

AFRICAN JOURNAL ON CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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**Climate Change and Natural Resource Conflict in ECOWAS
and ECCAS Regions: Implications for State Security Forces**

**Building Peace from the Grassroots with Informal Peace
Infrastructures: Experiences from the Ojoo Community, Ibadan, Nigeria**

**Regionalism and the Fight Against Terrorism in Southern Africa:
Reflections on Cabo Delgado in Mozambique**

**The Role of the Judiciary in the Resolution of
Intra-Party Conflicts in Lesotho**



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The *African Journal on Conflict Resolution* is a peer-reviewed journal published by the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) for the multidisciplinary subject field of conflict resolution. There are two regular issues per year, and occasionally also a special issue on a particular theme. It appears on the list of journals accredited by the South African Department of Higher Education and Training. ACCORD is a non-governmental, non-aligned conflict resolution organisation based in Durban, South Africa. ACCORD is constituted as an education trust.

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Articles should be of good academic quality, and should be between 6 000 and 8 000 words in length. An abstract of between 100 and 200 words, a list of six keywords for indexing purposes and a few lines about the author should be included. Book reviews should be between 1 000 and 1 500 words.

All references, according to the Harvard method, should be included. As far as possible, in-text references should include the page numbers of the sections of sources referred to. In the case of a direct quotation, the exact page number is absolutely necessary. For the purpose of adding extra details, comments or references which may distract attention from the argument in the text, footnotes may be used sparingly. For more information about the referencing system, please see the excerpt from ACCORD's Style Guide, which is available at <<http://www.accord.org.za>>

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Foreword

Cedric de Coning

This edition of the Journal marks an important transition that has been in the making for many years. From the establishment of the Journal in 1999 until this year, the African Journal on Conflict Resolution (AJCR) has been published by ACCORD through an in-house and self-managed process. Starting with the first edition of the AJCR in 2024 we will move to a publication process that will use the Khulisa Journals' online publication process. Khulisa uses open-source software to manage the workflow of the journal. Authors will therefore be able to submit their articles, track the progress of the articles and liaise with the editors in one online space.

This transition is part of a process involving the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) and the Department of Science and Innovation, South Africa, which is captured in a 2021 report entitled *The Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa Report on Grouped Peer Review of Scholarly Journals in History, Philosophy, and Politics*. In this report, the continued accreditation of the AJCR by the South African Department of Higher Education (DHET) was recommended. In addition, the AJCR was invited to form part of the South African portal of the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO). SciELO is an open access, multinational platform that houses open access journals which meet certain standards and are considered to be of high quality.

The invitation to be a part of SciELO means that the AJCR receives automatic accreditation from the DHET and will gain access to indexes like the Clarivate Analytics' Web of Science portal, SCOPUS, International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS) and the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). This will greatly improve global visibility and access to the AJCR. It also ensures that the AJCR continues to maintain publishing best-practice standards and assists the editorial

team to better measure the impact of the journal through bibliometric analysis. 2023 was a transition year and, while both editions of the Journal have been published on the Khulisa platform, the publication process was still managed manually. As of 2024, authors will contribute articles via Khulisa, and the review and publication process will be managed via the Khulisa content management platform. The AJCR will remain open access and will also be published on the ACCORD website. This is an important milestone for the Journal and will also improve citation recognition for our contributors.

In this edition of the journal, we cover conflict management experiences in West, Central and Southern Africa. In our first contribution, Freedom C. Onuoha, Oluwole Ojewale and Chukwunonso Joseph Akogwu consider the implications of climate change and natural resource conflicts in the ECOWAS and ECCAS Regions for State Security Forces. In our second article, Oseremen Felix Irene uses experiences from the Ojoo community in Ibadan, Nigeria to analyse how peace can be built from below, using informal peace infrastructures. Our third article is by Alexander Madanha Rusero and Kudzai Arnold Maisiri who consider regionalism and the fight against terrorism in Southern Africa by analysing the situation in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique. Our last article is by Mamello Rakolobe and Hoolo 'Nyane. They analyse the role of the judiciary in the resolution of intra-party conflicts in Lesotho.

As usual, we end this edition of the Journal with a book review. Zikho Dana reviews *War, Women and Post-conflict Empowerment: Lessons from Sierra Leone*, edited by Josephine Beoku-Betts and Fredline A. M'Cormack-Hale, and published by Zed Books (Bloomsbury Publishing Plc) in 2022.

Since the launch of the African Journal on Conflict Resolution, our aim has been to contribute to the intellectual development of the field of conflict management on the African continent. We hope that you will find this collection of articles by African researchers on African conflict resolution experiences valuable for your research and practice.

Climate Change and Natural Resource Conflict in ECOWAS and ECCAS Regions: Implications for State Security Forces

Freedom C. Onuoha^{}, Oluwale Ojewale^{**} and
Chukwunonso Joseph Akogwu^{***}*

Abstract

Climate change has emerged as the imminent threat to national security in many regions of the world. Nowhere is this reality more acute than in West and Central Africa where surging population growth, rising urbanisation, persistent environmental degradation, emergence of violent extremist organisations and weak state capacity have created a perfect storm of insecurity. It is against this backdrop that this article examines the nexus and dynamics of climate change and natural resource conflicts in ECOWAS and ECCAS regions, with a view to highlighting its security implications. This study notes that climate change contributes to increased conflict, but along indirect pathways. Across the two regions, climate change is experienced through rising temperatures, droughts and destructive floods, which greatly undermine people's well-being and compound the fragility of states. This calls for the capacitation of state security forces through orientation and training that foster good understanding of the complex relationship between climate change, peace

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and security. The study concludes by offering strategic recommendations and policy directions to effectively tackle the climate change and natural resource conflict challenges in the contiguous regions.

Keywords: Climate change, Conflicts, Natural resources, Sahel, Security

1. Introduction

Since the Earth was formed, around 4.54 billion years ago, nature has remained critical to the survival of human society and the ecosystem. It provides the oxygen that living things need to breathe, regulates weather patterns, supplies food and water for all living creatures, and is home to countless wildlife species and the ecosystems they need to survive. However, according to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), human activity has disturbed nearly 75% of the Earth's surface and put millions of animal and plant species on the endangered list. Human society has continuously overexploited nature's resources through land deforestation for agriculture and the livestock industry, while climate change is now exacerbating this degradation faster than ever, increasing erosion and desertification (Congo Basin Forest Partnership, 2021; The National Adaptation Plan to Climate Change, 2021; Giresse et al., 2023; Ojewale, 2023; Onuoha, 2023).

The climate change phenomenon is undoubtedly a global concern and, for the foreseeable future, would continue to receive attention from individuals, communities, organisations and states. The reason for this is not far-fetched. The dynamics of climate change are driving dramatic shocks that generate or exacerbate poverty, migration, conflicts, disease, mortality and the destruction of property and livelihoods across the regions of the world. As noted by Onuoha and Ezirim (2010:255), “climate change does not fit into the mode of traditional threats to national security, such as war, terrorism, insurgency, espionage, or sabotage. Yet its non-violent and gradual dynamics of manifestation serve only to disguise its impact on livelihoods, social order, peace, and stability.” In a sense, climate change is already adding a complex dimension to the humanitarian, security and natural resource challenges that confront individuals, communities and states on a daily basis. While no state or region is obviously immune to the deleterious impact of climate change, the difference in its impact on individuals, communities or states lies partly on the level of vulnerability or exposure, adaptive

capacity of the entity impacted upon, and the institutional capacity of authorities to respond to the effects of climate change.

In terms of broad geographical regions, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has found that Africa is already feeling the effect of climatic change and will experience more changes in the years ahead; yet, the continent has limited ability to adapt (IPCC, 2007). The cruellest irony of climate change is that the regions (in particular the poor and vulnerable groups living in these regions) that emit less of the greenhouse gases (GHG) – significantly responsible for climate change – suffer the worst impact of climate change. For example, in 2004, Africa, with almost 920 million people, contributed 7.8% of GHG emissions, while the USA and Canada, with 326 million people, contributed 19.4% of emissions (Cilliers, 2009). A study by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), which estimates the effect of climate change on Africa by 2050, indicates that Southern Africa and the Sahel, the Great Lakes region and the coastal zones of eastern and western Africa, will be chiefly at risk (DFID, 2006).

Nowhere is this prediction, or reality, more acute than in West and Central Africa where surging population growth, rising urbanisation, persistent environmental degradation, emergence of violent extremist organisations and weak state capacity have created a perfect storm of insecurity. Across the two regions, climate change is experienced through rising temperatures, droughts and destructive floods, which greatly undermines people's well-being and compounds the fragility of states. Aware of the current and predicted impact of climate change on both regions, their respective regional economic communities (RECs), namely the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), are taking diverse measures. These include sensitisation workshops, drafting of climate change mitigative and adaptation strategies and participation in the Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to contribute to negotiations on relevant international undertakings to decrease GHG emissions. Notwithstanding, West and Central Africa have been identified as climate-change hotspots. Population growth and environmental degradation are intensifying competition over already scarce natural resources in the regions, such as land and water. Climate change is set to

increase such competition even further with potential to cause or exacerbate natural resource conflicts.

It is against this backdrop that this article examines the nexus and dynamics of climate change and natural resource conflicts in ECOWAS and ECCAS regions, which form the greater part of the Sahel, with a view to highlighting its security implications. The Sahel region is arguably the most hit by climate security risks. The article is guided by the following questions: Is there any linkage between climate change and natural resource conflicts in the ECOWAS–ECCAS regions? If so, what are the implications of the climate change–natural resource conflicts nexus for the regions? What measures could be adopted to mitigate or adapt to the security challenges posed by climate change in West and Central Africa? The subsequent sections of this paper are organised to respond to these questions and other related concerns.

2. Understanding the concept of climate change and natural resource conflict

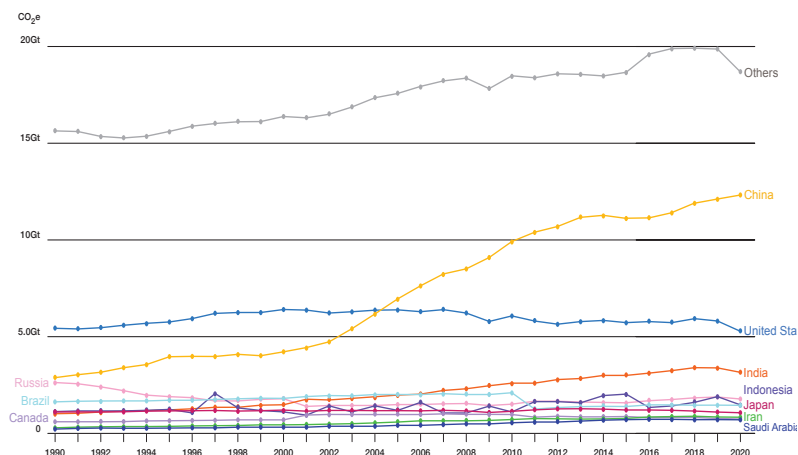
Given the tendency for concepts to elicit varying interpretations, particularly in the social sciences, we clarify our use of these concepts – climate change and natural resource conflicts – as a means to understanding their meaning and linkages in relation to West and Central Africa as a referent context.

In the simplest sense, climate change refers to change in climate overtime, as a result of either or both natural variability and anthropogenic factors. Culling from Article 1 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, 1992:4), “climate change refers to a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.” Climate change has also often been called the single biggest challenge for humanity over the coming centuries (Huntjens and Nachbar, 2015; Yamba et al., 2023).

There are lots of things that affect climate change, but the evidence is irrefutable. There is a large scientific consensus that humans are the leading cause of climate change. In their latest report, the IPCC states unequivocally that human activity is the principal cause of global warming. Human activity, such as burning fossil fuels and changing how human beings use the land, is the leading cause of climate change.

The gas responsible for the most warming is carbon dioxide, also called CO₂. According to Climate Watch (2022), developed countries are responsible for nearly 80% of all human-related CO₂ emissions between 1850 and 2011. Data in Figure 1 indicate that about 60% of GHG emissions come from just 10 countries, while the 100 least-emitting countries contributed less than 3%. Today, the richest 10% of people on the planet are responsible for nearly half of all carbon emissions (Ghosh, 2022).

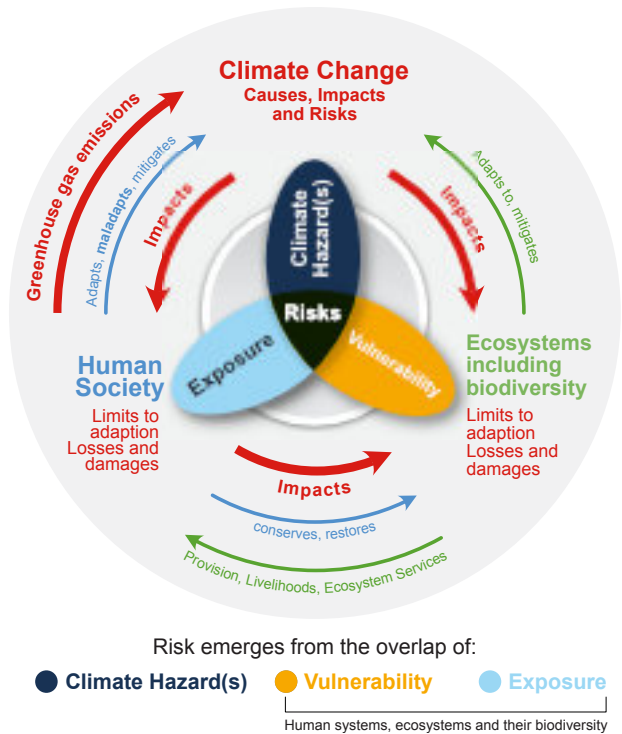
Figure 1: The top 10 countries in global greenhouse gas emissions, 1990–2020



Source: Climate Watch (2023)

Climate change is repeatedly being responded to as a major threat to peace and security in human society. This is understandable given the way it generates new risks or aggravates old ones. In its latest assessment report, the IPCC (2022) highlights how human-induced climate change, including more frequent and intense extreme events, has caused widespread adverse impacts and related losses and damages to nature and people, beyond natural climate variability. Figure 2 below provides an illustration of the interactions among the coupled systems climate, ecosystems (including their biodiversity) and human society. These interactions are the basis of emerging risks from climate change, ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss (IPCC, 2022). Its core assumption is that human society causes climate change.

Figure 2: Interactions among climate change, ecosystems and human society



Source: IPCC (2022)

Climate change, through hazards, exposure and vulnerability, generates impacts and risks that can surpass limits to adaptation and results in losses and damages (IPCC, 2022). Human society can adapt to, maladapt and mitigate climate change; ecosystems can adapt and mitigate within limits. Ecosystems and their biodiversity provision livelihoods and ecosystem services. Human society has an impact on ecosystems and can restore and conserve them. The arrow colours represent principle human society interactions (blue), ecosystem (including biodiversity) interactions (green) and the impact of climate change and human activities, including

losses and damages, under continued climate change (red). As depicted in the schema, the risk propeller shows that risk emerges from the overlap of climate hazards, vulnerability and exposure. A major risk associated with climate change is its tendency to act as a threat multiplier for instability, conflict and violence. What then are natural resource conflicts?

The ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework defines natural resources as “land, water, the environment and all material objects, natural or synthetic, found on and below the land, in and beneath water masses and in the atmosphere, and which can be transformed to produce value.” (ECOWAS, 2008) This definition reveals that natural resources are material endowments of nature in their original form, which are used to support life or create useable values in the realms of economics, commerce, industry and technology. Natural resources such as land, water, timber, minerals, metals and oil are vitally important sources of livelihood, income and influence for individuals, groups, communities and states around the globe. When natural resources are poorly managed or inequitably shared, however, or when (corporate) resource exploitation is implemented without due consideration for context and communities, they can contribute to tensions that can escalate into violent conflict, or feed into and exacerbate pre-existing conflict dynamics (United Nations Department of Political Affairs and United Nations Environment Programme, 2015).

Conflict, in this context, is defined as,

a situation of struggle between and/or among opposing individuals, groups, communities or states over certain perceived desirable values arising from differences in the action of any of the parties in the quest to realise or secure those values. The struggle may be over tangible values such as money, property, land, water, mineral resources, or animals. It may be intangible values such as power, influence, title, respect, and position, to mention but a few (Onuoha, 2008:41).

The conflict thus arises from the interaction of individuals or groups who pursue incompatible goals using incompatible means, leading to a situation of deprivation for any of the parties. On this note, Mark and Synder (1971) contend that a key element of all conflicts is the existence

of resource scarcity where the wants of all actors cannot be fully satisfied and where the quests for such resources result in conflict behaviour.

Natural resource conflicts are “essentially social conflicts (violent or non-violent) that primarily revolve around how individuals, households, communities and states control or gain access to resources within specific economic and political frameworks” (Turner, 2004:2). In other words, it is a “social or political conflict where natural resources contribute to the onset, aggravation, or sustaining of the conflict, due to disagreements or competition over the access to and management of natural resources, and the unequal burdens and benefits, profits, or power generated thereof” (Schellens and Diemer, 2020). Natural resource conflicts typically involve one or more of the following: (i) micro–micro conflicts between or among local stakeholders; (ii) micro–macro conflicts between local and national or international stakeholders, and (iii) macro–macro conflicts such as intergovernmental conflicts. Table 1 below shows examples of the different types of conflict arising in natural resource management. The causes of natural resource conflicts are often complex and multi-layered. A basic distinction can be made between contributing causes (such as climate change or proliferation of arms) and root causes (such as governance or inequality) (Funder et al., 2012).

Table 1: Examples of natural resource conflict

Type	Manifestations
Micro–Micro conflicts	Intra-community conflicts where some households are excluded or further disadvantaged and benefits captured by other community members Conflict over land access between pastoralists and crop farmers Conflicts over water access between long-standing resident groups and newcomer households Conflicts between neighbouring clan leaders over the control of pasture
Micro–Macro conflicts	Conflicts between customary and government authorities over control of land allocation Conflicts between local farmers and the state over protected areas Conflicts between fishermen and the state over hydropower production
Macro–Macro conflicts	Conflicts between two riparian states sharing a river course Conflicts between international NGOs and the state over logging Conflicts between international companies over diamond and fossil fuel resources

Source: Funder et al. (2012)

3. Theoretical framework

Natural resource conflicts are a common feature in many areas of the developing world, and reflect the widespread dependence on access to natural resources for local livelihoods (FAO, 2005). Since the mid-1990s, there has been a growing body of research on the causes of civil wars or violent conflicts. One of the important findings is that natural resources play a key role in triggering, prolonging and financing these conflicts. This finding is not particularly new (Ross, 2003). Indeed, the control and exploitation of natural resources has played a role in many violent conflicts throughout history (Berdal and Malone, 2000). Local conflicts are often resource related, particularly in rural areas where material conditions are poor. For the last three decades, one-third of peacekeeping operations have taken place in areas where the conflicts have been economically fuelled, or otherwise driven, by natural resources. According to Ross (2003:17), “the resources that cause these problems are largely oil and hard-rock minerals, including coltan, diamond, gold and other gemstones.” However, population growth and environmental degradation are intensifying competition over natural resources, such as land and water. Climate change is set to increase such competition even further, now and in the near future.

Africa has seven distinct climatic zones and ecosystems, ranging from that of the Sahara to the rainforests of Central Africa. The impact of climate change will vary between and within countries. However, available climate change evidence for Africa suggests increasingly scarce water resources in Central Africa, declining and failing agricultural yields and drought in the Horn of Africa, encroaching, desert-like environments in the Sahel region, the destruction of marine and coastal resources, and damage to property and infrastructure. These changes are already undermining the carrying capacity of Africa’s land and water formations, causing destabilising population movements and raising tensions over dwindling key resources (Adano and Daudi, 2012).

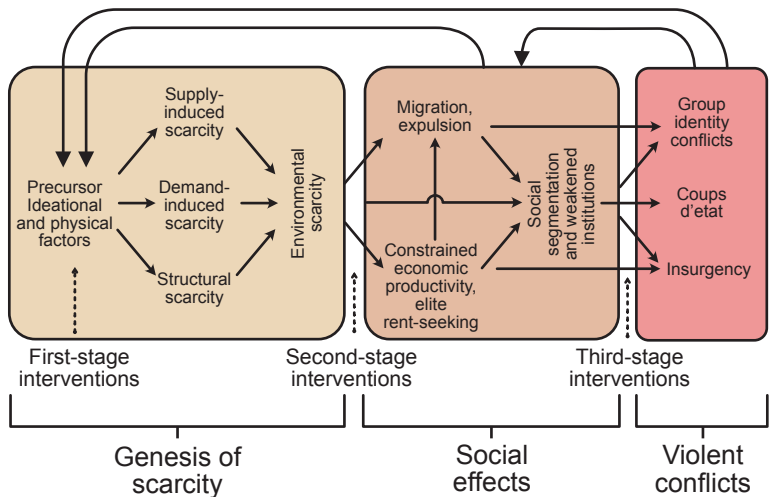
Under these circumstances, climate change becomes a significant factor that drives or compounds resource scarcity amid rising populations, especially under conditions of poor governance. Consequently, the diminution or depletion of natural resources undermines livelihood systems and increases the risk of conflicts, especially where conflict management mechanisms are weak, non-existent or where historic grievances fester or remain unaddressed. Its manifestation is best

understood from the core propositions of the Eco-violence theory, propounded by Thomas Homer-Dixon. Homer-Dixon and Blitt (1998) argue that large populations in many developing countries are highly dependent on four key environmental [natural] resources that are very fundamental to crop production: fresh water, cropland, forests and fish. Scarcity or shrinking of these resources as a result of misuse, over-use or degradation under certain circumstances will trigger off conflicts (see Figure 3 below).

According to Homer-Dixon:

Decreases in the quality and quantity of renewable resources, population growth, and unequal resource access act singly or in various combinations to increase the scarcity for certain population groups, of cropland, water, forests, and fish. This can reduce economic productivity, both for the local groups experiencing the scarcity and for the larger regional and national economies. The affected people may migrate or be expelled to new lands. Migrating groups often trigger ethnic conflicts when they move to new areas, while decreases in wealth can cause deprivation conflicts (Homer-Dixon, 1999:30).

Figure 3: Link between natural [environmental] resource scarcity and violent conflict



Source: Homer-Dixon (1999)

Climate change will drive the decline or scarcity of natural resources that are critical to the survival of people and states, for both subsistence and economic mainstay. In some circumstances, access to or control of natural resources has been a contentious issue which has often generated tensions and violent conflicts within, between and among nations. More often, a traditional type of analysis of resource issues as they relate to conflicts focuses on 'hard' resources, such as strategic minerals, at the neglect of 'soft' resources (Bissel, 1996), such as water, food and land. This marginal attention exists in the face of one obvious reality: people derive their living from land, water and other livelihood-sustaining resources, and fierce competition for them underlies conflicts in some parts of the world. If left unaddressed, climate change will increase the frequency and intensity of competition for these life-sustaining resources. For the focus of this study, the foregoing theories find application in four distinct domains: climate-induced fragility, resource conflict, vulnerability of disadvantaged populations and security resilience. We argue that the role of climate change is undeniable within the conflict matrix across the regions, and underscore the importance of climate change-conscious solutions to the unfolding security crisis. In subsequent sections, the findings of this study are highlighted, discussed and situated within this theoretical frame.

4. Understanding ECOWAS and ECCAS regions

The ECOWAS and ECCAS are the two RECs in West and Central Africa, respectively. Both were established to facilitate regional economic integration between members of the individual regions and through the wider African Economic Community (AEC). The ECOWAS, made up of 15 member states, was established by the ECOWAS Treaty in May 1975 with the primary objective of promoting economic integration in all fields of economic activity, particularly industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions, social and cultural matters. The member states of ECOWAS include Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. Article 3(1) of the ECOWAS Treaty provides that the aims of the Community are to promote cooperation and integration in the region, leading to the establishment of an economic union in West Africa in order to raise the living standards of its peoples; and maintain and enhance economic stability, foster relations among member states and contribute to the progress and development of the African continent.

ECOWAS member states have a tripodal colonial history, namely France (eight Francophone countries), United Kingdom and United States (five Anglophone countries) and Portugal (two Lusophone countries). The ECOWAS, Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), and West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) communique on COP26 and Climate Change of 11 November, 2021 acknowledged that the region was in a situation of climate emergency and called upon COP26 and GCA3 to recognise this state of emergency and to emphasise the urgency of increased action to fight climate change. The communique also called on COP26 to focus on climate finance and the effective mobilisation of up to US\$ 100 billion per year until a new, highly ambitious collective climate finance goal was adopted by 2025 (ECOWAS, 2021).

The ECCAS on the other hand, is made up of 11 member states, namely Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe. It was formed in October 1983 by the Treaty establishing the ECCAS signed in Libreville, Gabon. Following internal crises in many member states, ECCAS ceased activities between 1992 and 1998. ECCAS was revitalised by a Heads of State and Government decision at the 1998 Summit in Libreville. Article 4 of the Treaty provides that the community's objectives are to achieve collective autonomy, raise the standard of living of its populations and maintain economic stability through harmonious cooperation. The 1999 Malabo Heads of State and Government Conference set out four priority fields for the organisation: to develop capacities to maintain peace, security and stability as essential prerequisites for economic and social development; develop physical, economic and monetary integration; develop a culture of human integration; and establish an autonomous financing mechanism for ECCAS.

ECCAS member states have a tripodal colonial history, namely France (seven Francophone countries), Portugal (two Lusophone countries) and Spanish (one Español). Regarding the organisation's strategy to mitigate the impact of climate change in the region, ECCAS countries made international commitments to contribute to combating climate change through their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in the context of the COP21 of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Paris in 2015 (Eba'a Atyi, et al., 2018).

4.1 Manifestations of climate change in ECOWAS and ECCAS regions

There is a growing body of literature on climate change and conflict. Increasingly, they contend that there are significant linkages between climate change and conflict (Dahunsi et al., 2022; Melinda, 2005; Mikkel, et al., 2012; Schmidt and Muggah, 2021; Turner, 2004). Conflict is not seasonal even though climate varies in regions. Rather, the adverse impact or effect posed by alteration in weather conditions and seasons as a result of human and industrial activities has contributed to the outbreak of conflicts. Scholars have repeatedly described climate change as a threat multiplier of conflicts and instability. In ECOWAS and ECCAS, the consequences of climate change have continued to have a negative impact on the lives and livelihood of citizens, especially those residing in the rural areas. As a result of the massive and dynamic climate variations being experienced in several parts of the regions, such as low rainfall in northern Nigeria; drought in Niger; crop flooding in the far north region of Cameroon; rising temperature in western; northern and eastern Chad; sea-level rise and coastal erosion in Senegal, among other variations, the means to human survival continue to be threatened on a daily basis (Carré et al., 2022). Perhaps no region in the world has been affected as much as the Sahel in West-Central, which is experiencing rapid population growth, estimated at 2.8% per year, in an environment of shrinking natural resources (land and water). Climate change is already exacerbating existing problems, including conflicts in the region. The Sahel region is particularly vulnerable to climate change, with 300 million people affected. Drought, desertification and scarcity of resources have led to heightened conflicts between crop farmers and cattle herders, and weak governance has led to social breakdowns, with dramatic implications on peace and security in the regions.

One of the commonalities between these regions is the geostrategic location of some of the member states along coastal regions, which makes them susceptible to flooding as a result of rising sea levels. However, the manifestations of climate change consequences have cut across the coastal region countries to other landlocked countries in various forms with far reaching consequences. By implication, no country in these regions is immune to the deleterious consequences of climate change. Coastal populations are prone to increased risk of sea-level rise. This is combined with the surge in urbanisation of coastal regions of between 72 and 94

million people migrating to urban centres. The largest clusters can be seen in Lagos, Abidjan, Dakar and Accra (Ogunrinde et al., 2022; Saghiri and Santoro, 2018). The intensification of drought risks in West Africa has disrupted the region's nearly 20 million pastoralists, and contributed to a five-fold increase in conflict in Mali's Mopti region in 2019 (Luc, 2023; Ojewale, 2022; Schmidt and Muggah, 2020). Fluctuations in water availability in both regions (ECOWAS and ECCAS) pose a major threat to already vulnerable populations, especially for populations dependent on rain-fed agriculture. The Lake Chad Basin (LCB) is threatened as a result of this fluctuation and has disrupted the food security conditions for nearly 50 million people, of which 6.9 million are already severely food insecure (FAO, 2017).

5. Climate change and natural resource conflicts in the regions

5.1 Climate change and conflict over land resources

Africa has an estimated 132 million hectares of degraded cropland which, combined with climate change, makes millions more citizens vulnerable. Around 45% of Africa's land is impacted by desertification, 55% of which is at very high risk of further desertification. In West Africa, the landscapes are already affected by degradation, particularly in the fast-growing agricultural lands where natural vegetation cover has been removed, and fragile soils have been exposed to wind and water erosion. Since 1975, West African forests have declined from about 131 000 sq km to just 83 000 sq km. Much of that deforestation was driven by agricultural expansion, which doubled in area between 1975 and 2013, and now extends over 1 100 000 sq km – larger than the size of Mauritania. Poor management of agricultural land contributes further to degradation of land. Climate change drivers of land degradation include changes in temperature, rainfall intensity, windstorms and changes in the distribution and intensity of extreme weather events.

With so much of the natural habitat being replaced and fragmented by agriculture – and the increased degradation that is often associated with it – there is growing and intense competition for access to arable land. Consequently, farmers and herders in West and Central Africa have already been forced to migrate within their home countries or even across borders in search of more secure livelihoods. These stressed conditions have been linked to natural resource conflicts over grazing land and water.

Places affected the most in West Africa include Mopti and Gao in Mali, the Tillabéri and Tahoua regions in Niger, the eastern region of Burkina Faso, and the northwest and northcentral regions of Nigeria. The depleting natural resources and grazing lands in the region have increased conflict between farmers and pastoralists. Around 4 000 people died in Nigeria as a result of farmer–pastoralist conflicts between 2016 and 2019. In Mali, the cycles of farmer–herder violence and reprisals have become increasingly lethal since 2015 and resulted in nearly 700 fatalities in 2020 (Ojo, 2023; Onyeneke et al., 2022; UN Humanitarian, 2021).

In Central Africa, hotspots of climate change-related natural resource conflicts include the Salamat, Sila and Ouaddai provinces of Chad. Herders and sedentary farmers have a long and troubled history in southern Chad, where ethnic friction over land is common. In February 2021, about 35 people were killed in clashes involving semi-nomadic herders and farmers in the province of Salamat, south-eastern Chad. Similarly, 12 people were killed in February 2022 in clashes between herders and farmers in the village of Sandana, southern Chad. Thanks to the region’s relatively mild climate for the Sahel, its vegetation is lush and, for centuries, it has drawn in migratory herders from arid areas, many of them Arabs, for seasonal grazing (AFP, 2021; 2022). As with the Nigerian experience, it is important to note that, historically, herders and farmers in Chad have been from different ethnic groups and, in this case, it appears that the herders are Arab and the farmers are black Africans. Hence, an apparent conflict over land use may also have or develop an ethnic dimension (Campbel, 2019; Musa et al., 2022; World Bank, 2023).

5.2 Climate change and conflict over transboundary water formation

Water is distributed unevenly in time and space, which creates challenges in management and allocation. Although water is a renewable resource, its natural availability in a particular locality and at a point in time cannot be accurately predicted. Water is essential for a number of purposes, ranging from economic (agriculture, industry, transport, energy) to social (culture, household consumption, recreation) and environmental (all ecosystem services). The case of Lake Chad, straddling the borders of Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon, is a nodal example in this regard. The rich water resources of the Lake have been a source of economic livelihood, and have sustained over 30 million people inhabiting the catchment areas of the four riparian states. However, in

the last few decades, the size of the lake, as well as its resources, has continued to diminish. As the fresh water and other resources of the lake continue to diminish, economic livelihoods have been significantly disrupted such that local populations relying on the lake for their survival have followed its receding waters. The result has seen resource conflicts within the area.

Conflicts over the resources of Lake Chad manifest in two forms: conflicts of ownership and conflicts of use. Incidences of conflict of ownership occur when the struggle over the resources of the lake borders on the question of which territory of the riparian states has the right to appropriate the resources of the lake. Conflicts of ownership usually involve parties from different nationalities. At the heart of these conflicts is the issue of struggle over water and fishing rights, and it usually assumes both intra-state and inter-state dimensions. The issue of increased competition among the users has led to rampant conflict between downstream and upstream users (Carrington, 2019).

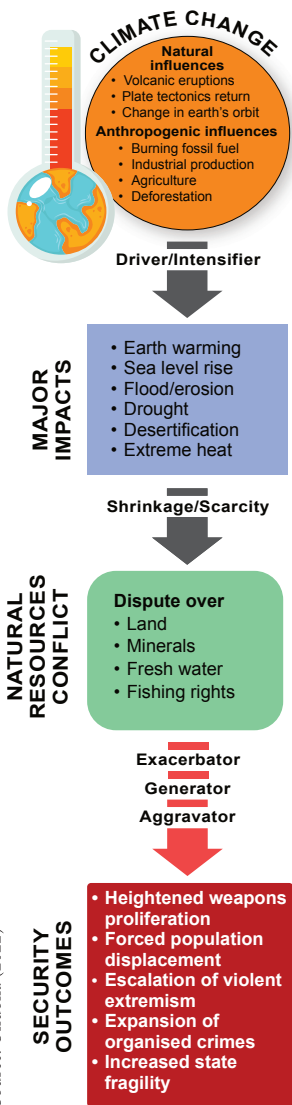
Conflict over fishing rights has been an important aspect of conflict of ownership in the waters of Lake Chad in recent times. For instance, in the early 1980s, there were various allegations of serious infractions and dehumanising treatment meted on Nigerian fishermen by Cameroonian and Chadian gendarmes. On one such occasion in 1983, the skirmishes resulted in the loss of nine Nigerians and 75 Chadian troops, while 20 Nigerians and 32 Chadians were reportedly captured. Similarly, Nigerian fishermen and fish dealers operating from both sides of the water of Lake Chad and the various fishing villages on the Nigeria-Cameroon border have reported a repeated incidence of physical assaults and, often, incarceration without the due process of law (Njoya et al., 2022; Okon-Ekpenyong 1989). Conflicts over competition for the resources of the lake have continued to manifest as the lake diminishes. In 2007, a Nigerian fisherman, Sanusi, contended that: “it is difficult to determine boundaries on water, yet the gendarme from Cameroon and Chad always come after us and seize our fishing nets and traps and we have to pay heavily to get them back” (cited in Murray, 2007). While reports of such conflict are not common since the outbreak of the Boko Haram insurgency in 2009, irregular rainfall patterns in the Lake Chad Basin have created socio-economic shifts that have been linked to recruitment into Boko Haram and the Islamic State (Nagarajan et al, 2018).

Regarding conflict of use, violent conflicts have become recurrent in the adjoining areas of the lake in Cameroon territory, due to growing water scarcity. As noted earlier, the lake's water resources have diminished by 70% in the past 50 years, partly due to climate change. However, the population depending on the lake for their livelihoods has increased from 3.5 million in 1960 to over 45 million inhabitants in 2020 (Kindzeka, 2021). Water scarcity has triggered regular clashes between ranchers and fishers in Logone and Chari, Cameroon. In August 2021, for instance, about 11 000 civilians fled from Logone and Chari to Chad after a conflict over water between cattle ranchers and fishermen. 40 people were killed and 70 were wounded (Kindzeka, 2021).

5.3 Climate change, migration and resource conflict

Climate change is also accelerating migration and displacement in West Africa, especially in the Sahel (Issifu, Darko and Paalo, 2022). Today, roughly 25 million Sahelian herders of cattle, sheep, goats and other livestock travel south with their animals during the dry season and then back north during the wet season. Prolonged dry seasons, shortened rainy seasons and less regular rainfall are generating new uncertainties for pastoralists, which require new herd management methods and which undermine delicate ecosystems. Harsh environmental trends in the northern part of Nigeria, such as the shrinkage of Lake Chad and desertification, have made more permanent the seasonal movement of the Fulani cattle rearers to the southern part of Nigeria. Previously, these pastoralists migrated to the southern part during the dry season and moved back to the north during the rainy season. Because of the deteriorating situation in the region, many of them are now settling in areas of southern Nigeria, such as Ilorin, Umuahia, Ogbomoso, Shaki, Ubakala, Uzo-Uwani and Oyo, where they have ended up competing for the available scarce resources with other economic groups or with host communities. Such resources include fresh water and arable or grazing land. This has contributed to resource conflicts in these areas with the potential to spill over into ethnic clashes (Onuoha, 2010). Competition for grazing land, reduced access to water and the erosion of customary dispute resolution mechanisms are accelerating retaliatory cycles of violence.

Figure 4: Mapping climate change, natural resource conflicts and insecurity nexus



6. Implications of climate change–natural resource conflicts in the regions

The foregoing examples illustrate the complex nexus between climate change and natural resource conflict. To summarise, climate change compounds the problem of natural resource scarcity. Situations of scarcity lead to intense competition for available resources, which could result in conflict in some cases, but not necessarily in all cases. As conflicts manifest or escalate over land, minerals, fresh water and fishing rights, parties may deploy violent tactics in the struggle to secure or maintain access or to guarantee their own survival. This could generate or complicate security challenges for the affected state or region. The resultant situation may have serious implications for the state and its security forces. For the state, the resultant security outcomes could include food insecurity, heightened proliferation of small arms, forced population displacement, deepening of violent extremism, possible militarisation of society and overall state fragility. Thus, there is a consequential linear relationship when considering climate change, natural resource conflicts and insecurity (see Figure 4 and Table 2).

Table 2: Climate change, natural resource conflicts and (in)security dynamics in the regions

Climate change	Natural resource conflict	Implications	Manifestations/Approximations
		Heightened SALWs proliferation	West and Central Africa over the last decade have witnessed some of the most devastating conflicts in the world involving the use of small and light weapons (SALWs). Further outbreaks of climate change-related natural resource conflicts will compound the challenge of weapons proliferation. It will hinder progress towards the African Union's campaign on Silencing the Guns in Africa, especially in the two regions.
		Population displacement	The outbreak of natural resource conflicts due to climate change will generate force population displacement and manifest in an increase in internally displaced persons (IDPs) or refugees, or both. For instance, 200 000 people fled their communities in northern Nigeria in 2020, with 77 000 of them crossing the border in search of safety, amid frequent farmer-herdsmen clashes and escalating banditry (Babangida, 2021).
		Exacerbation of violent extremism	The outbreak of natural resource conflicts triggered by climate change will heighten the threat of violent extremism. The challenge of terrorism and violent extremism remains endemic in West and Central Africa. In central Mali, for instance, terrorist groups have exploited the growing tensions between herders and farmers to recruit new members from pastoralist communities who often feel excluded and stigmatised. Environmental degradation enables non-state-armed groups to extend their influence and manipulate resources to their advantage.
		Growth of organised crime	As resource conflicts break out, organised criminal groups seek to benefit from the situation. The result is an increase in different forms of organised crime, particularly weapons smuggling, drug trafficking, cattle rustling and banditry. In Nigeria's northwest zone, the outbreak of violent clashes between herdsmen and farmers has implicated the rise and persistence of organised crimes, such as banditry, gun running and drug (tramadol) trafficking. Similarly, there are increasing links between transhumant herders and armed groups, such as the ADF, including the phenomenon of foreign armed groups and the exploitation of transhumance for criminal purposes.
		Increase in state fragility	Climate has an impact on and compounds conflicts. It further exacerbates fragility. When climate disruption contributes to pressure on institutions and hinders their capacity to provide public services, it fuels grievances and mistrust towards authorities. When the loss of livelihoods leaves populations in despair, the promises of protection, income and justice that are common in violent extremist narratives become more attractive (UNSG, 2021).

Source: Compiled by authors

Note: Table 2 is significant as it reflects the need for these challenges to be understood and addressed in an integrated manner to foster a coupled system of peace, security, resilience and sustainable development.

As with states or regions, the link between climate change and natural resource conflicts has implications for almost all state security forces and officials. Security forces are defined in this paper as the array of public institutions that are statutorily established by constitutional law and entitled to the possession and deployment of certain categories of weapons, equipment, facilities and specialised gadgets to deter, prevent, neutralise or eliminate anything (situation or actor) that poses danger to the safety and well-being of citizens, preservation of assets or cherished values, and continued existence of the state. It encompasses military, paramilitary, intelligence, security and law enforcement institutions established by law for the purpose of maintaining peace, stability and security in a state. Focusing on agencies and institutions that are strategic to the security architecture of a state, provisions in Table 3 offer insights into some of the notable implications of climate change and natural resource conflicts for peace and security management.

Table 3: Implications of climate change-natural resource conflict for state security forces

Agency	Possible statutory tasking	Remarks
Military	The outbreak or intensification of natural resource conflicts due to climate change will place additional demand for the use of the military in internal security operations (ISO) and possibly peacekeeping operations (PKO) or Peace Support Operations (PSO).	Military are almost engaged in more than 60% of the states embroiled in conflicts in the regions.
Police	As the first-line responder to internal security challenges, there will be heightened expectation for police services to preserve the safety and security of persons. Failure will widen loss of public confidence and create a trust deficit.	Police services are already suffering from acute trust and capacity deficit in most of the countries.
Department of State Services (DSS)	The task level and focus of its operative will increase, as they will be expected to inform authorities of early warning signals, conflict entrepreneurs and spoilers.	Once conflict breaks out, there are those who benefit from or support it, including for political purposes.

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Agency	Possible statutory tasking	Remarks
National intelligence agencies	The nexus between conflicts and organised crime has been established in the literature based on several empirical studies. The states' intelligence agencies will need to identify possible cross-border flow – weapons, drugs, fighters.	The Macina Liberation Front/Katiba Macina in central Mali has exploited issues such as marginalisation (land rights) to draw local support, and recruit, from Fulani pastoralist youth.
Customs services	The outbreak of natural resource conflicts will likely heighten proliferation of SALWs, especially if conflicts become intense and more violent.	This will add to the already saturated arms flow in ECOWAS–ECCAS regions.
National emergency management agencies	Climate change and natural resource conflicts will put additional burdens on already scarce resources (personnel, facilities and funds), in addition to the challenge of providing coordination amid different actors with divergent organisational cultures and interests.	Once conflict breaks out, there are those who benefit from or support it, including for political purposes.
Correctional services (prisons)	As other state actors deploy to contain natural resource conflicts, they will arrest and prosecute suspects (lawbreakers and criminals) who may be convicted or remanded in prison.	As the prison population increases, so do the risks of jail break.

Source: Compiled by authors

Based on the implications for security forces outlined above, three broad spectrums of response by critical security stakeholders are conceivable. These broad spectrums include the following:

Preventive spectrum: This is the spectrum that looks at gaining a good understanding of the underlying factors of and early warning signals for conflict. These are likely to fall within the remit of agencies we consider the soft security agencies, such as the intelligence agencies and the police services.

Combative spectrum: These are those who have the responsibility to deploy force as a way of separating the warring factions or as a way of restoring normalcy. Top on this list is the armed forces: army, navy as applicable in each country and those deployed for special operations.

Responsive spectrum: These are soft agencies of government that may respond to the conflict across the spectrum of conflict escalation and de-escalation, when the conflict is beginning to break out, at the height of the conflict and when the conflict is ending or has ended. Typical agencies in this spectrum include the national emergency management agencies, civil society organisations and humanitarian actors interested in relief distribution, counselling, restitution, etc.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

This paper has analysed the linkages between climate change, natural resource conflicts and insecurity in ECOWAS and ECCAS regions. No doubt, as a result of climate change, various dynamic shades of insecurity have emerged in West and Central Africa and have continued to hamper peace, security and development in the regions. The regions have witnessed increased conflicts, violence, insurgency and terrorism as a result of climatic variations, which have posed serious challenges to the security forces in their tasks of maintaining peace and security. While climate change is not the direct cause of natural resource conflicts, it has proven to be a multiplier factor in the dynamics of violent conflicts. To more effectively tackle the climate change–natural resource conflict challenge, the following recommendations are pertinent:

Regional economic communities (ECOWAS and ECCAS):

Prioritise commitment to preserving and restoring their forests. In particular, escalating action by ECCAS to support the protection of the Congo Basin, with its rainforests, wetlands and other ecosystems, is a critical and viable pathway to keeping 1.5 degrees in reach. Absorbing around 1.5 billion tons of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, or 4% of the world's emissions every year, Central Africa remains one of the only regions left in the world that absorbs more carbon than it emits. In addition, these forests play an important role in biodiversity conservation and millions of citizens depend on the free services these forests provide.

Support local initiatives aimed at mitigating climate change through coordination of policies, building partnerships, resource mobilisation and promotion of national ownership of projects that have been implemented. Partner with universities, research institutions and think tanks to generate knowledge and ideas as well as innovate ways of or mechanisms for mitigating the impact of climate change in the regions.

Deepen partnerships to strengthen the capacity of regional institutions and the frameworks of Lake Chad Basin countries (LCBC) and Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to respond to transboundary water resources challenges (shrinkage of Lake Chad) and transborder criminality, such as terrorism and organised crimes. The development and instrumentalisation of partnerships and initiatives linking local, regional and national approaches is key. A good example is the Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region, which was jointly developed by the AU, LCBC (ECOWAS and ECCAS states), United Nations and other partners. The strategy integrates humanitarian action, security, development and climate resilience.

ECOWAS/ECCAS member states:

Develop properly resourced national climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, supported with a robust national plan of action. The articulation and implementation of a national 're-greening' initiative should receive priority attention. This would involve the transformation of degraded landscapes into productive and resilient farmland through widespread adoption of agroforestry and related sustainable land management practices (Reij and Winterbottom, 2015).

Strengthen the criminal justice institutions to be able to, in a timely manner, effectively dispense justice on matters arising from marginalisation, grievances and rights violations.

Strengthen the capacity of traditional structures and authorities in early warning, mediation and alternative dispute resolutions, conflict management and peace messaging.

Promote best practices in agriculture and pastoralism, such as improved irrigation efficiency, use of adaptive crops and ranching.

Security forces:

Deepen Civil Military Relations (CMR) and Civil Military Coordination (CIMIC) training and involve a broad spectrum of military, paramilitary, intelligence, security, law enforcement and civilian actors (development and the humanitarian actors) to enable good working relations in complex security emergencies.

Undertake bespoke capacity building, refresher courses and simulation exercises that will enable state security forces to create a new generation of experts with deep-thinking and forward-looking capabilities to correctly

anticipate and effectively tackle the challenge of climate change–natural resource conflicts.

Employ a whole-of-government approach towards pursuit of national security in an integrated manner, aimed at tackling natural resource-based conflicts in ECOWAS–ECCAS regions. It requires establishing or strengthening frameworks that promote inter-agency collaboration and integrated planning among state defence and security forces.

Lastly, redefine and update the training curriculum for officers of the security and defense forces of the ECOWAS and ECCAS countries in the context of rapidly changing national and international security landscapes with the new layer of climate risks. The starting point is to acknowledge that the changing climate has a significant effect on security missions, strategies and installations. The militaries, national security outfits and military education institutions in the countries must elevate climate change as a national security priority and concern by integrating climate considerations into cadet trainings, refresher courses and national security strategies. This will bolster national capability and posture; it will enable security forces to maintain a strategic edge over the non-state armed groups who exploit the vulnerabilities and fragility imposed on states by climate change and will support their capacity to wage and sustain ‘new wars’ within the states and around their frontiers.

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Building Peace from the Grassroots with Informal Peace Infrastructures: Experiences from the Ojoo Community, Ibadan, Nigeria

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Abstract

One of the greatest resources for promoting peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the long term is always rooted in people and their culture. Bearing this in mind is a major step towards addressing domestic violence, intimate partner violence, disputes over land ownership and challenges associated with weak social cohesion that plague Ibadan, Nigeria. This study explores the contributions of informal peace committees (IPCs) as informal peace infrastructures (IPIs) in responding to the menace and powering peacebuilding from below in the local setting of Ojoo, Ibadan, where the study was conducted. The qualitative study adopts participatory action research design. It uses purposive sampling techniques and sourced primary data from individual interviews, focus group discussions, observation and diarising. Twenty respondents were interviewed and three focus group discussions were conducted for the study with a view to collecting primary data. Although IPIs also have their own weaknesses, the study revealed that local peace infrastructures, such as IPCs are resourceful and effective in addressing multiple threats, including domestic and intimate partner violence, disputes over land ownership, weak social cohesion and building peace from below. The study further revealed that IPCs can be sustainable if established through collaborative efforts in the affected community at a grassroots level with a sense of shared ownership, feelings of inclusiveness and project legitimacy.

Keywords: Building, Peace, Grassroots, Informal Peace Infrastructure, Nigeria

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1. Introduction

Many conflicts, be it conflicts at societal, state or global scale, are rooted in grassroots or local contexts and take place at the individual level. To address conflicts without giving adequate attention to people at the grassroots level can pose a challenge to conflict resolution. Peace-enhancing structures at grassroots level often offer adequate attention to conflicts rooted in the local context. Sangqu (2014:424) notes that IPCs are “classic examples of peace-enhancing structures because of their focus on building peace” from below. IPCs are set up by communities affected by conflicts with a view to advancing their common interests (Chivasa and Harris, 2019).

As local peace infrastructures, informal peace committees embrace cultural and grassroots mechanisms, which are important steps in building peace from the ground up. This is the reason it is important for conflict managers and conflict parties to pay attention to cultural and other grassroots dynamics. Nganje (2014) corroborates this when he argues that parties endeavour to grasp the cultural component of conflict, and identify the instruments for tackling conflict that exist within that cultural context. Exploring cultural resources is one viable option for achieving the expected result. As pointed out by IGI Global (2023:1), “cultural resources are cultural values, rites, norms or actions which lead in a subculture to a common understanding and which can be used to legitimize meanings, interpretations, and actions”. Thus, building on cultural resources and using other local mechanisms for handling disputes can be quite effective in resolving conflicts and transforming relationships (Maiese, 2003).

IPCs are not based on cultural resources alone, but are hybrid formations that combine indigenous and cosmopolitan values and norms. Colona and Jaffe (2016:1) define hybrid governance arrangements as “those in which non-state actors take on functions classically attributed to the state and, in the process, become entangled with formal state actors and agencies to the extent that it is difficult to make a clear distinction between state and non-state”. Furthermore, Kioko (2017) argues that hybrid governance arrangements are gaining popularity in development debates, particularly in the governance of (common-pool) resources, and in peacebuilding/ conflict resolution in the world, especially in Africa.

In Africa, many conflicts often revolve around struggle to control mineral resources and political power. Williams (2017:35) notes that “most of the nonstate armed conflicts in Africa revolve around struggles to secure local

sources of livelihood, notably issues connected to water, land, and livestock”. In addition, conflicts against women, including domestic and intimate partner violence, have also taken centre stage in many African countries. For instance, in Ibadan, Nigeria, the problem of domestic and intimate partner violence is alarming. According to a recent study by Adedokun et al (2019), about one in three women in Ibadan have experienced physical violence from their partners. In addition, Otto et al (2020), reveal that about one in five women in Ibadan have experienced sexual violence. Furthermore, a study by Okedare and Fawole (2023) found that intimate partners’ violence (IPV) is common among young women in Ibadan, and higher among women in slum communities. Also, trading-related violence against market women is also not left out among many violent experiences in Ibadan. According to Odeyemi (2016), market women in Ibadan are at risk of physical, sexual and psychological violence from a variety of sources, including their spouses, customers and co-workers.

Bad leadership in many African countries, including Nigeria, exacerbates conditions of human insecurity and violence in many countries on the continent. Galtung (1969) pointed out three types of violence: direct, indirect and cultural violence, all of which abound and interplay on the continent. He describes direct violence as violent behaviour or acts of aggression that threaten, injure or kill the victim; indirect or structural violence as the violence built into the social system, and cultural violence as the attitudes or beliefs used to legitimise direct or structural violence. Africa seems to be overburdened by all three types of violence, and the contribution of local peace infrastructure in addressing this menace cannot be underestimated.

Candid efforts towards dealing with all forms of violence, whether direct, structural or cultural, would involve a collaborative approach of top-down and bottom-up peace infrastructures. In fact, factors contributing to violence, be they attitudinal or behavioural factors, or factors relating to the broader socio-economic, cultural and political conditions, can be altered (World Health Organization, 2002). Infrastructures for peace (I4P) can play a key role in altering these factors.

Although local peace infrastructures (LPIs), whether formal or informal, have their own weaknesses, there are success stories of local peace committees (LPCs) in Kenya, South Africa, districts in the Democratic

Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi and Uganda, among others (Adan and Pkalya, 2006:3; Van-Tongeren, 2012:108; 2013:41–51).

It is against this backdrop that this study explores the concept of local peace infrastructures and the contribution of informal peace committees to building peace from the grassroots in a semi-urban location in Ibadan.

2. Infrastructures for peace

In today's world, peace infrastructures have become one of the main ways in which peacebuilders aim to achieve their typically wide variety of highly political goals such as local security, the extension of state authority, and the restoration or establishment of rule of law (Bachmann and Schouten, 2018). The idea of I4P emerged in the peacebuilding literature of the 1990s along with the shift of focus from conflict resolution to conflict transformation. Johan Galtung's original concept of I4P are still based on the search for structures that can eliminate causes of war and provide an alternative in a situation of war (Kovács, 2020). The idea is regarded as an alternative peacebuilding approach with the potential to transform the power dynamics inherent in and harness the positive aspects of the relationship between local, state and international actors to address conflicts on all fronts (Nganje, 2021).

I4P are institutional structures or mechanisms for preventing and addressing conflicts at local, regional, national and global level (Van-Tongeren, 2011). They are networks of interdependent systems, resources, values and skills held by government, civil society and community institutions that promote dialogue and consultation; prevent conflict and enable peaceful mediation when violence occurs in a society (Kovács and Tobias, 2016). They may be created to mediate intra-state or intra-communal violence. Through harnessing local resources, peace infrastructures can enable communities to resolve conflicts using a problem-solving approach (Irene, 2014).

I4P acts through dialogue, mutual understanding and trust-building. It embraces an inclusive and constructive problem-solving approach, and joint action to prevent violence (Odendaal, 2010). This is crucial to planning peace. Hopp-Nishanka (2012) argues that I4Ps give peace address due to their nature as standing peace structures. They transcend the small-scale approach to peacebuilding, peace trainings and peace activities and effect a large-scale more effective and long term approach that involves sustainable peace architecture.

Proponents of I4P argue that it affords local actors and communities the opportunity to call on political and infrastructural resources at national [and international] levels, while still rooting their peacebuilding initiatives in the relevant local context, history and culture (Odendaal, 2010).

I4P can be top-down or bottom-up. The top-down include ministries of peace, national peace councils, national peace committees, peace commissions and other formal peace structures created by states through legislation, proclamations or other related ways in which governments establish structures. The National Peace Council in Ghana and the Ministry of Peace in Ethiopia established in 2018 are examples of top-down peace infrastructures in Africa. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2010), the National Peace Council was initiated in 2005 by the UNDP to promote community dialogue and raise early warning on potential conflicts. Other top-down peace infrastructures in the world include the Ministry of National Unity; Reconciliation and Peace established in the Solomon Islands in 2002 and renamed in 2019 as the Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs; the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction in Nepal established in 2007; and the Ministry of Peace and Justice established in Costa Rica in 2009.

Bottom-up peace infrastructures are often “local agencies that result in community members working together to unite, participate and form peacebuilding committees” (Chivasa, 2023:1). Their names vary from local peace committees to informal peace clubs and community peace centres. In addition, they include local resources of all forms that are designed for violence prevention, peace-making, conflict management, resolution and transformation and peacebuilding. The Wajir Peace and Development Committee in Kenya, the Collaborative in South Kordofan in Sudan, Baraza Inter-Communicative in North Kivu in the DRC and the Kibimba Peace Committee in Burundi are examples of bottom-up infrastructures in Africa.

Overall, I4P have recorded positive results in mitigating and tackling different types of conflict and violence, including election-related violence. Kumar and Haye (2011), for instance, linked peaceful electoral outcomes to United Nations (UN)-backed initiatives in Guyana in 2006, Ghana in 2004 and 2008, Sierra Leone in 2007, Togo in 2010, Kyrgyzstan in 2010, Solomon Islands in 2010 and the constitutional referendum in Kenya in 2010. The UN-backed initiatives developed I4P which were

aimed at strengthening national capacities for conflict prevention and transformation. Nevertheless, they also had challenges and, in some instances, failed to stop violence.

2.1 Three examples of infrastructures for peace in Africa

2.1.1 Kenya

The effort to formalise grassroots-level peacebuilding initiatives was prompted by the severity of conflicts in Kenya's pastoralist and agro-pastoralist community in the late 1980s and early 1990s. As Adan and Pkalya (2006) posit, the realisation that community members themselves were better placed to manage their own conflicts necessitated the need for I4P. They added that inaccessibility of the formal judicial system and lack of trust in government led to conflict prevention interventions using I4P. The government's failure to provide security and justice, and its inability to address communal issues, laid the groundwork for informal peace committees in Kenya. This was made worse by the fact that many of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Kenyan districts had left. However, the NGOs' withdrawal from the district turned out to be a blessing in disguise because it allowed the local population to take initiative on their own (Juma, 2000).

Informal peace committees in Kenya were established, among other things, to deal with inter-ethnic conflicts and cattle rustling in the Rift Valley (Odendaal and Olivie 2008). The situation in Kenya is typical of a bottom-up approach to creating peace infrastructures. The post-election violence in 2007 led to the recommendation by the National Accord and Reconciliation Act of 2008 to establish district peace committees in all Kenyan districts. During the conflicts, there was less violence in districts that already had peace committees as a result of the Wajir District Women Group Initiatives.

In fact, the first informal peace committee (IPC) in Kenya was the Wajir Peace and Development Committee (WPDC). The Wajir peace-building experience between Degodia and Ngare clans was led by a woman, and contributed in no small measure to the basis for the creation of the IPCs in Kenya. According to Kioko (2017:4-5), IPCs came in the “wake of legitimate concerns” and “took shape mainly after the atrocities committed during the 2007–2008 post-election”. The WPDC process was entirely owned by and driven at a grassroots level, and it was largely successful (Odendaal, 2010). Civil society actors, elders from various

clans, district commissioners and parliamentarians collaborated in the creation of the WPDC. The Wajir Peace Initiatives were incorporated into the district development committee and eventually evolved into the Wajir Peace and Development Committee (Van-Tongeren 2012). It was chaired by the district commissioner. WPDC's expansion to the northern part of Kenya was facilitated by the model of its formation and success.

Following this, the government and civil society organisations saw an opportunity to establish, emphasise and promote local peace institutions. Wachira, Arendshorst and Charles (2010) emphasise the significance of promoting local capacities for peacebuilding. The Kenyan government made the decision in 2001 to set up the National Steering Committee (NSC) on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management. In 2004, the President's office used the National Steering Committee to start the process of developing a peacebuilding and conflict management policy.

2.1.2 Ghana

Within the rationale for establishing a national I4P in Ghana, as argued by van-Tongeren (2011), was the need to gravitate towards the use of a cooperative, non-violent and dialogue-based approach that involved all stakeholders in conflict resolution; as well as to develop culturally appropriate institutional mechanisms to promote and manage this approach at district, national and local levels. An in-depth examination of Ghana's experience reveals that the need to end a devastating violent conflict typically led to the establishment of only a few I4Ps.

The northern region of Ghana saw 23 conflicts between the 1980s and 2000, culminating in the 2002 killing of the King of Dagbon and some of his elders. The affected region was placed under a state of emergency by the government, which then urged the UN member states to assist her. The UNDP responded by appointing a Peace and Governance Advisor to intervene and assist in putting an end to the violent outbreak (Odendaal, 2010). This development could be considered the beginning of the journey towards the establishment of I4P in Ghana. In May 2006, the National Peace Council (NPC) was established in Ghana with UNDP support.

The body played a crucial role in ensuring that Ghana's 2008 election was peaceful and that the transfer of power went smoothly. According to Odendaal (2010), Ghana's national peace architecture became the first official African national programme for peacebuilding. It aligned with the

resolution of African leaders at the 2002 First Standing Conference on Stability, Security, and Development in Africa. It proposed a resolution that each country establishes a national framework to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. Ghana's national peace architecture became the first official African national programme for peacebuilding.

In addition to its national infrastructure, Ghana also established a District Peace Advisory Council. According to Ojielo (2007), Ghana's decision to implement the District Peace Advisory Council was influenced more by her experience with a few intractable community-based and inter-ethnic conflicts than by a crisis in governance (especially not at the national level). The frontiers of peace committees expanded to include their use in maintaining peace even in areas that appeared to be peaceful, due to a growing understanding of the concept and effectiveness of peace committees. Ghana is a clear illustration of the interconnectedness of national and local conflict systems. The NPC's contribution to ensuring a peaceful election in 2008 and the smooth transfer of power in Ghana remain one of its most significant effects.

2.1.3 South Africa

The National Peace Accord (NPA) was born out of a desire to put an end to the escalating violence which was occurring in the period between the announcement of the end of apartheid in 1989 and the first democratic elections in 1994 (Irene, 2014). As part of the National Peace Accord agreement in 1991, formal peace committees were established throughout the country. The peace structures that were established to implement the Accord include the National Peace Committee and Secretariat, 11 regional peace committees, 263 formal peace committees and more than 18 000 peace monitors (Carmichael, 2022). Carmichael added that the "silent majority" was mobilised by the National Peace Campaign, which was established under the NPA and gave peace an unprecedented grassroots identity and legitimacy. She continued by arguing that the formulation of the NPA by political representatives, church and business facilitators brought an end to the political impasse. This marked South Africa's first encounter with multi-party negotiations and made it possible to begin discussions about the constitution.

During the year prior to the 1994 elections, confidence was high that South Africa had successfully pioneered a peace structure which had laid the foundation for peaceful electioneering processes in the country. At the

local and regional levels, the country developed mechanisms to effectively halt a rise in violence. Even though political violence caused 2649 deaths in South Africa in the final days of the apartheid struggle in 1992 and 3567 deaths in 1994 (Van-Togeran, 2013), all observers agreed that formal peace committees successfully prevented several potentially violent events by encouraging local dialogue and problem-solving processes. The role of formal peace committees in conflict intervention contributed to the political future of South Africa, including the 1994 end of apartheid.

3. Local peace committees (formal and informal)

The rise of local peace committees as mechanisms for grassroots peacebuilding in the 21st century could be traced to the early 1980s with John Paul Lederach playing a key role in popularising the entire idea of infrastructures for peace. The concept gained prominence in the 1990s following the argument that local communities affected by violent conflict be recognised as resources, and not just recipients of peacebuilding efforts that were largely driven from the outside (Lederach, 1997). In addition, it was argued that communities affected by violent conflict had greater incentives than any external actor to resolve such conflict, and were better positioned to build and sustain peace through their intimate knowledge of the local culture as well as community relations and dynamics (Lederach, 1997).

There are two main categories of local peace committees – formal and informal peace committees. A formal peace committee is one created by the state through a national peace accord, legislation or a formal statutory body as part of its mandate. IPCs are often established by members of a civil society or community members. Chivasa (2019) opines that “formal peace committees (FPCs) are structures whose members are official representatives of sides to the conflict, with official mandate from a piece of legislation and, in contrast, IPCs are a replica, but whose members are volunteers from all walks of life in the community in question and with no official mandate from a piece of legislation”. Adan and Pkalya (2006) conceive local peace committees (formal and informal) as conflict intervention structures that integrate both traditional and modern conflict intervention mechanisms to prevent and manage or transform intra-ethnic or inter-ethnic conflicts. They defined this as a conflict mitigation and peacebuilding structure which integrates traditional and modern conflict interventions to address intra- and inter-tribal tensions and conflicts and/or a community-based structure and initiative to

prevent, manage and transform intra- and inter-community conflicts. A working definition from a workshop put together in June 2005 by the NSC and Oxfam GB in Nanyuki, Kenya defined local peace committees (FPCs and IPCs) as groups of people whose broad job was to define parameters for peace.

Chivasa and Harris (2019:1) further argue that informal peace committees are “community-based responsive and supportive mechanisms that deal with social issues such as interpersonal conflicts, small-scale violence, poverty, hunger and social injustice”. As local peace infrastructures, formal and informal peace committees are established using both traditional and modern conflict resolution mechanisms and for the purposes of peace-making and peacebuilding. They are envisioned as organic, inclusive and participatory standing peace structures that use a problem-solving approach to address conflicts. Tsuma et al (2014) opine that they serve as instruments for strengthening social cohesion and promoting the resilience of local communities. By so doing, they contribute towards the attainment of sustainable peace beyond the immediate local environment. As reported by Nganje (2021), these peace committees were used to halt the 2019–2020 xenophobic unrest episodes in South Africa, as they played a major role in alerting the police and relevant authorities to potential attacks, and also mobilised communities to protect foreigners and their properties. These are mechanisms suitable for building peace at the grassroots level, even under challenging circumstances. As further revealed by Chivasa (2023:1), informal peace committees “have a close relationship with developmental social intervention strategies that seek to deal with development challenges such as poverty, inequality and violence, and the major one, community development”.

The inherent ability of FPCs and IPCs to build trust and confidence at community levels makes it essential in personal transformation and in the transformation of potential actors. According to Hopp-Nishanka (2012), LPCs (FPCs & IPCs) bring stakeholders, their constituencies and change agents together, and create space for joint problem-solving, thus creating, consolidating and maintaining a network of transformative actors. It allows various representatives of the community to take responsibility for and participate in addressing their problems. This corroborates Chivasa’s (2021:1) argument that it allows “ordinary people who have little influence over their lives to tackle difference, injustices and peace issues between men, woman and youths” and, as revealed by Muchanyuka

(2020), IPCs have the potential to set in place an early warning system to mitigate violence which occurs at community levels.

Unlike the traditional structure, local peace committees (FPCs and IPCs) recruit members from various community representations, including elders, women, youths, civil society groups, community organisations, political leaders, government and foreigners. The qualities to be considered in selecting people into informal peace committees include honesty, integrity, impartiality, neutrality and fluency in the local language. In addition, such persons must be knowledgeable, of local residency, a non-political office holder, and they should be accessible and available (Adan and Pkalya, 2006).

Local peace committees (FPCs & IPCs) are inclusive and present a superior structure that values and recognises the role and contributions of various groups within the community (Irene, 2014). Whereas successive structured steps and criteria, such as age system or kinship/clan, often define the membership of traditional structures, informal peace committees manage a selection process of representatives from different groups in the community. Adan and Pkalya (2006) posit that this approach helps to widen the composition of formal and informal peace committees with the cumulative effect being the emergence of all-inclusive peacebuilding structure/approach/process.

According to Van-Tongeren (2013), memberships of IPCs often comprise volunteers with high passion and interest in peace. In addition, members show greater commitment and creativity than members of formal local peace committees. They resonate well with the grassroots and local resources and have been found effective in dealing with conflicts and building peace from the ground up. Although they are not without challenges, as noted by Muchanyuka (2020), they may experience a lack of adequate financial resources, initial resistance, and suspicions from community members and state authority.

4. Methods

The study involved qualitative research which adopted a participatory action research (PAR) approach and informal procedures to establish an informal peace committee (IPC) in a local setting in Ojoo, Ibadan, Nigeria. As an ancient city, Ibadan is characterised by urban, semi-urban and rural suburb settings. Ojoo local community was purposely selected for the study against the backdrop of its history of conflict and violence,

particularly over land and resources. In recent years, some of the most common conflicts have included disputes over land ownership, domestic and intimate partner violence, trader-related violence (market men or women), road transport worker-related violence, farmer-herdsmen violence and violence relating to the activities of cult groups. In addition, there have been reports of increasing crime rates, including armed robbery and assault (Onokala, 2017). As a Yoruba people, the Yoruba culture and tradition holds sway in the location, and community members are mostly linked by Yoruba language, norms, values, kin and tradition. The population of study cut across all age groups and other social characteristics in Ojoo community, Ibadan.

PAR design was deployed because it resonates with peacebuilding, and it is believed to be very appropriate for the study due to its relationship with peacebuilding. As opined by Chivasa (2017), PAR and peacebuilding bring individuals together with a view to addressing a common social problem; they are relationship oriented. He further argues that peacebuilding acknowledges peace as not an accidental experience. It requires planning, as pointed out by Hopp-Nishanka (2012). It also requires commitment and participation of relevant stakeholders and cooperative relationship. These are all critical components of PAR.

PAR is useful in linking research to the action required to bring about social change. PAR is essential to this study because it has, at its core, trust, networks and social justice. These are important values that underpin both PAR and peacebuilding; they remain major components of peaceful communities (Van Niekerk and Van Niekerk, 2009). Members of the community participated from the design stage through to the evaluation of their own activities. A study by Chivasa (2021) revealed that taking responsibility for the design and establishing peace committees by the grassroots, help in the development of variables that facilitate participatory peacebuilding, because of shared commitments and equitable inclusion between the social groups and areas or sectors that are involved. He added that participatory peacebuilding enables local individuals who have small influence over their lives to handle issues relating to peace, injustices and differences between men, women, and youth. Furthermore, Chivasa (2021) found out that the key components that facilitate participatory peacebuilding incorporate an equivalent share of responsibilities and collaboration between men, women, and the young

in the plan and creation of peace committees, and allow women to occupy major positions within the structures of informal peace committees.

For this study, PAR meant that local members of the community participated in the design and creation of the informal peace committees. PAR is a process of continuous cycles, where each cycle reflects the PAR principles. The components or stages of the cyclical process of PAR are diagnosing, planning, taking action, observing, reflecting and re-planning.

The study adopted a purposive sampling technique in selecting members of the PAR team, which was made up of volunteers from members of the community for the study. Interest and commitment to peace work were leading criteria that guided the selection process into the PAR from among the volunteers. Other factors considered were honesty, social group representation and willingness to commit time to the project. Seven volunteer members who are members of the local community were selected for the study and the researcher constituted the PAR team during the first cycle of the participatory action research. For this study, the process went through PAR cyclical processes twice. Before starting the second PAR cycle, seven more volunteers joined the PAR team. This increased the PAR team to 14 volunteers (self-selected members). The need to increase the number was pointed out during the observation stage of the first PAR cycle. The PAR team (14 members) co-diagnosed the problem, co-planned, co-implemented, co-observed, co-reflected and co-re-planned in line with the PAR cyclical approach.

Prior to the commencement of the second PAR cycle, a three-day workshop was organised for members with a view to adding value to their indigenous conflict resolution skills and building their capacity to a contemporary approach. In short, the workshop was designed to build their capacity in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and deepen their insight into the concept and operation of IPCs. The need for this was pointed out after the first cycle of the PAR. Observation, diarising, interviews and focus group discussions were used to collect primary data for the study. Data collected were analysed using thematic content analysis.

The demographic information of participants included 14 PAR team members and six non-PAR members (domestic conflict parties). There were nine females and 11 males. The age range of the participants was 19 to 70 years. Many of the participants are educated holders of diploma, national certificate of education (NCE), high school certificate, chartered accountancy, bachelor and masters certificates, but there were also lesser-

educated (with no certificate) and high school students among the participants. Among the participants were married, single, separated and divorced people. Also, among the participants were teachers, public servants, administrators, accountants, self-employed, clergy (pastor and Imam), estate agents/consultants, retired persons, housewives and unemployed persons including students.

The research questions for the study were guided by the research problem which led to the specific objectives: to establish an IPC in Ojoo, Ibadan, Nigeria; to assess the effectiveness of IPC in addressing conflicts and building peace in the local community; to explore how IPC can be promoted in the local community for the study; and to examine how IPC sustainability can be achieved in the local community. The PAR team co-prepared the questions used for the individual interviews and focus group discussion (FGD) in line with the aforementioned specific objectives of the study. The PAR team co-prepared these (research objectives and research questions) in line with the PAR approach. Three focus group discussions were carried out. Two of the three FGDs had seven members, and the third group had six members. Individual members interviewed also constituted the FGD members. Fourteen of them were members of the PAR and are also members of the community while six were non-PAR members who are also members of the community, and had direct dealings with the established IPC following their cases brought before the IPC.

The interviewees and members of the FGD were selected from the PAR team (also members of the community) and other community members who brought their cases before the IPC. The interviewees were asked questions that constituted the research question, and related to the specific objectives of this study. The same constituted the topics for the FGD. The respondents addressed the following questions: Is IPC a structure you are willing to establish to address conflict and violence in your area? Do you think the IPC was effective in respect to its objectives? Are you willing to promote IPC in the study area? How will IPC sustainability be assured in your area?

Thematic content analysis was the method used in analysing the primary data collected for the study as it was suitable for the analysis of qualitative data. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse the classifications and present themes (patterns) that related to the data. A collaborative approach was also deployed in selecting the themes following the data

from the interview and FGDs. Similar themes were obtained from both sections (individual interviews and FGDs) mostly due to the fact that the same respondents who participated in the individual interviews also broke into three different groups for FGDs. Additionally, they were guided by the same topics and questions as was the case in individual interviews.

The identification of themes for discussion was effected via a coding technique developed in line with Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) advising that letters or symbols could be used to represent data in the form of codes. The themes that emerged were LPC establishment, LPC effectiveness, LPC promotion and LPC sustainability. Themes that occurred more frequently were considered to be major themes.

For validity and reliability, triangulation, including the use of participants checking, preliminary activities that served as a pilot programme, and prolonged presence in the site of research were deployed as strategies. Individual interview and FGD questions were prepared in line with the aforementioned specific objectives by the PAR team, and presented to two experts and senior researchers in the field of peace and conflict study for review, criticism and validation. Their criticism and modifications were implemented while producing the final draft of the interview guide. In addition, for data validation purposes from participants, the researcher checked on members for clarification on issues that seemed inconclusive, unclear or that required emphasis.

One of the ways of finding out whether, for example, an observation is 'valid' is to ask other people, especially the research participants, and check whether the participants agree with the researcher's data (Creswell, 2014). This was one of the strategies adopted in this study. The giving of clear instructions to participants and respondents as well as not asking questions that required long explanations contributed to the reduction of fatigue and attention deficit for those interviewed. Participants agreed with the researcher's data, which established the reliability of the study.

The research was carried out in accordance with ethical guidelines. Ethical consideration was a priority in this study. There was voluntary participation of individuals in the interview sessions. Individuals who participated in this research work were not forced into it. Privacy and anonymity of participants were also given paramount importance in this study. The consent of the informants was sought to have their responses recorded for easy analysis. Participants were assured that the purpose of

the data collection exercise was strictly academic. Furthermore, works of authors used for the research were duly acknowledged.

5. Results

An IPC was established in a local setting in Ojoo area in Ibadan, Nigeria following this study. The IPC was used to address dispute over land ownership, domestic and intimate partner violence and it promoted a social cohesion programmer. The data for the study were analysed along various themes as seen below:

5.1 IPC establishment

An IPC was established in a local setting in Ojoo area in Ibadan, through an informal procedure and volunteer methods. During the FGDs and individual interviews, many respondents argued that the creation of the IPC required collaboration among stakeholders. They said the IPC creation could be done through research, through community outsider(s) and/or insiders' motivated actions. In all of these, respondents said the best was insiders' motivated actions. If it is something the insiders (local community members) think they want, the insiders would be motivated by the spirit of local ownership, and this would contribute to making the creation and running of the IPC more effective. In this study, this was taken into consideration. Local people took ownership of it. They saw it as what they thought would work in addressing the problem of domestic and intimate partner violence, violence against pregnant women and weak social cohesion, and in building peace in their community. A respondent commented, which also captured the views of many respondents, and corroborates the aforesaid point when he said:

We are really now happy to be part of this project of creating IPC in this our community because we are convinced that it is the right approach to deal with conflicts and violence that are prevalent in this community (especially domestic and intimate partner violence, dispute over land ownership) and in building sustainable peace. (Seg, 2023)

Another respondent added that following his experience in this project, he believed that:

Self-initiated IPCs are less expensive. This is due to the fact that they make use of community resources which often include free manpower, free venue, and easier mobilisation of volunteers or people

to select into IPC, including flexible time arrangement and local fundraising (no matter how small) even if it's for refreshment of IPC members when addressing conflict cases during meetings. (Iwe, 2023)

The above comments follow Odendaal's (2010) argument on legitimacy as a critical consideration in setting up a local peace committee. IPCs must enjoy local legitimacy, and legitimacy often flows from ownership. When it is available, it makes the local community members double or multiply their commitment to the IPC. Interest and commitment to peace work are the key motivations for joining informal peace committees. The acceptability of the IPC becomes very high among local community members.

Community members who volunteered or were appointed into the IPC membership had to be impartial persons whose honesty, integrity, credibility and attitudes were impressive. In addition, they had to be knowledgeable on what they were expected to do. Community leaders and the indigenous community members in both local and semi-urban settings, knew the track records and antecedents of many indigenous people in the area. They were able to draw on these resources to determine the qualifications and validate persons appointed into the IPC or who volunteered to join. The establishment of IPCs often involves the selection of capable individuals representing different sectors and social divides of the community. The representation of all social groups or constituencies found in the community, including vulnerable groups such as youth and women, offers local peace committees a platform that is conducive to creating co-existence and cohesion (Chivasa, 2017) in local communities. The IPC members often undergo relevant trainings with a view to building their capacity and to empower them to carry out the IPC activities effectively and efficiently.

5.2 IPC effectiveness

During individual interviews, many respondents argued that local peace committees were very effective in addressing domestic and intimate partner violence, including violence against pregnant women that appeared to be prevalent in Ibadan. It was also effective in promoting relational peace building. IPC creation could be a preventative measure (through local early warning signal mechanisms and nipping conflict at latent stages) or in response to specific conflict cases. Overall, IPCs

promote peacebuilding at grassroots level. Many conflicts and violence that manifest at national level are also entwined with local factors. Therefore, it is important for national level governments to formulate and encourage policies that can promote formal and informal peace committees in communities. Many respondents described the IPC as more effective in addressing the root causes of conflict and in building peace than other approaches such as litigation, and even the traditional approach. Given that IPCs are often a blend of traditional and contemporary approaches, one may not want to argue the position of the respondents on IPC effectiveness. The successful intervention by the IPC in different conflicts in the community, including six domestic violence cases brought to it by six non-PAR community members, attests to the effectiveness of the IPC. The view expressed by many respondents appeared to have been summarily captured by a respondent who said:

We are glad for all we have put into this project of setting up IPC. We can see by ourselves that IPC is truly effective in addressing conflicts and violence as seen in the different conflicts the IPC intervened, such as domestic and intimate partners' violence cases, disputes over land ownership. We can see that IPC build peace on a solid foundation that can endure the test of time for conflict parties, as it addressed the needs and the root causes of conflicts. Whether as a reaction to a specific conflict or as a preventative structure, IPC is indeed effective, and its capacity to build peace from below is not in doubt. (Ama, 2023)

The comments of many respondents may very well further spotlight the inherent capacity of IPCs to build peace, especially in local communities and even in semi-urban settings in today's world. This is important amid the increasing rate of violence and state fragility, and the urgent need to stem the tides. Van-Togeren (2012) connects with this when he contends that when state fragility occurs, the creation of IPCs help communities to address peace challenges which affect their well-being. And the addressing of their well-being brings balance to such communities which, by so doing, advance their interests. Also, Odendaal (2010) and Sangqu (2014) alluded to this when they said that communities create peace committees to advance their interests. Building peace is of paramount interest to communities and IPCs are strategic to the whole engagement. IPCs build peace in local communities through creating dialogue spaces where people engage each other in search of solutions to their challenges.

They also facilitate peacebuilding sessions. In some situations, they mediate conflict and act as early warning systems; they work towards addressing human insecurity concerns in their areas.

All the ingredients that make IPCs effective must be available, and some of these have been pointed out in studies by Lederach (1997). He points out that what makes peace committees effective is the fact that most, if not all, are situated in existing networks (involving village heads, local councillors, chiefs and other leaders), particularly those created by community members themselves. Any peace committee that uses these networks has the potential to build peace at local community levels.

All respondents from among those who brought their cases to the IPC intervention in the course of this study agreed that their conflicts were amicably resolved by the IPC created by the study. They added that what was achieved could be rightly described as positive peace among the conflict parties. They said they were satisfied with the resolution, and believed that the root causes of their conflicts had been properly addressed.

In sum, one such case was concerned with domestic violence. It involved a man who regularly returned home drunk very late at night, and often beat up his wife for her complaints regarding his behaviour. The intervention of the IPC contributed in returning peace to the home, as the man stopped returning home late and his stopped wife-beating behaviour. The IPC adopted a method that, among other methods, drew on mediation as an approach to resolve the conflict. Domestic and intimate partner violence and land ownership disputes were the cases addressed alongside advocating programmes to promote the building of social cohesion in the course of this experimental study.

One advantage of blending a traditional approach and a contemporary approach resides in the power of synergy that such IPCs brings to the fore. This truly makes the IPC strong, effective and holistic in its approach to dealing with conflicts and building peace. The comment of an informant, as seen below, which also captured the opinions of many respondents, attempts to bring clarity on the impact of the IPC when he said:

We are happy the IPC has been created and that the committee can resolve conflicts. So, we decided to come to the IPC to see how it would resolve our conflicts. We are happy we came and brought our cases here. All we say at this point, is that the IPC really did well. What

we saw was different from our experiences in previous cases we were involved in. The IPC facilitated resolution processes, also allowed us to play a major role in resolving our conflicts. What we mean is that the IPC helped us to resolve the conflicts by mediating the process. (Fide, 2023)

The above comment from a respondent revealed that parties to the conflict were satisfied with the outcome of the resolution of their conflicts. Respondents also pointed out that the IPC helped to facilitate the process that led to the resolution of the conflicts. There was a strong collaboration between the conflict party and the members of the IPC as they worked together towards the resolution of the conflicts. This was in line with the IPC approach which is concerned with facilitating dialogue, mediating conflicts and building consensus. These functions of IPCs allow the conflict stakeholders to play key roles in resolving their conflicts. In short, IPC helps the conflict parties to address the root causes of the conflicts.

5.3 IPC promotion

Promoting IPCs in local communities can flow from IPC legitimacy. When respondents were asked if an IPC was something they were willing to promote in their community, all the respondents said yes. They added that they were happy to share the idea with neighbouring communities and support promoting IPCs even in those areas. They continued, saying that they had seen that IPCs would be useful in dealing with conflicts and violence and in building peace in their community. Their willingness to promote the IPC was an important step in the realisation of my desire for the establishment of more IPCs in the community. This would help reduce pressure on a single committee, given the prevalence of conflicts in the community, and the need to build peace as soon as possible. The extent of members' willingness to promote IPCs can be seen from their actions and commitment to the project. A participant's voice summed it up by saying:

I would like to say on behalf of my colleagues that we are glad to commit ourselves to the promotion of IPC in our domain, and even try to influence neighbouring communities to establish IPC. Personally, I love the idea, and would be very much available and support the IPC in my community with my resources. I am sure the same goes for my

colleagues, and from what we hear around, the community is happy to promote IPC in the community. (Olu, 2023)

When asked how they might promote the concept of IPC in their community, many of the respondents said it was possible, especially if the community leader was in support of the project. They added that community leaders had systems in place for supporting and promoting what they supported and approved. They continued by saying that they would continue to volunteer their time and resources to the IPC they had created. And that they were sure that a combination of individuals and collective resources of the community deployed into it would go a long way towards promoting the IPC. They would promote the IPC with their resources and continuously ensure that the support and approval of leaders was obtained at all times.

5.4 IPC sustainability

Generally, IPCs are faced with the problem of inadequate funding from external sources or outsiders. This has contributed in stifling some IPCs, and has eventually led to the folding of such IPCs. When the respondents were asked about the challenges faced regarding sustainability of IPC, given their experiences in this project, many of them pointed out that poor funding could be a major challenge for IPC sustainability. However, for many of them, even though donor support from outsiders or external sources could add value to IPCs in their local community, they argued that with their local resources support, they believed their IPC could continue to survive. The clarity of this point is seen in a respondent who remarked that:

We may not have adequate financial resources to support our IPC, but we believe as we put forward the little we have and make our non-financial resources available, such as our time, commitment, free venue for meetings, our foods and palm wine to drink during meetings, we won't have problem keeping our IPC on the sustainable path, and continue to survive. (Dam, 2023)

What was observed from the respondents relates to the benefits, such as local ownership, inclusivity and legitimacy of the IPCs. Local ownership and inclusivity are key factors for achieving legitimacy of an IPC. When a community takes ownership of an IPC, it raises the IPC stake for its legitimacy. Such a community works to mobilise local resources and

ensure the sustainability of its IPC. For IPCs to be sustainable, most respondents said that such IPCs should be set up by members of the community. They all agreed that outsiders cannot simply set up IPCs without the leaders of the community and the insiders' support. If outsiders were interested in setting up an IPC in any community, they should first obtain the approval of the community members, and also involve community members in the set-up process. The respondents in this study added that sustainability was not a problem when community members saw the IPC as part of their everyday life. This informant's remarks summed it up by saying that:

When IPC is organically developed by community members, it will run just like many other associations in the community, such as elders' forum, youth groups, women groups, traditional leaders' councils, and so on. And it will survive as the community members see it as part of their everyday life. When IPC is presented as a complementary structure to the existing structure in a community, and the people see it as partner in progress in dealing with conflicts, and in building peace, including seeing it as having a healthy relationship with the indigenous community frameworks, then it would be received by community leaders as part of the community assets, and part of everyday life of the community members. (Iwale, 2023)

One of the important points raised by an informant in the above comment is the adaptability of IPC to a community indigenous framework, since many local people often strongly uphold and cherish their indigenous tradition and local framework. Change is difficult, so whatever is going to change in local communities, existing systems often encounter resistance to this. So IPCs must be introduced to complement the existing tradition or local system that supports peace-making in the local community. This helps to increase acceptability of the IPC by the people of the community. This is very important for the sustenance of IPCs in communities.

Informal peace committees often readily resonate with community commitment to connect the IPC to the local resource base of the community. For formal peace committees, external resource support is often required for their survival. In general, whether local peace infrastructures (formal and informal peace committees) are externally or internally motivated, it cannot be denied that adequate resources are required to make them functional and sustainable.

6. Synthesis of findings and reflections

The study demonstrates the power of IPCs in building peace from the ground up using local resources, principles and philosophies of grassroots and informal agencies and initiatives. Reflecting on the power from below in peacebuilding, the study focuses on an informal peace committee created through collaborative efforts by 14 PAR members in a local setting in Ojoo, Ibadan, Nigeria. They came together to create a local peacebuilding infrastructure (informal peace committee) and used it to intervene in conflict and to promote peacebuilding. The use of the informal peace structure to resolve cases of domestic and intimate partner violence, dispute over land ownership and to build social cohesion among members of the community further added to the voices in support of IPCs and a call on communities to establish IPCs and other peace infrastructures.

Primary data were sourced from 20 respondents through individual interviews, focus group discussions and observation. Despite some of its weaknesses, many respondents expressed confidence in the capacity of an informal peace committee to significantly contribute to peacebuilding in local and semi-urban settings. They pointed out that an informal peace committee established through a collaborative approach was more effective and result-oriented in conflict intervention, peacebuilding and in promoting social cohesion. Participants added that the willingness to continuously promote informal peace committees in locations was anchored on the spirit of shared ownership and legitimacy of the informal peace structure. These serve as the pivot upon which informal peace committees sustainability can be achieved. While recognising the challenge inadequate funding can pose to IPI sustainability, the study nevertheless argued that the burden can be less if legitimacy and the spirit of shared ownership are strong. This could urge community members to strive towards ensuring that they contributed their quota towards the survival of the local peace infrastructure, even in difficult circumstances.

Overall, projects relating to informal peace committees are readily replicable. This contributes to its scientific usefulness in research and in addressing the problem of peacebuilding in Africa and the world at large.

7. Conclusion

The study shows that local peace infrastructures (as grassroots peacebuilding initiatives) are effective in addressing multiple threats in communities, including domestic and intimate partner violence and land ownership disputes. They are also effective in promoting relational peacebuilding and powering peacebuilding from below.

Moreover, there are existing studies that show the application of local peace infrastructures (formal and informal peace committees) to manage tensions during elections (as seen in Sierra Leone during the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2007 and 2008), pastoral or grazing-related violence, and other social issues including structural violence at grassroots level. In the South African experience, although they were not able to prevent all violence, they were instrumental in containing the spread of violence.

Local peace infrastructures, with both informal and formal peace committees, are seen as an effective collaborative peacebuilding framework, especially at community level. They are, however, not without weaknesses. Notwithstanding, their strength in building peace contributes to their relevance in contemporary time, especially at local levels and even in semi-urban settings, as well as in forging a pluralistic understanding of peacebuilding beyond the elders-centric indigenous/ traditional approach that revolves around male elders and community leaders only.

The study established an informal peace committee. It revealed that the IPC was effective and that community members expressed willingness to promote IPCs in their domain. In addition, it revealed that IPCs are sustainable when robust in legitimacy, shared ownership and inclusiveness.

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Regionalism and the Fight Against Terrorism in Southern Africa: Reflections on Cabo Delgado in Mozambique

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Abstract

Post-independence Africa has often depicted Southern Africa as a formidable region spared by the calamities of Islamic insurgencies and terrorism. However, unfolding events in the last five years have demonstrated the limitation of SADC to terrorism exceptionalism. A combination of relatively weak states perpetuating poor regionalism, ethnic and religious diversity, poverty and the existence of the 'ungoverned space' are possible explanations in making the region a suitable habitat for insurgency groups. The recent invasion by terrorists of Cabo Delgado province in Mozambique has been a critical cause for concern for the stability of the region. The military intervention of the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) and Rwanda presents an opportunity for academics to explore regional prospects for peace and security. This paper uses insights gained from a qualitative study on terrorism, counterterrorism and regionalism to investigate the concept of regional security cooperation in the SADC region and the authenticity of institutional responses in Northern Mozambique. The study concludes that the launch of the SAMIM, despite several obstacles, represents a step in the right direction. More so, creating durable security institutions is the starting point towards realising meaningful regional security cooperation, which guarantees feasible regional economic integration.

Keywords: regionalism, SADC, Mozambique, Cabo Delgado, terrorism, insurgency

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1. Introduction

Over the past two decades, we have witnessed a proliferation of institutional rapid response mechanisms, which stretch from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 2002 to the European Union (EU) battle groups in 2007 and the African Union (AU) standby force declared operationally ready in 2016. In the case of NATO, established in April 1949 and comprising 12 countries from Western Europe and North America, which has since expanded, an essential aspect of the NATO Alliance was the American commitment to the defence of Western Europe (Baylis and Smith, 2001). Thus, the alliance was driven by a critical principle of collective self-defence enshrined in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Whereas the premise of the alliance was perceived as the United States of America's (US) unconditional commitment to defend Western Europe militarily, the alliance also literally meant that the US could use nuclear weapons to deter Soviet "aggression" (Baylis and Smith, 2001). For the Soviet Union, political encirclement entailed a growing military threat, specifically nuclear threat. It is for this reason that the vexatious NATO question vis-à-vis ambivalent relations of the US and Russia has for the umpteenth time remained uneasy, thus becoming an existential threat to regional and world peace, as now fully expressed in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War. On the part of Europe, the Treaty of Lisbon strengthens the security of the EU member states in dealing with external and security threats by introducing Article 42(7) of the Mutual Defence Clause. The clause has similar motives to NATO's injure one, injure all policy. The pursuit of collective security by the EU can thus be perceived in the context of a shared understanding of the desired notions of peace (Mvundura and Rusero, 2019).

However, despite investments made to these institutional mechanisms, as pointed out above, in the case of Africa, observations seem to suggest that the continent's military alliances and convergence have remained peripheral and weak (van Nieuwkerk, 2017). Instead, when one looks at the military responses to security crises across the African continent in recent years, the narrative is a repetition of the ever-increasing tendency that 'when push comes to shove' it is the coalitions of the willing that get deployed. Academics have termed these; 'ad-hoc coalitions', defined as temporary groups of actors that consent to solve a particular conflict at a given location in a more or less non-institutionalised manner. A case reference can be attributed to the Multinational Joint Task Force

(MNJTF) fighting against Boko Haram in Nigeria, created in 2015 by the most threatened states.

Northern Mozambique has projected similar responses towards the terrorist group locally called 'Mashababos'. Although the group is also called Al Shabab locally, it does not have any known or established connections with the real Al Shabab, which wreaks havoc in Somalia and Kenya (Dzinesa, 2023). This article explains the correlation between regionalism and terrorism, referencing the Cabo Delgado case study. The article further avers an assessment of the achievements, lessons learnt and, lastly, the feasible recommendations about attaining viable SADC regional security cooperation mechanisms.

2. On the notion of regionalism

The concept of regionalism can be mapped out from the decades after the Second World War when decolonisation and the Cold War resulted in the establishment of multilateral and regional organisations across the globe. This trajectory is traceable from such organisations as NATO, the EU, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Africa Union (AU) and the Arab League, among other regional organisations (Nagar and Saunders, 2011). Generally, regionalism can be defined as the efforts of a group of nations to enhance each member state's economic, political and social aspects (Mvundura and Rusero, 2020; Nagar and Saunders, 2011). These efforts can manifest in regional cooperation, market integration and development integration. The 1990s, which coincided with the end of the Cold War and increasing complexities in interdependence fostered by globalisation, bears witness to a new wave of cooperation, which academics have often termed 'the new regionalism'. This is characterised by the forming of several regional cooperation frameworks that have advocated economic integration. References can be drawn from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), where efforts towards rejuvenating and strengthening existing regional actors and creating sub-regional actors in Europe and Africa became evident.

3. Regionalism in Africa

On the African continent, regionalism can be traced from the African philosophy of 'Africanism', which brings about the unquenchable thirst for collective self-reliance, development, peace and unity (Daniel and Nagar, 2014). Scholars have described this doctrine as the pragmatic force

behind the birth of the OAU, AU and subsequently sub-regional groupings such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC) and SADC premised on the exact cause (Dzinesa, 2023). Despite unsatisfactory results, regional integration discussions have been prominent on the agenda of the African continent, drawing back as far as the OAU's 1980 Lagos Plan of Action, the 1991 Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) adopted by the AU (Daniel and Nagar, 2014). Manifestations of regionalism continue to be visible in contemporary Africa with the launch in January 2021 of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) by the AU, which serves as a protuberant reference to economic regional integration. The AfCFTA is an initiative that seeks to bring the continent the *crème de la crème* status. Africa has vast resources and a diversified people. Therefore, engaging in a treaty that facilitates intraregional trade makes inevitable the capacity to become the epitome of success and envy of other nations from a pragmatic conception. The AfCFTA treaty emanates from the continent's founding fathers' desire to integrate the whole continent. The merits of this treaty will bring about development, security and integration, among many other merits attached to this treaty. Nevertheless, one should not be oblivious to the fact that technicalities are a conventional aspect when it comes to the issue of reforms as a concern, with specific reference to the AfCFTA technicalities which include infrastructure, mismanagement, competition, ethnicity and implementation. Among other technicalities are the setbacks that could potentially alter the motive behind the implementation of the AfCFTA.

However, it is paramount for one to note that Africa's pursuit of regional integration, just like that of the entire global South, has not been spared by complexities that have widely remained diverse when compared to the global North, this being due to the socio-economic and political dynamics impacting the process (Rusero, 2023). In the African milieu, regional integration is attached to philosophical propositions which developed generally from western societies. Each of the different types of integration scheme has distinct regularities and methods of operation (MacLean, 1999). Thus, Africa's regional integration has been an exercise of different types where economic integration formulates different policies underpinned by the pan-Africanist school of thought. This scenario has led various scholars to understand African regionalism as a long-cherished pan-African idea of local governments and its people, not necessarily a means to development.

In the case of Southern Africa, countries from this region have held an enviable history of political cooperation. A high degree of solidarity was forged during the battle against settler colonialism and apartheid between the 1970s and early 1990s (Chimanikire, 2001). SADC remains the most formal and inclusive expression of Southern African regionalism (Bischoff, 2002). Southern Africa is one of the areas of the African continent that warrants systematic treatment as a region. Regions are not just geopolitical divisions but also social constructions premised on shared interests and intersubjective understandings. It is possible to identify several empirically and socially constructed attributes within and across states and societies in Southern Africa (Baner and Taylor, 2005). There is a high degree of shared colonial history in Southern Africa. The Portuguese had settled in the region on both coasts in present-day Mozambique and Angola, the Dutch in South Africa and the British in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi. However, towards the end of the 19th century, much of the territory had fallen under British control, except for Namibia under German rule and Angola and Mozambique under Portuguese rule (Baner and Taylor, 2005).

Liberation struggles also fostered interconnectedness among peoples and states in the region. Most of the time, liberation fighters were forced to live in exile in neighbouring countries. This meant the interface of various nationalities long before attaining several states' independence. States such as Tanzania and Zambia, which attained independence earlier, became rear centres to establish training camps and offices for liberation movements that were attempting to end minority rule in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), South West Africa (Namibia) and South Africa. However, the legacies of security–military alliances and a sense of cooperation did not start with the liberation movements. The Pretoria-Lisbon-Salisbury Axis entered into between South Africa and colonial Mozambique, Angola and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) was a security alliance aimed at curbing the feasibility of any meaningful military campaigns or armed struggles by the indigenous populations (Ngoma, 2005). In addition, the White Cooperation Bloc forged unity of shared common origins, history and the common motive of protecting the white colonial regimes against liberation movement uprisings (Ngoma, 2005). These developments point to a systematic approach that warrants SADC to be qualified and understood as a region.

The SADC as a regional organisation evolved out of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), an offspring of the Lusaka Declaration of 1980 and the Frontline States (FLS) consisting of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The FLS was an informal and loosely coordinated political alliance which attempted to aggregate its member states' power to pursue a specific foreign policy objective in Southern Africa. The FLS also evolved from the Pan-African Movement for East, Central and Southern Africa (PAMFECSA), consisting of Botswana, Zambia, Angola and Mozambique. The FLS had a twin objective of waging the liberation struggle to decolonise the region and simultaneously forging African unity buttressed through political and cultural symbiosis (Mpanyane, 2009). The expression and mechanisms of executing the struggle were coordinated and executed under the security arm of the FLS and Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDC). These security dynamics, to some degree, continue to shape the political and security cooperation of the region and help entrench collective thinking among regional members. Zimbabwe deliberately exploited this when confronted with its domestic crisis and external pressure from the broader western international community.

The SADCC, in turn, was meant to create its own economic space to free the region from its dependence on the apartheid economy. SADCC opted for functional cooperation and attracted overseas economic aid in doing so. The SADCC founding document of the Lusaka Declaration 1980 laid a framework for economic cooperation, development and the full integration of Southern Africa. On the political side, the FLS articulated the notion of greater security for Southern Africa from the apartheid regime of South Africa and advocated fundamental change aimed at liberating both Namibia and South Africa. Established in April 1980 by governments of nine states, namely Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, the central thrust of SADCC was to coordinate development projects in order to lessen economic dependence on the then apartheid South Africa. SADCC agreed on grouping priorities into Sectoral Responsibilities allocated to member states between 1980 and 1992 to achieve that objective.

4. Defining concepts – Insurgency, terrorism and violent extremism

It is critical to delve deeper into the nuanced distinctions of the notions of insurgency, terrorism and violent extremism, as they dominate the terminology discourse of this paper. A broader and holistic understanding of these terms dictates the policy tools that states and multilateral organisations use, encouraging strategies such as counterterrorism, counter-insurgency, preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE), and preventing violent extremism (PVE). In the context of this paper, insurgency follows a definition postulated by Dzinesa that it is a rebellion against authority by the rebels who are not recognised as belligerents. This definition helps us to arrive at an informed understanding that not all rebellions are characterised as insurgencies. Conversely, terrorism denotes the calculated deployment of violence to a targeted population to instil and cultivate an atmosphere or culture of fear, thereby attaining a particular political objective. The deployed violence, which is deliberate or intentional, is thus meted out on a significant magnitude to draw the attention of the state and the populace. The AU has defined terrorism as “any act that is a violation of the criminal laws of a state party and can endanger the life, physical integrity, or freedom of, or cause serious injury or death to, any person, any number or group of persons, or cause or may cause damage to public or private property, natural resources, environmental or cultural heritage”(AU, 2022).

More related to terrorism is violent extremism, which is the vocal or active opposition to the defined fundamental values of a given polity, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and respect and tolerance for different faiths and beliefs (Institute for Security Studies, 2022). Thus, in the context of Cabo Delgado, the violent conflict that erupted there was not characteristic of a civil war and not a popular revolt, but rather a war against the state and its populace carried out by a terrorist sect. The definitions of the concepts above are essential in making sense of the authors' characterisation of the conflict in Cabo Delgado and, in the process, enhance the analytical depth of the paper through the facilitation of a comprehensive understanding of the diverse range of nuances this

phenomenon can engender, ranging from complex security responses to more holistic and preventive approaches.

5. Theorising regionalism in Africa

The doctrine of regional integration in the African context cannot be ascribed to a singular theoretical framework. This is because of its associated complexities grappled by changing perspectives in the realities and challenges of globalisation, regionalisation and liberalisation. The continent has been involved in experiments of different types of regionalism guided by the notion of pan-Africanism regarding cooperation and integration. Scholars propound that the economic aspects of the concept are the accurate measure of success concerning regional arrangements, while other schools of thought focus on the relevance of politics. This narrative has explained the scholarly environment, which has seen a preoccupation with political and economic issues on African regionalism and has considered African governments and citizens craving regional integration as a long-cherished desire. This section seeks to articulate the functionalism and neo-functionalism theories in analysing vital political issues regarding Africa's quest for regional economic integration. Efforts in this section are premised on examining how these theories, combined, provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter to identify the theoretical gaps, contradictions and challenges in line with Africa's political and social realities.

6. Functionalism

The ideology of functionalism can be retracted from the outbreak of World War 2, where concerns were raised on how the state had become dilapidated as an institution for social organisations. This concept was premised on countering power politics and state-centredness in international relations. The theory entails that power politics and state-centredness lead to conflicts and wars in the international system as nation-states continuously battle to achieve their self-interests and safeguard their sovereignty. Functionalism, therefore, advocates promoting peace and harmony among states. In this regard, functionalists affirm that war is a universal problem that affects everyone and, as such, the need for world peace should be a universal goal cherished by everyone. This theory then acts as the backbone behind understanding international cooperation in functional spheres of activity which do not impinge on

individual state sovereignty. This ideology believes that, through a system of functional cooperation, people are brought together with a feeling akin to sustained community. Functionalism reflects the roles of international organisations, non-state actors and transnational institutions, rather than national governments, when it comes to problems affecting the human species. It provides the fundamentals in explaining the basis of international cooperation and the evolutionary nature of the development of international and regional organisations.

As a theory, functionalism has also been a point of enlightenment for researchers on the reason sovereign states cooperate and how this cooperation advances with time. Functionalism enunciates that international institutions are not complete and immune to weaknesses, but should be seen as vehicles through which human needs are met. Thus, their activities ought to be premised on the human needs of the day. There is room to question as to whether functionalism is the most appropriate approach to take in relation to regional economic integration in Africa, given the political priorities that often come into play in realising key integration objectives. In reality, African leaders tend not to get involved in matters that are not contentious and could be resolved by more technical experts. Another potential issue with international cooperation is that it can sometimes lead to wars. Functionalism, a theory that cooperation is less likely to lead to conflict, is a valuable perspective. However, it only sometimes holds in Africa, where regional integration arrangements (RIAs) have led to state conflicts. This results from the weakness of African countries which mainly produce raw materials and import manufactured goods. Africa has yet to strengthen its policy and institutional frameworks to achieve regional economic integration goals.

7. Neo-functionalism

Neo-functionalists, like functionalists, argue that the national government's authority is gradually eroded as people transfer loyalties to supranational bodies. Proponents of this ideology argue that, unlike what functionalism proposes, the integration process is not restricted to the intensification of policy collaboration in a specific functional area — economic or technical. Neo-functionalism is based on a political approach and re-launches functionalist theory from the perspective of regional institutions. To the neo-functionalists, 'interests' are the driving force behind the integration process, but actors may learn and develop common ideals and identities. The neo-functionalist model posits that

conflicts between states will be likely to occur when integration progresses and different political powers struggle for control. Cooperation is unlikely to last when these conflicts arise, as they can lead to power struggles and attitudes among political elites opposed to integration. Based on the above statements, neo-functionalism tries to explain the process of regional integration from a practical point of view. Regional integration is an inevitable process that can be initiated by political leaders of states interested in participation. Thus, neo-functionalism notes that states are essential participants in the integration process but emphasises that states comprise various interest groups and political parties. The essential neo-functionalist idea is that 'spillover' occurs, leading to the gradual integration of different sectors of society. This process is inevitable and will result in the merger of states and their different constituencies.

However, both functionalism and neo-functionalism have been criticised from different angles. For example, the new post-functional approach claims that the role and authority of member states decreases as integration proceeds; however, this claim contradicts the experiences of Africa. From European and African experiences, the state's role in national and regional affairs poses a significant challenge for neo-functionalist interpretations. Particularly in the African context, the new post-functional approach fails to account for the nature and functioning of the post-independence state in Africa or its impact on the process of economic integration, and it does not explain the lack of effective institutions in African countries, such as those interest groups and political parties that are supposed to drive integration. It does not account for the fact that, while regional integration is embraced in Africa, the status quo (state sovereignty) is maintained. While African governments have been motivated by the success of regional integration in Europe, the continent has yet to take full advantage of integration. Much attention has been given to establishing regional economic institutions rather than the structures that must be built and integrated to advance economic integration.

8. Security challenges in Africa pose challenges for regionalism

Most African states are characterised by unsolvable internal ethnic conflicts, power-sharing disputes, lack of the rule of law, weak institutions, border disputes, religious and cultural differences, and weak institutions. This narrative has been conducive to hosting terrorist groups,

especially those founded on a revolutionary agenda, with religious antagonism motivating the extremists and a desire for institutional change. These groups often claim recognition from an oppressed minority while scholars define terrorism as a criminal act directed against a state intending to create fear and terror in the minds of a particular group or the whole nation. The world has known about terrorism for years, and it has become a global concern with the emergence of East-Asian terrorist groups operating in many countries. The strength of Al-Qaida in Africa and other regions of the world presents a threat to both western and African interests on the continent. The war on terrorism has been declared in an attempt to neutralise some of the sophisticated terrorist group networks in West and East Africa. The war on terrorism is a communal effort as it affects the whole region. It threatens global peace and security, and individual countries may be unable to handle it. Regional integration institutions should work for counterterrorism with international organisations such as the United Nations.

9. Mozambique's Cabo Delgado crisis and negotiating regional security alliances

The situation in Cabo Delgado has shed light on the problem of promoting African solutions to African problems, given the existing lack of requisite financial and institutional resources. This paper highlights, first, some of the difficulties in negotiating regional security cooperation and, second, the security alliances on Mozambique's crisis in Cabo Delgado within the SADC confederation. Note is taken of the fact that Mozambique is a member state that is historically averse to external involvement in its domestic affairs and even the idea of creating military support alliances from within the region.

Over the past years, Mozambique has been experiencing mass displacement in a growing humanitarian crisis at the back of an Islamist insurgency in its gas-rich province Cabo Delgado. From the end of 2017, the North and Eastern parts of the province became a stage of violent conflict when a group of armed insurgents, mainly composed of local youths with links to Tanzania and Kenya, unleashed a series of attacks in the areas of the coast with a higher Islamic concentration (Forquilha and Pereira, 2019). The initiative aimed to establish an Islamic caliphate in that region. Cabo Delgado is the northernmost province of Mozambique, and it borders Tanzania in East Africa. Mozambique also shares borders with five other SADC member states: Swaziland, South Africa, Zimbabwe,

Zambia and Malawi. Four of the six neighbouring countries are landlocked and depend on Mozambique as a gateway to global markets (Forquilha and Pereira, 2019). In terms of security, Cabo Delgado could threaten this trade, which has been the basis for the support offered by these neighbouring counterparts in Mozambique to stem the insurgency. The conflict in this province has also been a cause for concern about maritime security in the Mozambican channel and local maritime security capacity generally along that belt. The East African coast is very limited, and it faces many challenges which include trafficking, illegal fishing and the potential resurgence of piracy.

The insurgency in Cabo Delgado has been complicated, as were the strategies to counter it. There have been many hypotheses propounded by scholars to articulate the roots of the conflict. There has been a school of thought focused on grievance aspects of the conflict, issues surrounding poverty and frustration of social expectations related to exploiting natural resources among local youths. Another school of thought has identified historical ethno-linguistic conflicts between coastal and inland peoples. Yet another hypothesis speaks to the regional dimensions of the conflict, which are pronounced by the relationship between the insurgency and terrorist cells in East Africa (countries such as Somalia, Tanzania and Kenya). Lastly, there is also the confluence of various international, regional and local economic interests in the Mozambique Channel, which are related to the control of a massively lucrative energy corridor and illegal drug, timber and ivory roots. These scenarios underline the complexity mentioned in the above paragraphs, where strong links exist between violent extremism, organised crime and local conflicts concerning the Cabo Delgado crisis.

10. SADC mission in Mozambique (SAMIM)

The full expression of a SADC mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) came into being on 23 June 2021 following the regional bloc's overall consent to establish it on 23 June 2021. SAMIM was deliberately put in place as a response mechanism to escalating violent extremism and insurgency by an Islamist armed group, Al-Shabaab or Al-Sunnah wa Jama'ah (ASWJ), in Mozambique's northern Cabo Delgado Province, which posed the risk of regional contagion (Cilliers et al., 2021). It is important to note that SADC's peace operations are informed by regional and continental policies and principles, including the 1992 SADC Treaty (as amended); 2001 Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation (in short,

Protocol); 2003 Mutual Defence Pact; 2010 Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ; Regional et al. Plan (RISDP) 2020-30; SADC Vision 2050; ASF Policy Framework; and AU Agenda 2063.

Specifically, the Treaty, Protocol, SIPO and Mutual Defence Pact provide the legal framework for establishing and regulating the peace and security architecture to promote regional defence, peace and security coordination and cooperation among SADC member States. The RISDP and Vision 2050 emphasise peace, security and good governance as the foundational pillar for Southern Africa's regional integration and development and are complementary to the AU Agenda 2063 goals of a stable and peaceful Africa backstopped by a relevant, fully functional and operational African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The Summit of Heads of State and Government is the mandating authority of collective self-defence, such as the deployment of the SADC Standby Force (SSF). The Summit does so on the advice and recommendation of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation (the Organ). Article 2 of the Protocol states the overall objective of the Organ, is to coordinate, facilitate and promote peace and security in the SADC region. Article 6 of the Mutual Defence Pact states that:

- An armed attack against a State Party shall be considered a threat to regional peace and security, and such an attack shall be met with immediate collective action.
- Summit shall mandate collective action on the recommendation of the Organ.
- Each State Party shall participate in such collective action in any manner it deems appropriate. Any armed attack and measures taken in response to it shall immediately be reported to the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and the UN Security Council (UNSC).

Based on the above outline, we concur with Dzinesa (2023) that the Mozambican case resonated with both regional instruments as external links existed. Article 7 of the Mutual Defence Pact stipulates that collective action can be taken at a member state's request or with its consent, except where the Summit decides that action needs to be taken in compliance with the Protocol. This is in sync with Article 11 of the Protocol, which outlines significant intrastate conflicts under the jurisdiction of the Organ and the various conflict management methods and procedures at the regional body's disposal, including collective enforcement action without

a member state's consent. Such intrastate conflicts include genocide, ethnic cleansing and gross human rights violations; civil wars or insurgencies; military coups or other threats to legitimate state authority; and conflicts that threaten regional peace and security (Dzinesa, 2023). However, the Summit can mandate such enforcement action only as a last resort, under Chapter VIII, Article 53 of the UN Charter and with UNSC approval (Dzinesa, 2023).

SAMIM was created under the auspices of the SADC Mutual Defence Pact and was deployed at the invitation of the Mozambican government to help it uphold national sovereignty and territorial integrity. This was significant as the government's response had been first to deny and downplay the conflict in Cabo Delgado, second to invoke sovereignty in domestic affairs while underestimating the terrorist threat, and third to graduate from heavy-handed but inadequate policing to military force subtly backed by private military contractors (PMCs), namely Russia's Wagner Group, Dyck Advisory Group (DAG) of South Africa and a consortium of South Africa's Paramount Group and Dubai-based Burnham Global.

SAMIM's initial mandate was to support Mozambique in combating terrorism and violent extremism in Cabo Delgado by:

- Neutralising the terrorist threat and restoring security to create a secure environment;
- Strengthening and maintaining peace and security, restoring law and order in affected areas of Cabo Delgado Province;
- Providing air and maritime support as well as logistics and training to Mozambican Armed Defence Forces (FADM) to enhance its operational capability;
- Helping Mozambique, in collaboration with humanitarian agencies, to continue providing humanitarian relief to the population affected by terrorist activities, including internally displaced persons (IDPs).

SAMIM's 15 July 2021 deployment was preceded by Mozambique's signing of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with SADC, which outlined the operational framework for the mission's troop/personnel contributing countries (T/PCCs), including Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. The Summit extended SAMIM's mandate repeatedly with the Mozambican government's consent throughout its

first deployment year. The third extension in April 2022 was significant as it approved SAMIM's segueing from a Scenario 6 military intervention mission to degrade the terrorist threat to a Scenario 5 multidimensional peace mission. This has been one of greatest contemporary security threats and has dedicated 24 sessions to the issue, making it the most discussed by the AUPSC since its operationalisation in 2004.

A summative evaluation of SAMIM can thus be made, notably that it played a crucial role in helping the Mozambique government pacify Cabo Delgado and restore law and order as a fundamental basis to combating terrorism. SAMIM's peacebuilding initiatives, buttressed by €1.9 million in funding from the EU under the AU African Peace Facility (APF) Early Response Mechanism (ERM), included the capacity building of Cabo Delgado's police and correctional services officers and resulted in the enhancement of law and order. In addition, SAMIM contributed through capacity building of local officers. Human rights issues were addressed and the rule of law was observed when dealing with, among other issues, grassroots community concerns, terror suspects, including children recruited by the insurgents, and terrorist prisoners (Forquilha and Pereira, 2019).

11. Rwanda's mission in Cabo Delgado

Rwanda's mission in Cabo Delgado deserves attention since it has, in several regards, been more effective than the SADC mission. This section also discusses a comparative assessment with the SADC mission to provide valuable insights into regional security interventions. On 9 July 2021, the East African state of Rwanda deployed 1000 military and police personnel to Cabo Delgado "to support efforts to restore Mozambique state authority by conducting combat and security apparatus, as well as stabilisation and security-sector reform" (Pigou, 2022:1). The deployment followed a bilateral deal entered between the presidents of Mozambique and Rwanda, respectively Phillip Nyuse and Paul Kagame. The Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) was effectively at the forefront in countering insurgents in their designated areas of responsibility, the districts of Palma and Mocimboa da Praia, and re-occupied the part of Mocimboa within weeks of deployment (Pigou, 2022). In an official statement, the Republic of Rwanda noted that the Rwandan contingent would support efforts militarily to restore Mozambique's state by conducting combat and security operations and stabilisation and security sector reform (Government of Rwanda, 2021). The Mission of Rwanda proved to be

more efficacious than that of SAMIM. SAMIM was deployed on 15 July 2021 following an approval by the Extraordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government in Maputo on 23 June 2021 as a regional response to extreme violence and terror in Mozambique (SADC, 2021). SAMIM was deployed under Scenario 6 of the African Standby Force with a mandate to support the Mozambican government in combating terrorism and violent extremism in Cabo Delgado. The mandate also extends to strengthening and maintaining peace and security, restoring law and order and assisting the government and humanitarian agencies to provide humanitarian relief to the affected population (Dzinesa, 2023). However, SADC's (late) deployment into Mozambique was mainly due to its internal processes and, more importantly, because of Mozambique's reluctance to have a regional force deployed. The initial position Mozambique adopted in refraining from having SAMIM deployed earlier was that it did not refer to the insurgency as 'terrorist activities' but as banditry, implying that the threat was not as severe as terrorism. SAMIM's ineffectiveness in dealing with the conflict in Mozambique has largely exposed the deep invisible divisions of the regional bloc in handling intrastate conflicts, and has rendered as suspicious the hierarchy and status of the states in the bloc as far as its responsiveness to conflicts is concerned.

12. Other mediation efforts in Mozambique and implications of SADC regionalism

Outside of SAMIM and RDF involvement in Mozambique, there have been other notable mediation efforts and involvement by some external actors. Notably, in October 2021, the European Union established the European Training Mission in Mozambique (EUTM), whose thrust was "military training including operational preparation; specialised training, including on counterterrorism; training and education on the protection of civilians and compliance with international humanitarian law and human rights law; and promotion of the agenda Women, Peace and Security" (Louw-Vaudran, 2022: 4). In addition to the EUTM, the EU contributed €2 million to the AU Rapid Response Mechanism support to SAMIM (Louw-Vaudran, 2022). SADC currently seeks support from the AU on the planned extension of the mission in Mozambique. While commendable, the gesture by the EU diminished the pursuit of 'Sadcness' as the regional bloc has existed for the past three decades. The much-cherished values of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and wading off

imperial and neo-imperial influence, have been the hallmark of SADC's existence. However, the EU gesture demonstrates both the unwillingness and/or incapacitation when mobilising resources to defend a member state's territorial integrity and sovereignty. On 8 July 2019, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres announced the appointment of Mirko Manzonei of Switzerland as his Personal Envoy for Mozambique. According to the UN, Ambassador Manzonei would provide good office support in facilitating the dialogue between the government of Mozambique and RENAMO and towards the signing and implementing of a peace agreement between the parties (UN, 2019).

13. Recommendations

Support should be provided to Mozambique on the terms requested by the government of Mozambique, especially in terms of the logistics and training of the Mozambican army. In this conversation, the EU could diplomatically request more effort towards transparency and information sharing in the way that the support is used and in the efficiency of the support. The EU should also advocate the call for a collective undertaking initially oriented with domestic undertones. This issue of having to negotiate with Rwanda outside the regional arrangement is plausibly uncomfortable for other member states, especially given that there could be a scenario of regional conflict spillovers and negative consequences from the coalition that Mozambique was trying to forge.

However, given the negotiations that Mozambique undertook with countries in the region, the fact remains that this was a Cabo Delgado insurgency, straddling East Africa and also going into the Mozambique Channel. This more significant issue extends to the peripheries of SADC, and the regional community should have admitted to incorporating other regions for support. This position thus drives a push towards an EAC, ECCAS and SADC peace and security summit, which might be an urgent necessity. If this is something feasible, the EU could assist with the necessary skills or capacity building that would be required to manage the complex logistics and coordination efforts of such a mission. The case of Cabo Delgado has also presented a long-term conflict; thus, SADC's response should also extend its conflict resolution and crisis management efforts by incorporating long-term solutions and strategies to such predicaments. This can be put into practice by aligning a strategy for prevention of violent extremism with a strategy for countering violent extremism to address the factors that lead to radicalisation.

For the Mozambican government, there is a need to embrace a multidimensional approach that is forthright in recognising the root causes of the insurgency and an integrated national security response with a human security-centric and developmental approach. In such a crisis, the nation-state must also develop a culture of working with the local community and humanitarian workers to provide humanitarian relief and essential services in the affected and at-risk areas. There is an urgent need for the Mozambican government to take a step further to change the security position of the maritime. They need to identify and undercut the localised financial supply chains and links to the transnational illicit networks that fund the insurgency.

14. Conclusion

The security situation in Cabo Delgado cannot be viewed as being separate from the human development disparities that prevail in the region. These disparities have been a contributing factor to the unfolding of the insurgency. Lessons from elsewhere on the continent relating to the 'development trap' must remain a part of the discussions about diffusing the situation. If interventions are only seen as reactive, the continued insurgency will find deeper traction among the disaffected groups in the region, mainly the youth. The point of departure for the Mozambican government, SADC and South Africa, a regional hegemony, is to recognise that, if left unattended, the situation will morph into a regional military complex dilemma where there is no peace in poverty, inequality and underdevelopment. This article recognises that regionalism functions beyond security operations to address these issues. There are issues of peace and development, capacity building and educational programmes, building basic infrastructures, and addressing unemployment in the region. A holistic understanding of these dynamics will likely bring finality to restoring total sovereignty in Mozambique and reclaiming a bonafide state fully in charge of its defined territory.

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The Role of the Judiciary in the Resolution of Intra-Party Conflicts in Lesotho

Mamello Rakolobe and Hoolo 'Nyane***

Abstract

Political parties play an integral role in modern democracies and are legitimate platforms of contestation for state power. Despite the vital role that political parties play in democratisation, they are often prone to internal disputes. Their internal processes, such as conferences, elections, decision-making and deployments, are often subject to contestation. Conflicts are inherent in political contestation in general and in political parties, in particular. Hence, political parties have several mechanisms for dispute resolution, one of which is the referral of disputes to the courts of law. The role of the courts in internal political party disputes is a double-edged sword. While a court provides an independent platform for resolving disputes, it lacks reconciliatory attributes. After court intervention, many political parties often break up into smaller parties or experience major defections. This phenomenon is more pronounced in Lesotho than elsewhere. Ever since the return to electoral democracy in 1993, the role of the courts in internal party disputes has increased phenomenally. However, instead of achieving cohesion and internal stability, political parties have experienced splits, exacerbated conflicts or significant defections after the referral of their internal disputes to the courts. This raises the question of whether the courts are the appropriate

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mechanism for resolving internal political conflicts. This article investigates this question.

Keywords: political parties, Lesotho, inter-party conflicts, courts of law, conflict resolution mechanisms

1. Introduction

Political parties are essential anchors of viable democracies as they, among other things, mobilise the electorate and recruit candidates to participate in elections. As grand places for the endogenous and exogenous contestation for political power, they are often prone to conflict (Ibrahim and Abubakar, 2015). Political party conflict can take two forms: intra-party and inter-party conflict. On the one hand, intra-party conflict is internal to a single political party. It involves members or structures of the same party. Inter-party conflict, on the other hand, involves two or more political parties. Both forms of political party conflict are common and often have the same potential to result in the most catastrophic consequences. The worst effects of political parties' conflicts can be the devastation of countries and political violence. Intra-party conflict often emanates from members' disagreements over many aspects of party management, such as, but not necessarily limited to, intra-party democracy, management and candidates' nomination and imposition (Aleyomi, 2013 in Ibrahim and Abubakar, 2015:117). If not properly managed, intra-party conflict often leads to the disintegration of parties, weakening of political parties and, ultimately, breakaway (Kukec, 2019; Momodu and Matudi, 2013). Hence, political parties employ several mechanisms to manage and resolve internal conflicts. Some mechanisms are internal and contained in party constitutions, while others are external and include litigation in a court of law.

Lesotho has experienced recurrent intra-party conflict since independence from Britain in 1966. Since 1993 when the country returned to electoral politics, it has seen an increased role of the courts in internal party strife with far-reaching consequences not only for political parties but also for the stability of the country (Shale, 2016). Most conflicts have occurred over leadership positions, thus leading to factionalism and splits (Shale and Matlosa, 2008). The entire post-1993 era is laden with political party splits and defections instigated by disputes that were referred to the courts. In most cases, the disputes that were referred to courts of law invariably resulted in defections, breakaways and, in some instances, tumult for the country.

This raises the question of whether the courts are the best means of resolving internal political party conflicts. This article examines the efficacy of the courts as a mechanism for resolving internal party conflicts. It is based on secondary data collected from decided cases, books, journal articles, reports and newspapers. These sources provide the best data for analysis suited to the purpose of this article. The article comprises four main sections. The first section is the conceptual framework, which deals with the key conceptual levers. The second section examines the conflict resolution mechanisms available to political parties in Lesotho. The third section examines the judiciary as a conflict resolution mechanism in Lesotho and analyses the approaches used by the courts in Lesotho in a number of cases where breakaways followed the courts' decisions. Lastly, a conclusion with recommendations is provided.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1 Party systems

Like political parties everywhere, political parties in Lesotho operate within a particular typology of party system. A political party system involves frameworks and structures within which political parties compete and cooperate in a specific jurisdiction. The four main factors in determining the typology of political parties systems are "(a) the number of political parties, (b) the absolute and (c) relative size of the two largest and (d) the relative size of the second and third largest parties" (Croissant and Volkel, 2012:239). The typology of political party systems in Africa is a subject of great controversy (Bogaards, 2004). This is because African political party systems often have intricate nuances that defy generalised typologies largely informed by Eurocentric party systems. Bogaards captures the situation of party typologies in Africa rather astutely: "[m]ulti-party elections do not lead automatically to multiparty systems. In sub-Saharan Africa, the spread of multiparty politics in the 1990s has given rise to dominant parties. A majority of African states have enjoyed multiparty elections, but no change in government" (Bogaards, 2004:173). Within the African context, three broad categories of party systems exist: predominant or dominant, multiparty or pulverised and single-party systems (Alan, 2003). A political party system is predominant when one party "gains an absolute majority of seats in parliament" (Erdmann and Basedau, 2008:243). In Africa, countries such as South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana are prime examples of this predominant party system. Although a predominant system may be open to and

practice multi-partyism, a single political party emphatically dominates the landscape. The second category is a non-dominant or pulverised system. This system has a constellation of political parties with no dominant political party. According to Ranny and Kendall (1954), this is a system in which three or more political parties have shared the majority of the votes and public office such that coalition governments have ruled the country. The third is a single-party system. This typology has effectively been wiped off by the wave of democratisation in Africa since the 1990s (Bogaards, 2004). There are outliers in Africa where political parties are prohibited, such as in Eswatini. Eswatini is the region's pariah as it is the only country in southern Africa without multi-party elections.

The political party system in Lesotho has been in constant change. From 1993, when the country returned to electoral politics, until 2012, when the country started a turbulent era of coalition politics, the party system in Lesotho was characterised by two dominant parties: Basotuland Congress Party (BCP) (1993–1997) and Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) (1997–2012). Since 2012, no single party has commanded an absolute majority, thereby rendering the system largely pulverised. An intriguing dynamic of this period is that two main political parties – All Basotho Convention (ABC) and Democratic Congress (DC) – took turns as the main political party in the country, albeit without an absolute majority. This pattern was disrupted by the formation of the Revolution for Prosperity (RFP) in the run-up to the 2022 elections. The RFP won the most votes in the 2022 elections and, consequently, the most seats in parliament. However, the party could not get absolute votes which led to the formation of a coalition government.

2.2 Intra-party conflicts

As platforms of contestation for power, political parties are always prone to internal and external conflict. Conflict within political parties is referred to as intra-party conflict (Awofeso and Ogunmilade, 2017). Intra-party conflict is a multidimensional and dynamic phenomenon (Gherghina, Close and Kopecky, 2019). It connotes a situation of disagreement due to incompatibility and strife within the party system and implies a situation characterised by disagreements, disputes and physical hostility within the party (Obi, 2018). Intra-party conflict is persistent and occurs in different ways and at different points in the process of democratisation (Ibrahim and Abubaka, 2015). It characterises political

party life and occurs regularly within and between the different units of the party organisation. Invariably, it is caused by, among other things, the diversity in the composition of the party members, disagreements that occur at party conferences regarding the nature of the party platform or leadership selection, divergence in voting behaviour by party representatives in the legislature, and disputes between the party's parliamentary caucus and representatives in the cabinet (Gherghina, Close and Kopecky, 1999). It may also result from the lack of intra-party democracy and methods and procedures for including members in decision-making (Aleyomi, 2013). For instance, intra-party conflict often occurs during the nomination and selection of candidates, elections for leadership positions, ordinary membership conventions and during the application of internal rules to discipline party members and hold the leaders of political parties accountable (Awofeso and Ogunmilade, 2017). In the same vein, Ibrahim and Abubakar (2015) point out that intra-party conflict happens when members pursue contradictory goals, particularly in the fielding of candidates for both elected and appointed positions. Likewise, Anjorin and Danladi (2021) state that intra-party conflict is inevitable because, although members pursue the common goal of ruling a country and influencing public policy, they also hold conflicting views, interests, thoughts and principles. Although the causes of intra-party conflict are numerous, the most common trigger is the nomination and selection of candidates for elections and leadership positions.

2.3 Conflict resolution mechanisms

Conflict resolution is the process of ending disputes and removing the factors identified as causes or triggers of the conflict to achieve peace and harmony among the conflicting parties (Nnaemeka, 2019). Conflict resolution is intended to reduce, eliminate or terminate conflict (Rahim, 2002). To minimise the negative effects of conflict, political parties employ a wide range of mechanisms. These mechanisms can be divided into proactive and reactive methods. Proactive methods focus on the prevention of conflict while reactive methods refer to the responses to the occurrence of conflict (Nnaemeka, 2019). Proactive methods include good governance, trust and confidence building, intra-party democracy and communication. In contrast, reactive methods include mediation, negotiation, conciliation, arbitration, mini-trials and litigation (Nnaemeka, 2019).

Negotiation systems encourage and facilitate cooperation between parties to a dispute. Negotiation involves communication between the disputants to reach an understanding that would benefit both parties. It does not involve a third party (Obi, 2018). In cases where the negotiation fails, those in dispute engage a third party to act as a mediator. Mediation is a special form of negotiation. The mediator is not directly involved in the conflict but becomes a negotiating partner (Kotzé, 2002). Conciliation involves a third party, namely a conciliator, who facilitates the settlement of conflicts following consensus from those in dispute. The conciliator assists the conflicting parties to identify and address the causes of the conflict. The conciliator also encourages voluntary participation and discussion in an effort to ensure conflict resolution (Nnaemeka, 2019).

Often when internal measures fail to resolve intra-party conflicts, parties resort to external mechanisms such as litigation. Litigation refers to a process in which complainants escalate their dissatisfaction to a court of law (Obi, 2018). The courts have several approaches to resolving intra-party conflicts: the amicable settlement approach, the contractarian approach and the zero-sum approach. The amicable settlement approach may take two forms. First, the court may allow parties to reach a settlement on their own and return to the court for such a settlement to be made a court order. Second, after assessing the totality of the circumstances of the dispute, the court may send the parties back to attempt to settle the dispute amicably (*Ntsu Mokhehle v Molapo Qhobela and Others*, 1997). The advantage of the amicable approach is that, like the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms, which involve negotiation, conciliation and arbitration, parties are given a second opportunity to reflect on their dispute after realising that if they do not settle their disputes, a third party – the court – will settle it for them with an unpredictable outcome. The disadvantage is that disputants in general, and those within political parties in particular, rarely change their hard-line positions. Therefore, referring the resolution of the dispute back to them is either a waste of time or worsens the dispute (*Ntsu Mokhehle v Molapo Qhobela and Others*, 1997).

The contractarian approach treats the constitutive instruments – constitutions, rules and guidelines – of political parties as contracts that members enter into voluntarily (*Ramakatsa and Others v Magashule and Others*, 2012). In terms of this approach, courts are often reluctant to tamper with the decisions of political parties even when they appear

ostensibly unfair, as long as they were made in accordance with the provisions of the constitution of the party. Courts normally interpret the constitutions of political parties with a view to giving them effect.

Sometimes, the courts do not apply the amicable approach to internal political party disputes. Instead, they use the adversarial zero-sum approach. In this approach, the courts stick strictly to legal procedures and the evidence placed before them. The court decides where one party is the winner and the other is the loser. In most cases, litigants expect this when they refer their disputes to the courts. However, this is the most divisive approach as far as the internal disputes of political parties are concerned. As always observed in the scholarship, this approach is an example of the fact that the courts are ill-suited to resolving political disputes, in general, and internal political disputes, in particular. After the courts make their decisions, political parties often split or experience major defections. Litigation invariably leaves political parties “without internal cohesion, damaged interpersonal relationships, financially drained litigants, suspicion and distrust” (Obi, 2018:29).

3. Intra-party conflict resolution mechanisms

3.1 Constitutions of political parties

Political parties are constituted in terms of their constitutive instruments: constitutions, rules or statutes. Hence, political party constitutions are vital as they are “the terrain upon which confrontations, negotiations, and power games with other organisational actors will take place” (Panebianco, 1988: 33– 36). Hence, any analysis of the conflict resolution infrastructure within political parties must always start with an investigation of the provisions of the constitution on the subject. Besides, most challenges for political parties – from a lack of clarity on the party’s ideology to poor organisational structure in areas such as gender parity and conflict resolution – emanate from the constitutional design. Lesotho’s political parties are no exception; their constitutions have conflict resolution mechanisms. Intriguingly, political parties have strikingly similar constitutional designs. This, in a way, is attributable to the historical fact that they are virtually the offshoots of one political party – the BCP (Likoti, 2005; Matlosa and Sello, 2005). As Likoti observes, “all these parties have a similar ideology and are fragments of one main political party, the BCP. [They have] a shared origin, history and similar ideological outlook” (2021:162). In respect of conflict management and

resolution, the party constitutions in Lesotho have three prominent features.

The first feature is that conflict resolution is embedded in their structural hierarchies. Unlike disciplinary structures appointed as structures from the mainstream hierarchical structures, conflicts within parties are handled by the same structures that run the parties – the structures that ordinarily manage the party are also expected to act as mechanisms of conflict management and conflict resolution. The constitution of the All Basotho Convention (ABC), one breakaway party of the BCP lineage, is a case in point. It provides for a four-layered dispute resolution mechanism: branch committee level, constituency committee level, national executive committee level and national conference level. In terms of clause O of the party's constitution, a dispute in the political party must first be referred to the branch committee. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision of the branch committee, the decision may be referred to the constituency committee. If the dispute is not resolved at the constituency level, it is referred to the national executive committee, and the national conference is the final appellate forum. The constitution provides that the decision of the national conference is binding and final. This mode of embedding conflict management and resolution within the party's structures is problematic. Disputes often concern party positions, which means that internal hierarchical party structures are invariably conflicted and is the reason their decisions are never accepted as fair and impartial. This is what transpired in 2019 when the courts in Lesotho – both the High Court and the Court of Appeal – were seized with a dispute over the nomination of candidates in the run-up to the national executive committee election scheduled for February 2019 (*Korokoro Constituency Committee v Executive Working Committee – All Basotho Convention*, 2019).

In the build-up to the conference, the leader of the ABC, Tom Thabane, had already stated that he would not accept the nomination of Nqosa Mahao. Nevertheless, his home constituency nominated him as a candidate for the position. Not entirely unexpectedly, the National Executive Committee (NEC) rejected that nomination and the Executive Working Committee (EWC) went on to suspend the Korokoro Constituency Committee's membership in the ABC. The constituency committee challenged the decision of the EWC in the courts. While the High Court dismissed the application, the Court of Appeal ruled in favour of the Korokoro constituency, and Mahao was allowed to participate as a

candidate for the position of deputy leader at the conference. The conference indeed elected him as deputy leader. The leader never endorsed the committee elected at the conference, which included Mahao. The conflict between the leader and his newly elected deputy, Mahao, continued until Mahao defected in April 2021 to form a breakaway party, the Basotho Action Party (BAP). This ABC spectacle demonstrates how the model of entrusting the party hierarchy with conflict resolution has fundamental limitations. The ABC's approach of entrusting the party hierarchy with conflict resolution is not unique. The constitutions of the Democratic Congress (DC) and the Alliance of Democrats (AD), albeit in varying forms, also entrust the party structures with the responsibility of managing and resolving internal party conflicts.

The second feature of constitutions in Lesotho is that, despite the inherent limitations of the internal conflict management and resolution architecture, they do not expect members to appeal or to refer their grievances to the courts. Therefore, they include ouster clauses in their constitutions. Ouster clauses preclude the involvement of the courts after a certain decision has been made. Such a decision is regarded as final and binding (Edlin, 2009). Political parties enforce these clauses by automatically terminating the membership of any member who refers an internal party dispute to the courts. While the ABC's constitution is not unique in using an ouster clause, its constitution is a prime example. Clause 5(e) of the ABC's constitution provides for an ouster clause thus:

Members must try to resolve their disputes by using internal party structures. Any member or group of members that refers their disputes to the courts of law before exhausting processes provided by Article O of the Constitution will be deemed to have violated discipline and will automatically be taken to deprive himself of membership rights in the party (translated from the vernacular).

Ouster clauses are prevalent in the constitutions of political parties in Lesotho and internationally. For instance, Rule 2.7.1 of the constitution of the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa provides that "a decision of the NDRC [National Dispute Resolution Committee] Appeal Committee shall be final and binding on the parties, and neither party shall have any further recourse to a court of law or other structure or office of the ANC" (ANC, 2017). Ouster clauses have always been highly controversial as they deprive members of political parties of the right to access the courts, which is a right provided by the country's constitution.

After a long period of uncertainty about whether ouster clauses conflicted with the constitution, the Court of Appeal of Lesotho had the opportunity to decide on their constitutionality in *Korokoro Constituency Committee v Executive Working Committee – All Basotho Convention* (2019). Among the many issues that had to be decided by the courts was the constitutionality of the ouster clause embodied in clause 5(e) of the party's constitution. The Court of Appeal was unequivocal in its finding of the clause as unconstitutional. The court held that, "clause 5(e) of the ABC constitution is constitutionally unconscionable when measured against the constitutional standards of access to justice and right to a fair trial contemplated by section 12(8) of the Constitution of Lesotho" (para 84). The court identified four grounds on which it found the ouster clause unconstitutional. The first ground was that it took away a constitutionally entrenched right to have one's disputes resolved by an impartial court. The party structures were clearly conflicted. Second, the court found that even if the clause was to be regarded as a limitation on the right, "it is not clear what this kind of clause serves [a] legitimate purpose in a democratic society" (para 86). Third, the court found that the clause was one-sided, favouring the party hierarchy against the members. Therefore, it was unfair as "the prejudice that the clause visits on aggrieved litigating members is disproportionate to the conceivable benefits that it confers on the party" (para 86). Fourth, the court said the clause seemed to be enforceable against the members regardless of the fact that it was unfair. The court criticised the clause as follows: "in other words, the clause may be enforced however unfair or unjust its consequences may be. In my view, there are no common law defences which could render the clause flexible. In my view, the clause means what it says" (para 86).

3.2 The electoral law

Political parties in Lesotho are registered under two legal regimes: the Societies Act of 1966 and the National Assembly Electoral Act of 2011. They are registered under the Societies Act as legal entities that may acquire rights and duties, with the capacity to sue or be sued. Such registration is not enough to allow them to contest elections under the auspices of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). Therefore, they are required to further register with the IEC to contest elections and to gain all the benefits that come with such registration, such as election campaign funding and political party funding. Both pieces of legislation do not permit intervention by either the Registrar of Societies or the IEC

in the internal affairs of political parties in general and conflict resolution in particular. Section 23 of the National Assembly Electoral Act requires all political parties intending to contest an election to register with the IEC. Section 24 of the same Act provides for the myriad of requirements for registration of a political party, including the contents of political parties' constitutions. While the section imposes certain minimum standards of good internal governance, such as management of finance, non-discrimination, gender equality and inclusivity, it does not impose any minimum standards on managing or resolving internal party conflict. Neither does the section provide for the IEC having any role in internal party conflict. Hence, it may be said that the electoral law is based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of political parties. This principle is based on the reality that the IEC should approach its interaction with political parties with extreme caution because its principal mandate is to manage elections, not political parties. Therefore, it must appear independent and impartial to all players at all material times.

3.3 The judiciary as a conflict resolution mechanism

The involvement of the courts in internal political affairs is a very controversial, if not complex, subject. However, the courts of law in Lesotho have been seized with internal political party disputes for a long time. The involvement of the courts in internal political party disputes is a contentious subject because it is a double-edged sword. Courts everywhere enjoy the reputation of bringing expertise, independence and impartiality to bear on resolving any disputes. The final resort to the courts is also based on the fact that every individual has certain inalienable rights regardless of affiliation. These rights, among other rights, include access to the courts and equality before the law enshrined in national constitutions. On the one hand, the courts are often viewed as the best forum for the referral of political conflicts. On the other hand, the courts are often touted as not being the best arbiters of political disputes because their approach to dispute resolution is often adversarial, zero-sum and therefore destructive to internal party cohesion (Obi, 2018). This last part is vindicated by the continual post-litigation splintering of political parties in Lesotho.

The courts in Lesotho have adopted several approaches to resolving internal political disputes in Lesotho. These approaches may be classified

in three ways: the amicable settlement approach, the contractarian approach and the zero-sum approach. Despite variations in each approach, almost all of the approaches have resulted in major splits within political parties or the defection of individual members, as will become clear in the discussion that follows.

3.3.1 The amicable settlement approach

Although the courts are renowned for their adversarial approach to dispute resolution, they sometimes resort to the amicable resolution of disputes. This approach has been invoked occasionally with regard to political parties' internal disputes. The amicable approach was adopted by Justice Mofolo of the High Court of Lesotho in the *Mokhotlong Constituency Committee of Basutoland Congress Party and Others v Mosisili and Others* (1996). This dispute culminated in the splintering of the then-ruling BCP after long and gruelling internal rancour. The then prime minister and leader of the party, Ntsu Mokhehle, finally left the BCP and formed the LCD in 1997, which immediately became the government because it had the majority of members in the National Assembly. This move was unprecedented and sent shock waves through the national and international community.

The facts of this case can be noted briefly as follows: Four constituencies affiliated to the BCP had approached the High Court seeking to nullify the outcome of an elective conference held from 8 to 11 March 1996. The basis of their complaint was that irregularities had marred the conference. The court found that irregularities had marred the conference but, rather bizarrely, ordered that "the entire proceedings of the BCP Conference of 8 – 11 March 1996 be referred to the leader of the BCP Dr Ntsu Mokhehle for amicable settlement" (para 133). The court's rationale for referring the dispute back to the leader for amicable settlement was cast thus:

Evidence was confused as on whom, after the elections, power fell. As there was no evidence of the outgoing committee having handed over to the incoming committee moreover as it was established by evidence that there were two rival groups within the BCP with no group willing to yield to the other, and moreover as it was established by evidence which this court believed that members of the Elections Committee at the March 1996 conference belonged to the rival groups, and more importantly as it

was not established by evidence that the leader of the BCP Dr Ntsu Mokhehle belongs to any of the rival factions ... (para 33).

The court directed that such an amicable settlement had to be completed within 14 days from the date of judgement with the possibility of an extension, which could not extend beyond 30 days. The court stated that, should the amicable settlement not be proceeded on within the stipulated time or such extension of time as may have been granted by the court, or if any of the parties wished to approach the court for any reason, a party wishing to do so could set the matter down to have such questions determined by the court (para 134). Not entirely unexpectedly, the approach did not work, and the parties returned to the court, where the court ordered that a new conference be organised (*Mosisili and Others v Mokhehle and Others*, 1997). The last court-ordered conference was held in February 1997. The conference was held amid an already soured relationship between the executive committee and the party's leader. As expected, the delegates of the conference organised by the leader's rivals staged a vote of no confidence in the leader and purportedly removed him from his position. The leader approached the High Court again for an order nullifying his removal (*Ntsu Mokhehle v Molapo Qhobela and Others*, 1997). The court decided that the removal of the leader was invalid because it was not on the agenda. However, it was decided that Ntsu Mokhehle's term as the leader of the BCP had expired in January 1997, and he would remain the interim leader while a new conference was organised to elect the leader. Since the relationship between the then leader and the executive committee had already broken down irretrievably, the leader defected from the BCP and announced the formation of a new party, the LCD.

This case demonstrates the way in which the court had entirely misread the conflict situation within the BCP and started by improperly applying the amicable settlement approach. The internal conflict in the BCP had a long history and had always orbited the leader. Suggesting that the leader, who was at the centre of the conflict, should preside over an attempt to find an amicable solution to the problem was a recipe for disaster.

3.3.2 The contractarian approach

The contractarian approach is not unique to Lesotho; it is a common approach in disputes concerning the interpretation of political party constitutions. For instance, the Constitutional Court of South Africa

reiterated this time-honoured principle in *Ramakatsa and Others v Magashule and Others* (2012). The case concerned the internal disputes within the ANC in the Free State province. The applicants sought to set aside as invalid the Free State provincial conference of the ANC and all its outcomes on the grounds that there were irregularities in many of the branch meetings that elected delegates to the provincial conference. The applicants claimed that their rights under the constitution of the party had been breached. The court agreed and consequently declared the conference, its decisions and its resolutions unlawful and invalid. In espousing the contractarian approach, the court stated that the ANC was a voluntary association as it had been established by agreement – the ANC's constitution. It was not a body established by statute. The ANC's constitution constitutes “the terms of the agreement entered into by its members. Thus the relationship between the party and its members is contractual. It is taken to be a unique contract” (para 79).

The superior courts in Lesotho often apply the contractarian approach. For instance, the approach was adopted in the High Court's recent decision in *Cekwane and Others v Basotho National Party and Others* (2020). The dispute arose during the run-up to the Basotho National Party (BNP) elective conference in July 2019. The applicants argued that, among other things, the nomination of candidates as constituency committee members of the BNP for Qacha's Nek, Qoaling, Qhalasi and Mafeteng should be reviewed and set aside, and fresh constituency elections should be held. The court agreed. The court invoked the contractarian principle and rejected the argument that members did not have the standing to sue the party. The court held that as members of the party they were inherently qualified to sue the party “through its structures where they entertain a founded conviction that it has either by conduct or omission violated its constitution. Their right and authority to do so originates from a supportive legal reality that a constitution of political party is actually a *sui generis* contract” (para 18).

It was common cause that, although the party did not experience a split as such, it experienced a major defection when its member in parliament, Mr Joang Molapo, defected (The Post, 2020). Molapo had contested the position of leader of the party, which he lost to the incumbent leader, Machesetsa Mofomobe. This outcome reveals that the simmering conflicts within the party were never resolved by referring the disputes to the court. Although party members often exalt their constitutions,

overreliance on the contractarian approach always has its own risks. Party constitutions often have deficiencies, such as ambiguity, dictatorship and unfairness (*Korokoro Constituency Committee v Executive Working Committee – All Basotho Convention*, 2019). Hence, if the courts disregard these inherent causes of conflict in resolving internal party conflicts, this does not help conflict but only exacerbates it.

The most recent incident is the case of Revolution for Prosperity (RFP), a new political party formed a few months ahead of the 2022 general elections. The RFP introduced a unique and controversial selection method for its candidates for the 2022 elections. The method had two stages in the selection process: popular election and a ‘merit-based selection’ by the party's National Executive Committee. The four best performers in the primary elections were subjected to the so-called interviews, the outcome of which was to be approved by the party's leadership (Letsie, 2023). The outcome of the interview process was that some hopefuls who had won the popular vote during the primary elections were not endorsed as party candidates; those who ‘performed well’ at the interview were endorsed as candidates even though some did not win the popular vote. The process and its outcomes generated much controversy, and some losers dragged the RFP to the courts of law (*Ralentsoe v Toloane*, 2022). The applicants complained that the decision of the Executive Committee not to endorse them despite being elected by popular vote violated Article 9 of the RFP Constitution. The article provides that members have a right to participate in the party's affairs. The court agreed with the applicants that the Executive Committee did not have the power to deprive the elected candidates of their right to contest elections as RFP's candidates at the election. The court ruled that: “[i]t is declared that the applicant's constitutional right to participate in the affairs of the party (RFP) and the right to participate in the national elections on behalf of the party in terms of Article 9 of the party Constitution has been violated by the party” (para 54).

As a result, the popular candidates were allowed through the court order to stand for the party against the will of the party leadership. This became the source of protracted internal party strife. Even though the party did not immediately experience visible cracks after the court case, some fractures started showing a few months after the elections. Even after the elections, the members who represented the party and were elected based on the order were viewed mainly as ‘rebels’. The fissures between these

members of parliament and the party continued to widen until they, on one occasion, voted against the party line and openly criticised and opposed government policy (The Post, 2023a). The crescendo of this conflict was the disciplinary process against, and the resultant suspension of, three members (Mahali Phamotse, Thuso Makhwanyane and Rethabile Letlailana) from the party for six years (The Post, 2023b). The spectacle is unending as the suspended members returned to court to challenge the suspension (Lesotho Times, 2023). The conflict that is crippling the RFP has far-reaching implications for the stability of the RFP-led coalition government, the performance of the party in the succeeding elections and, as is the pattern with all leading political parties that came before the party, has the potential to harm the party's political dominance.

3.3.3 The zero-sum approach

While Lesotho's contemporary political history is replete with court-instigated party defections and breakaways, four major incidents demonstrate how the zero-sum approach has invariably failed to manage internal party conflicts. The first incident occurred during the transitional period when the country was transitioning from a military junta to a democracy. The first democratic elections were scheduled for 1993. With a view to contesting the elections as a united body, the belligerent factions struck a short-lived truce. The BCP organised an elective conference in January 1992, the first conference to elect the executive committee since 1969 (Sekatle, 1997). Prominent party members Gerard Ramoreboli, Phoka Chaolana and Khauta Khasu, who had been engaged in continuing disagreements with the leader, Ntsu Mokhehle, challenged the outcome of the conference in the High Court (Pule, 1999). The challenge was unsuccessful, and they broke away from the BCP to form a new political party, the Hareeng Basotho Party (HBP).

The second significant incident was the formation of the LCD in 1997. Following a protracted conflict within the BCP, the High Court attempted a hybrid approach – combining the amicable settlement and zero-sum methods. In the first case of *Mokhotlong Constituency Committee of Basutoland Congress Party and Others v Mosisili and Others* (1996), the court adopted an amicable approach but failed to resolve the conflict. Several other applications and counter-applications ensued, but all were in vain. In the last case, *Ntsu Mokhehle v Molapo Qhobela and Others* (1997), the court adopted the zero-sum approach and declared as

unlawful the removal of the then BCP leader, Ntsu Mokhehle. However, the court made a further adverse finding that Mokhehle's term as a leader had long expired and he would therefore be an "interim leader" until a new leader was elected. This finding, coupled with the already deep fissures between him and the executive committee, led Mokhehle to announce that he was forming a new political party, the LCD.

The third court-instigated defection was that of the deputy leader of the ABC, Tlali Khasu, in 2017, after losing a court battle over his 90-day suspension from taking part in the ABC executive committee's activities. Khasu challenged his suspension in the High Court, where he lost; he appealed to the Court of Appeal, where he lost again (*Khasu v Thabane and Others* 2016). After losing the court case, he decided to defect from the ABC and announced the formation of his new breakaway party, the True Reconciliation Unity (TRU), in January 2017 (Lesotho Times, 2017).

The fourth major court-instigated breakaway was the formation of the Alliance of Democrats (AD), a splinter party of the Democratic Congress (DC). The leader of the DC, Pakalitha Mosisili, and his deputy, Monyane Moleleki, had been in conflict for some time. In November 2016, the executive committee made some drastic and dramatic decisions. It purportedly suspended Mosisili from the executive committee. Thereafter, it appointed Moleleki as the acting leader, withdrew the DC from a seven-party ruling coalition and announced a coalition agreement for a government of national unity with the then-opposition party, the ABC (Lesotho Times, 2016). Mosisili responded by calling the party's special conference to discipline what he called "rebels" of the executive committee. Moleleki sought to block the conference by launching a High Court application, and Mosisili launched an application challenging his suspension (Lesotho Times, 2016). The High Court consolidated and heard the two cases together, and Moleleki lost the court bid. After that, the special conference suspended Moleleki and nine other members of the party's National Executive Committee for six years. Moleleki viewed the measure as political banishment and decided to form a new party, the AD. The consequences of his defection were far-reaching and even affected the

country. The prime minister lost a vote of no confidence in parliament and responded by calling for an early election in 2017.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

This paper investigated the role that the courts in Lesotho have played in resolving internal party disputes. It analysed the major splits in the post-1993 history of Lesotho. Invariably, it is evident that most major splits resulted from unresolved internal party disputes. These disputes were referred to the courts of law for resolution. The courts tried several methods to resolve party disputes: amicable, contractarian and zero-sum. In some instances, the courts even tried hybridised methods, as in the case of the internal BCP conflicts that culminated in the formation of the LCD in 1997 (Pule, 1999; Sekatle, 1997; Sekatle, 1999). Nevertheless, the conflicts have resulted in splits and defections. This shows that the courts, using their conventional methods, are not the correct forum for resolving internal party conflicts.

Because of the adversarial and win-lose nature of the courts' approach, the courts' decisions leave the parties in conflict feeling mistrustful. Another key finding is that the legal framework for resolving internal political party disputes is inefficient. Political parties' constitutions often do not provide for a fair dispute resolution framework within the party. Most of the constitutions entrust the party hierarchy with dispute resolution. The problem with this approach is that it lacks fairness and expertise. As demonstrated in the case of the ABC, as the Court of Appeal observed, the ouster clause in the party's constitution largely serves to protect party executives from scrutiny by the general membership. The party executives, as decision-makers, are inherently conflicted. Thus, it violates the rules of natural justice when the person interested in the outcome of the dispute resolution process becomes the sole and final arbiter. The statutory framework for the registration of political parties – the Societies Act of 1966 and the National Assembly Electoral Act of 2011 – does not help

either. These two pieces of legislation do not allow the Registrar of Societies or the IEC to assist in internal party disputes.

Since courts of law are an ill-suited mechanism for resolving internal party conflicts, it is recommended that the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) framework be instituted for political parties. The ADR framework should be mandated by legislation and be operationalised by party constitutions and rules. The law should not preclude courts of law from resolving internal party disputes as that may be unconstitutional, but the ADR process should mandatorily precede a court's intervention in the internal affairs of political parties. The institutionalisation of the ADR will go a long way towards stabilising democracy in general and the political party system in particular.

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Book review

War, Women and Post-conflict Empowerment: Lessons from Sierra Leone

Edited by Josephine Beoku-Betts and
Fredline A. M'Cormack-Hale, 2022

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*Reviewed by Zikho Dana**

War, Women and Post-conflict Empowerment: Lessons from Sierra Leone, edited by Josephine Beoku-Betts and Fredline A. M'Cormack-Hale uses an African Feminist theory to explicate how issues such as class, race, gender, religion, ethnicity, and heteronormativity intersect and are shaped by women in the African context, specifically in the war and post war contexts. The book offers conceptual frameworks embedded in “African centred gendered analysis” which privileges African lived realities and localised understandings of empowerment and development over dominant Western neoliberal conceptual frameworks. It does this by showcasing various womanhood and motherhood strategies used by women in Sierra Leone to end the 11-year Civil War (1991–2002). Equally so, the book divulges various ways women’s mass mobilisation has contributed to post-war Sierra Leone which saw the passage of landmark laws that protect women from patriarchal violations that predate the

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11-year Civil War. This book is authored in collaboration with various contributors ranging from scholars to activists, researchers, and historians. It is grounded in progressive intersectional discourses systematically anchored in women's lived experiences in pursuit of securing substantial social, legal, and political gains for women in Sierra Leone. It offers invaluable context-oriented lessons that women the world over can learn from.

Wars by nature are devastating but women and men experience wars differently; men may bear the brunt of the war, but it is women who are adversely affected because these wars are also fought on women's bodies. With that in mind, women in Sierra Leone saw the aftermath of the 11-year Civil War as an opportunity to advocate women's empowerment. It is against this backdrop that the editors and contributors submit *War, Women and Post-conflict Empowerment: Lessons from Sierra Leone* after years of research as "a result of a labour of love". It is a love letter to the people of Sierra Leone which boasts an innovative conglomerate of diverse contributors whose genesis was in the Special Panel sponsored by the African Studies Association Women's Caucus at its 2014 annual meeting. The title of the panel was "The Politics of Women's Empowerment in Post-war Sierra Leone." Papers presented in this conference were later published in a special issue of *African and Asian Studies* in 2015. The book was published in 2022 by Zed Books (Bloomsbury Publishing, London).

By methodically diving deep into the historiography of Sierra Leone part one of the book sets the tone for the trajectory it takes the readers through: the significance of storytelling in the post-war period and how it is intrinsic to reconciliation and paving a path towards reconstructing the social and moral fabric of a war-torn country. Part two takes us through the voyage into the early political career of Zainab Hawa Bangura (1994–2005), followed by the linguistic vitriol, bastardisation, intimidation, and violence against women who dare to "transgress" into politics-men's "turf". The centring of women chiefs as conduits to their societies bridges the gap between traditional and modern spaces, thus highlighting the vital role of these women. Even with their declining numbers, their impact in their communities did not go unnoticed. Part three draws on women's legal, social, and political intersectionality which has shaped and continues to shape their activism. Lastly, part four takes us through various insightful approaches that Sierra Leonean women have

used to make strides in their collective activism and the numerous issues that they must work through to consolidate this.

Women in Sierra Leone have relied on various women and motherly attributes to assert themselves in ending the war, managing post-war and curbing the Ebola epidemic and Covid-19 outbreak. This book illuminates women's resourcefulness and collective mobilisation in ending the war, and their fight for their recognition and protection as peacebuilders and agents of change in their respective capacities in the aftermath of the war. The passage of the three gender laws in 2007 namely the Domestic Violence Act, the Devolution of Estates Act and the Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, have significantly elevated the status of women in their families and communities. The 2012 Sexual Offences Act (which criminalises marital rape) has also been a triumphant law which has safeguarded women's rights within their homes and, thus, has accentuated the importance of women's bodily autonomy.

Women and girls were forcefully engaged in the Civil War either as military combatants, or as, - "wives", spies, cooks in rebel camps or, child soldiers. They were victims of sexual abuse, gang rapes, killings, amputations, abductions, and displacement. With the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leading the cases of documented reports of rapes at 67.1%, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) following suit, along with the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) and the civil defence forces (CDF), it is evident, that rape and various forms of sexual abuse were used as weapons of war. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Sierra Leone found that the RUF used the rape of women and girls to publicly humiliate and intimidate their male relatives or to compel women into forced marriages with the male combatants. It is worth noting that the government failed to prioritise key issues which were the root cause of the war. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Sierra Leone described as "years of bad governance, epidemic corruption and denial of basic human rights which created the deplorable conditions that made conflict inevitable" (p xvi).

By demystifying the fears and anxieties parents have about educating their girl children, this book strategically models creative ways that can inspire parents to invest in the education of their daughters because it has far-reaching benefits for their families and communities. Instead of focusing solely on the education of girls through government sponsored scholarships, the book suggests a turn towards "gender justice" instead of

the neoliberal idea of “gender equality”. The former serves as a redress method while the latter erodes differences between genders and thus leads to an inverse bifurcation of genders. Put simply, for the Sierra Leone people investing simultaneously in the education of the girl child and boy child optimises their society’s chances of survival and economic prosperity. This is contrary to the education system espousing British patriarchal ideas which were imposed and later adopted by Sierra Leoneans and which intended to enforce hegemonic heteronormative binaries of masculinity and femininity.

Motherhood occupied a central role in how mothers used their maternal intuition as a form of diffusing the war and bringing the warring factions to the negotiation table. This subsequently led to the end of the war and mobilised former rebel group leaders and child soldiers to a path of peacebuilding and demobilisation. Amid the debilitating effects of war Sierra Leone’s women’s reliance on motherhood reminded the warring factions of the significance of listening to their mothers (motherhood is more social than simply biological) and the ramifications of ignoring their mothers’ cautioning words.

The inability of the women of Sierra Leone to rally around reproductive health issues, such as abortion rights due to religious differences, prohibits them from countering patriarchal expedient laws and continues to erode women’s abilities to make informed decisions about their bodies. It is in their diversity that we see them rallying behind women’s universal issues, such as protection from sexual violence (sweeping rape cases under the rug, especially those committed by family members or, - influential men within the community, instead of reporting them to the relevant authorities), and patriarchal inheritance laws (prohibiting women from inheriting their late husbands’ estates and being “inherited” by their brothers-in-law as wives). Rallying behind a woman presidential candidate and women’s reproductive rights, such as the right to terminate a pregnancy, are yet to be seen. Women in Sierra Leone are accustomed to placing their support for political candidates within the confines of their political parties. Men are usually the preferred political candidates as they are socially and economically palatable to the country’s political landscape. This limits women’s political engagement to merely being men’s auxiliaries. These fragmentations have also served as a reminder of

how women can internalise patriarchal norms – as many of them can act as patriarchy’s foot soldiers, – thus maintaining patriarchal privilege.

According to the book, the country has been unable to pass into law through parliament the 30% gender quota in the public and private life (Gender Equality Bill). It has failed to create a conducive environment to increase women’s political participation and eliminate political violence against women during elections. The authors recommend that “post-war rebuilding programs should avoid one size fits all policies and, instead, deploy flexible and responsive strategies that account for women’s unique educational, socio-political, economic, and cultural circumstances and experiences” (p 41). Furthermore, the book clearly states that there must be a radical shift against dominant attitudes embraced by men about women; – put simply, men and women must work together to change and challenge widespread gendered societal norms which confine women to the margins of society.

The book seamlessly traces, – and details complex and multi-layered roles portrayed by women in Sierra Leone in pre-war, war and post-war periods as they collectively mobilised themselves into a force to be reckoned with. It further exhibits how gender transformation and change do not occur on their own, transformation and change happen because of collective work done by different generations of women over time, along with their male allies who are committed to gender justice. Through this book one can see that the dominant portrayal of women as passive victims of war with men as the overarching protectors has been successfully contested and skilfully debunked. This book is a crucial and timely contribution to expanding literature on women, war, and post conflict reconstruction as it meticulously accentuates copious applications in which women’s agency in Sierra Leone has been deployed to secure their hard-won gains.

