkina Faso, President Blaise Compaore was forced out of power after advancing his third-term political tenure. The cause for a myriad of tenure elongations on the continent is considered to be deficiency in mobilizing strong democratic institutions. In place of strong institutions, many African nations are building strong Big Men. As Craig (2015) argues “strong men are not going to build up strong institutions, strong men are going to build weak institutions in order to remain in power”.³¹ The tables below better articulate numerous African countries that have successfully eliminated term limits, the failed attempts and those that have not attempted any constitutional amendments regarding term limits. Tables 1-3 present respectively the countries that have attempted to extend term limits, those without any attempts and those that have had unsuccessful attempts in removing the constitutional clause for term limits. The tables indicate that between the years 2000 and 2015, the average Composite Democracy Index (CDI) in countries that have successfully removed term limits was 3.6, while countries that have attempted but failed scored 5.7 and in countries where no attempt was made at all the CDI was 7.2. Thus, this demonstrates that the prevailing quality of democracy has a greater

impact in determining whether term limits will be sustained, repealed or removed. Evidence from the tables considers countries like Senegal where the average CDI is 7.7, (stronger as compared to other countries). This suggests that public acceptance of term limits would be in conformity with levels of democracy. However, the empirical study reveals that in countries rated low in CDI, including Swaziland, Guinea, Togo, Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire, citizens' acceptance of term limits was reasonably high. Equally, in countries rated high in CDI, such as Mauritius, Botswana and Lesotho, popular acceptance for term limits was relatively low.³² Generally, in Africa, it can be argued that there is growing popular support for term limits. This could be a result of the entrenchment of democratic institutions, changing political culture and orientation of the African populace. Moreover, the map in Fig. 1 further illustrates the experience of African countries regarding term limits.

Term Limits Removed		
Country	Year	CDI*
Cameroon	2008	3.4
Chad	2005	3.1
Congo, Republic of	2015	3.2
Djibouti	2010	4.3
Equatorial Guinea	2011	2.2
Gabon	2003	3.8
Rwanda	2015	3.4
Togo	2002	4.3
Uganda	2005	5.0
Average CDI		3.6

Failed Attempts to Remove Limits		
Country	Year	CDI*
Burkina Faso	2004	4.6
Malawi	2002	7.6
Nigeria	2006	5.6
Zambia	2001	5.0
Average CDI		5.7

Table 1

Source: Reynjtjens, (2016) *The Struggle Over Term Limits in Africa: A New Look at the Evidence*

Table 2

Source: Reynjtjens, (2016) *The Struggle Over Term Limits in Africa: A New Look at the Evidence*

Table 3

Source:
Reyntjens,
(2016) *The
Struggle Over
Term Limits in
Africa: A New
Look at the
Evidence*

Term Limits Removed	
Country	CDI*
Benin	7.7
Botswana	8.4
Cape Verde	9.2
Comoros	5.3
Ghana	7.9
Guinea-Bissau	5.5
Kenya	6.0
Mali	7.0
Mozambique	6.7
Namibia	7.8
São Tomé and Príncipe	8.9
Senegal	7.6
Seychelles	7.1
Sierra Leone	6.3
South Africa	9.0
Tanzania	5.5
Average CDI	7.2

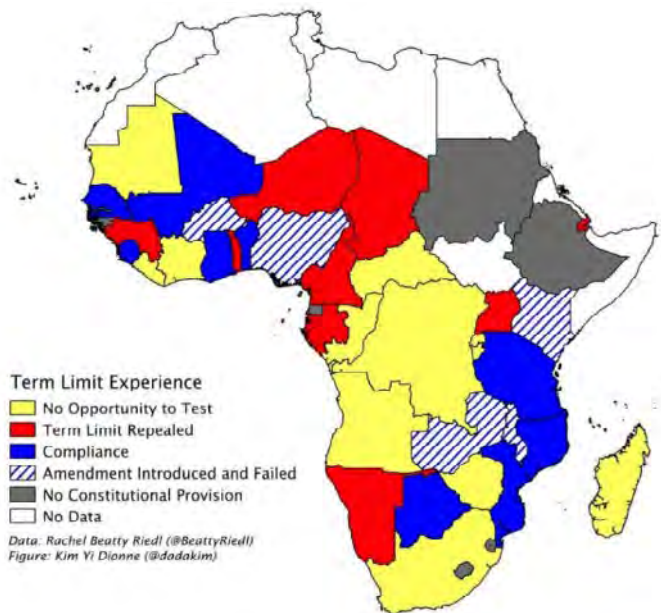


Figure 1.

Source:
Reyntjens,
(2016) *The
Struggle Over
Term Limits in
Africa: A New
Look at the
Evidence*

Between 'Honorable' Departure and 'Dishonorable' Exit

A variation of regimes has shown different approaches to political transition in Africa. Some regimes have taken the path towards constitutional adherence while others seek out more manipulative political machinery so that they can afford themselves lifelong presidencies. Those that followed honorable pathways employed peaceful transition methods and mechanisms at the end of their term limits. Some examples include Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, Mascarenhas Monteiro of Cape Verde, Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, Mathieu Kerekou of Benin, Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania, Alpha Konaré of Mali, Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria and Miguel Trovoada of São Tomé e Príncipe. There are a number of cases in which the incumbent regimes were forced out of power, while some have trekked the path towards an honorable exit after their tenure. Recently, incidences are forcing incumbent political administrations out of power in many African states. Remarkably, public sensitivity towards accountable political administration and (re)orientation of the citizenry are some newer trends believed to be responsible for this contemporary political culture against Africa's extortionists. The case of the former President of Gambia, Yahyah Jammeh, represents an example of a dishonorable departure. Yahya Jammeh was positioned as the ninth longest-serving president on the Africa continent, having ruled Gambia for 22 years.³³ An ever grander historic fall for Yahya Jammeh was circumvented in the last presidential election face-off between him and Adama Barrow, a property developer. Following the declaration, by the national electoral body, of Adama Barrow as the winner of the presidential election, Jammeh conceded defeat to Barrow, pledging to work alongside him for a peaceful political transition. Following this event, Jammeh made a further pronouncement that the election has been annulled as a result of 'foreign interference' and assertively pledged to stay in power until another election could be called. However, the United Nations, ECOWAS and the African Union all avowed that Jammeh would no longer be recognized as the president of Gambia.

A number of high profile delegations, constituting the Presidents of Mauritania, Guinea and Liberia, played a key role in mediating with Jammeh for him to relinquish power. Nevertheless, the mediatory measure proved unproductive and as such, the application of force was considered necessary. ECOWAS had no feasible alternative other than to mobilize regional armed forces constituting of 7,000 personnel from Nigeria, Ghana, Niger and Senegal, among other nations, to station in Senegal. Jammeh, who had initially claimed to rule The Gambia for “one billion years” was forced out of power as a result of the joint effort.³⁴

The ironclad Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe also falls within the context of African leaders that were forcibly ousted from power. Mugabe has been the only president Zimbabweans had experienced since independence. He was a freedom fighter in the independence struggle, seen as an icon for the actualization of the Zimbabwe nation-state from the hands of the British. After 37 years of an autocratic reign, the popular uprising against his regime sprang as a result of the dismissal of Emmerson Mnangagwa - Mugabe's vice president. Following the sacking of Mnangagwa, Mugabe's intention to install his wife as his successor raised a popular rebellion against the government. This marked the beginning of the fall of Mugabe's political administration. This event triggered the urgent convention of a Zimbabwean Parliamentary session. The outcome of parliamentary votes threatened Mugabe's presidency, offering him two political alternatives; either to resign or be impeached. It should be noted that Mugabe has been the leader of the ZANU-PF party for decades. However, the polarization in the party, triggered as a result of Mnangagwa's removal, divided loyalties inside the ZANU-PF party. Following this episode, Robert Mugabe was forced out of power by the military, marking the demise of Mugabe's political leadership of Zimbabwe. The factors that produced the dishonorable exit of Robert Mugabe unfolded in two dimensions; first, the struggle over who will succeed him inside ZANU-PF and second, the divided loyalties between those loyal to former vice president Mnangagwa and those supporting Grace Mugabe. The African Union recognized that the Zimbabwean people have expressed their wishes that there should be a peaceful transfer of power in a manner that secures the democratic future of the country. President Mugabe's decision to resign, paving the way for a transition process, was owned and led by the sovereign people of Zimbabwe”.³⁵

Democratic Transition in Post-Colonial Africa

The character of political transitions varies across borders. The pathways in Latin America, Eastern Europe and Southern Europe are inevitably not identical with those taken in Africa. Political transitions in divergent environments are shaped by cultural and historical traditions. To start with, political transition implies a process of transferring power between one regime to another. A successful political transition provides a favorable environment for new governments to operate.³⁶ Still, two basic approaches to democratic transition have been considered; these include the transition from above and transition from below. The transition from above occurs when political leaders respond to looming crisis and take corrective measures by initiating democratic reforms. In contrast, the transition from below occurs when the incumbent political leadership succumbs to popular pressure from the public. While confronting it with pact formation, a national conference, a coup d'état or popular revolution, it is generically envisaged as a pathway to achieve democratic advancement. It has been argued that transitions from above have the capability to deliver democracy. This is because such transitions are habitually coordinated within

a specific time frame, procedure and strategy. On the contrary, the transition from below is often beleaguered with uncertainty, negotiation and the excessive use of force on proponents by the government in power.³⁷ Another perspective in the study of political transition argues that very few transitions to democratic regimes were made possible as a result of revolutionary bursts that surmounted the incumbent regimes through popular revolt.³⁸ The trepidation of plummeting the nation into crisis emboldened many regimes into dialogue with opposition parties to secure political transitions. As Adler and Webster (1995: 82) argues,

protagonists agree to terminate conflict...because they fear that a continuation of conflict may lead to a civil war that will be both collectively and individually threatening. The pressure to stabilize the situation is tremendous since governance must somehow continue. Chaos is the worst alternative for all.³⁹

Huntington's (1993) explanation of the 'third wave' of democratic transitions in thirty-five countries provides a myopic relationship between the nature of incumbent authoritarian regimes and political transition. He argues that while political transitions are often prompted from the top down, such occurrences are by the same token probable in personalistic or single-party military regimes. Yet, political leaders in one-party states and military regimes are more likely than a personal dictator to engage in dialogue with the opposition in the course of transferring power. In fact, personalistic regimes are more vulnerable to capitulate when compared to other regimes, especially in the process of popular protest. He further argues that dictatorial regimes often stay long in power and are obstinate to relinquish power.⁴⁰

A few prototypes of such regimes are found in the political ecology of Africa. African political regimes were incongruent with the movement for democratic multipartyism, considering examples from Kenya during the political regime of President Daniel Arap Moi, whose political philosophy thwarted political pluralism and disparaged the campaigner of multi-party democracy. A similar venture was also made by President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, who sponsored a de jure one-party state which was later abandoned as a result of pressure from eminent outspoken citizens and donor nations. The protagonists of a one-party system justified the structure on a number of grounds, including the traditional supremacy of an 'unchallenged chief', the recognition of a democratic majority articulated through a single-party system and the necessity for unity among divergent ethnic, cultural and linguistic groups. Thus, competitive politics was discarded as a foreign luxury neither necessary for nor logical in Africa. A similar trend was observed in Malawi, where the rationale for a nostalgic single-party system was analyzed based on the quasi-theological premise that there is no opposition in Heaven. God himself does not want opposition — that is why he chased Satan away. Why should Kamuzu [President Banda] have opposition then? ⁴¹

Since 1989, several transitions from authoritarian to democratic regimes have taken place; conversely, many of these constitutionally instituted political regimes were short-lived, except in a number of cases where democracy has found to be resilient. Even though the trajectory of democratic transition has been defective, the acceptance of freedom of expression and recognition of 'legitimate opposition' are continually reinforced.⁴² There are critical moments and dynamics in a transitory period, and such occurrences habitually compel a dictatorial or military state to

dialogue with civil society organizations or concerned citizens. Transitioning into a democratic state requires electoral competition and the acceptance of defeat by the opposition.⁴³ The acceptance of defeat makes the process of transition less troublesome. In Africa, it is well known that fraudulent elections represent one of the major challenges subjugating democratic transition; the legitimization of the de jure incoming regime becomes difficult due to electoral corruption and the inability of the opposition to concede defeat. There were a series of recent protests challenging the credibility of elections across Africa. The 1999 elections in Nigeria, and subsequent ones, were challenged by local and international election observers – the Carter Center, National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Republican Institute (IRI), Transition Monitoring Group (TMG), the European Union as well as the opposition.⁴⁴ More recently, Kenya's presidential election race, between President Uhuru Kenyatta and veteran opposition politician Raila Odinga, triggered protests that killed twenty-four persons, showing how the credibility of an election could obstruct peaceful political transition.⁴⁵ Remarkably, in a political environment where the opposition acknowledges its defeat, political transition becomes acquiescence and therefore enhances democratic stability. It is against this background that Bratton (1994: 27), argues that:

Whether a democratic regime becomes consolidated depends upon the acceptance by all political actors, especially the losers of the election, of a new and stable set of political rules including the convocation of regular subsequent elections. It may take generations to consolidate a democracy. Regime consolidation can only be said to have occurred after significant threats of regime reversal (e.g, from the military or a “disloyal” opposition) have been effectively eliminated or contained.⁴⁶

In this context, political transitions have continued to change from vicious traditional nomenclature to a more peaceful and mature democratic mechanism that has come to domicile within the African political environment, therefore, driving the continent towards ideal democracy.

From Political Pettiness to Political Adolescence: The Shifting Paradigm in African Political Culture

Following the ‘third wave’ of democratization in 1989, African dictators bowed to the conventional demands for political reform. The reforms considerably centered on term limits, multi-party elections and representative parliaments. The quest for institutional reforms recorded significant victories which reduced the host of African autocracies from 45 to 30. Nonetheless, since the year 2000, some elected presidents have attempted to extend their tenure by the constitutional manipulation that brought them to power.⁴⁷ However, starting from the 1990s, the nature of African leadership has slowly began to change; this era witnessed a paradigm shift from “coup d'états to voluntary resignations”, moving the region towards ‘institutionalized political order’.⁴⁸ A larger percentage of contemporary African political leaders utilize democratic order as compared to their comrades from 25 years ago.⁴⁹ These changes are evident in a series of socio-political metamorphosis. For instance, most African countries have political histories that are littered with civil wars, military coups and the demise of multi-party systems. This depicts the paltry nature of African politics as a result of events that were culturally, attitudinally and behaviorally driven. In an attempt to shift from this milieu, Africanisation of the polity began to strive towards

the proliferation of political authority figures, as well as organizations and networks that serve as interest groups in place of formal governmental institutions. This institutional upsurge constitutes the organic part of the African political process. Without recourse, organizations and networks have played important roles in the relative stability and continuity of democratic governance on the continent. By 1989, the winds of political change had signaled throughout Africa. Yet, at this stage, African politics was still handicapped by fundamental human rights abuses, economic mismanagement, nepotism and political repression. This makes the popular struggle for democratic consolidation not outrightly new. Remarkably, the current political transition in Africa is taking different forms. It is ensuing from various dimensions with different outcomes, depending on the inducement of external bodies as well as prevailing socio-political configurations. In this respect, existing studies have cautiously identified various typologies of political transition in Africa.

Among the Francophone countries, it can be noted that political powers were transited and government structures were formed via national conferences. According to Martin (1993), this could, however, be likened to a transitional government with a dual executive. It was evident that this type of process had already taken place in Benin, Congo, Gabon, Mali and Niger. More notably, a similar process of political transition has once manifested to a full military regime in Nigeria, led by General Sani Abacha. There are examples of such processes being truncated mid-way, as in Togo and Zaire. Transition has also been fully chanted by opposition groups in countries like Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic/CAR, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and Madagascar.⁵⁰ Furthermore, political transition in some African countries have been facilitated via multi-party elections. Initially, no African country (with the notable exception of Mauritius) had experienced a change of government via multi-party elections in the post-independence era. Such government change (without a national conference) has since taken place in Senegal (February 1988); Cape Verde and Sao Tome & Principe (March 1991); and Zambia (October 1991). Some countries had co-opted transitions and these include Cote d'Ivoire (October 1990); Gabon (September-October 1990); Ethiopia (June 1992); Cameroon (October 1992); Ghana (November 1992); and Kenya (December 1992). It was also the most probable outcome in the Central African Republic (1993). In Togo, President Eyadema had managed to subvert the transition process by wresting power from the prime minister, Kokou Koffigoh, who was democratically elected by the National Conference (July-August 1991). A similar scenario unfolded in 1993 to the benefit of Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire.

Previous descriptions of African political transitions could be declared pettiness while political pubescence or adolescence can be considered in the instance of guided democratization. This was represented, most notably, by Burkina Faso, Guinea, Nigeria and, to a lesser extent, by Ghana and Mauritania, where military regimes retained virtually complete control over the transition process making it deliberately complex and prolonged. Contrary to this, the relative pettiness of political transition was observed via authoritarian action and sub-national conflict. For states in this category, the process of political restructuring has been hampered either by the stubborn refusal of the incumbent leader to open up the political system (Malawi), or by open or latent sub-national conflict (Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Chad, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia and Tunisia). Moreover, the recent change in government in Zimbabwe, South Africa and The Gambia symbolizes how the African region is moving towards more mature political transitions. Although The Gambia and Zimbabwe experiences might look somewhat forceful, willful resignations are

seemingly uncommon in Africa and stand against the long-established tradition of African political leadership to hold on to power for life. This thus marks the changing political culture of African governance.⁵¹ The tables below exemplify the progressive pace in democratization acculturation in Africa.

Table 4 illustrates the patterns of polarity and improved democratic constitutionalism between Africa and the rest of the world from 1985 to 2014. Table 5, by Freedom House, further depicts the declining rate of conflicts in the African region. Beginning from the year 1990, the region experienced a drastic reduction in the one-party system as well as the diminution in conflict, especially starting from the year 2000. This epoch also began to produce the entrenchment of multi-partyism, freedom of association and improved freedom of the press. The number of semi-authoritarian, hybrid and democratic countries climaxed in 2005. However, some countries have experienced improvements with regards to civil liberties and political rights and these include countries like Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Liberia, Burkina Faso and Cote D'Ivoire while countries like Uganda, Burundi, South Africa, Ethiopia and Gambia witnessed a decline. Hybrid regimes were considered neither dictatorial nor fully democratized. Yet, some African leaders attempted to stay in power way beyond their constitutional limits, seeking constitutional reforms in order to remain in power. Table 6 indicates the category of countries that have experienced improvement in democratic leadership, especially from the year 2006 to 2015. Surprisingly, the Republic of Benin is considered among the most rapid democratizers, while democratic regression was marked in eleven countries.

Table 4
Democratic
Progress
Scores

Source: Center for Systemic Peace. Harbeson J. (2018) Democracy and the State in Sub-Saharan Africa (eds) in 'Africa In World Politics: Constructing Political And Economic Order

	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2014
World	-1.45	0.70	2.60	3.02	3.71	3.94	4.28
Africa	-5.64	-5.02	0.00	0.69	1.88	2.39	2.70

Table 5
Changes in
Levels of
Democratization
Since 1975 in
Africa

Source: Freedom House, www.freedomhouse.org. Adapted from Tripp, A. (2008) In Pursuit of Autonomy: Civil Society and the State in Africa, (eds) in 'Africa in world Politics: Constructing Political and Economic Order

Years	Democratic Regimes	Hybrid Regimes	Authoritarian Regimes
1975	8%	30%	63%
1985	4	28	69
1995	19	39	42
2005	23	44	33
2016	18	41	41

Sustained Democracies		Most Rapidly Democratizing Countries		
	2015 Score		10-Year Ave Score	Change 2006-2015
Cape Verde	90	Cote d'Ivoire	40.0	30
Mauritius	90	Togo	29.2	25
Ghana	83	Zimbabwe	18.5	17
Benin	82	Benin	80.3	12
São Tomé and Príncipe	81	Guinea	46.2	8
South Africa	79	Comoros	54.0	7
Namibia	77	Burkina Faso	52.4	6
Botswana	73			

Table 6
Democracies and Most Rapidly Democratizing Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, 2006–2015

Source: Freedom House, www.freedomhouse.org. Adapted from Tripp, A. (2008) In Pursuit of Autonomy: Civil Society and the State in Africa, (eds) in 'Africa in World Politics: Constructing Political and Economic Order

Conclusion

Gone are the days when African 'Big Men' perpetuated themselves in cycles of continued leadership and power. The contemporary African citizenry is becoming more politically enlightened and their political orientation has shifted from the long-established political culture to more mature democratic evolution. The winds of change are raging across the region and so-called 'third termers' are fading away. Today, at least 75 percent or more of presidential administrations are fused with term limits, according to the 2015 Afrobarometer report. While term limits have been scrapped in at least nine African countries such as Niger, Chad, Rwanda, Cameroon, Togo, Uganda, Guinea, Djibouti and Gabon, some insubordinate political leaders have attempted to hold on to power through the instrumentality of constitutional manipulation or unconditional disobedience to established term limits. Some of these regimes have found it easy to do so, by channeling constitutional manipulation through parliamentarians. Once their party holds the majority in parliament, it becomes easy to achieve tenure elongation. This political logic has been witnessed in a host of African countries, including Nigeria under President Olusegun Obasanjo seeking his third term after the completion of two terms. The elongation was later blockaded by the upper legislative chamber - National Assembly. In some countries, the considerable instrumentality of civil society is also being observed. In Malawi, a coalition of civil society organizations had been mobilized against the abolition of term limits fronted by President Bakili Muzuli, while similar occurrences witnessed resistance from women organizations, opposition parties, church coalitions and NGOs against President Frederick Chiluba's third term agenda in Zambia. The overview presented in this paper marked a symbolic departure from articulating the dye-hard political leadership model to a more civilized democratic practice in Africa. This transition is owing to a myriad of factors, including the changing political orientation of the citizenry, media autonomy, effective civil society organizations

as well as popular displeasure with the constitutional reform crusaders regarding tenure elongation or what some countries refer to as 'third term' political regimes. The combination of such metamorphosis leads to advancement that slowly aides the political maturity of African states. The current indication in the continent has mixed outcomes for tenure elongation and for constitutionally abiding regimes. This development has depicted the changing political culture in the region. At the same time, it should be understood that while there has been remarkable advancement in some countries, there has also been no progress or little advancement in others. Thus, it is noteworthy to recognize the fundamentalism of constitutional adherence to term limits. The rationale for this can be viewed through dual lenses; first, the mere compliance with constitutional term limits by the incumbent regimes could facilitate a constructive tradition that can, in a practical sense, advance further change. In doing so, it becomes a conventional norm for acceptable political behavior and a substantial example for the African political community. Therefore, it is necessary to make it difficult for tenure elongation seekers to attempt constitutional reform. Second, the international community should recognize the significant contribution of civil society in creating momentum against future movement by constitutional reformists. Moreover, successes recorded and lessons learnt in other countries that have scaled through the hurdles of regime elongation could serve as reference points and sources of inspiration for others yet to adopt strict constitutional adherence. The experience of a country like Nigeria, that has scaled through the web of such political leadership, could offer other African nations encouragement to consider conventional the precept of democratic routine on tenure limit, and therefore provide a congenial environment for peaceful political transitions on the African continent.

Notes

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