

Hybridization approach in the inclusion of local actors in top-down peacebuilding initiatives

Bidu Ibrahim

Centre for Peace Studies, The Arctic University of Norway, UiT, Tromsø, Norway

Copyright © 2023 ISSR Journals. This is an open access article distributed under the *Creative Commons Attribution License*, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

ABSTRACT: Peacebuilding aims to prevent relapse into conflict in countries or communities that are regarded as 'post conflict'. Peace building initiatives may be structured or described in different ways. A common description based on the vertical implementation of the peacebuilding efforts as well as their level of inclusivity. Hence, peacebuilding efforts may be undertaken in a top-down or bottom-up approach. Top-down approaches have been criticized as elitist and fostering exclusion. This has led to a push for the inclusion of local actors in the top-down peacebuilding interventions in what is sometimes described as multitrack implementation. By examining the strength and drawbacks of both approaches, this article seeks to clarify the areas of tensions and possibilities of accommodation in a hybridization approach. In addition, by categorizing the local actors based on their characteristics and roles in their communities, the article seeks to demystify the concept of the local. This helps in visualizing how they may be incorporated into interventions. Local actors can provide entry points, consultancy and partnerships in research. Collaboration in form of locally led analysis, planning and implementation can be explored. Supporting local businesses and the private sector may mitigate likely sources of instability. External actors can also provide funding to facilitate the peacebuilding processes.

KEYWORDS: Peace, conflict, local, local ownership, liberal peacebuilding, hybridity, hybridization.

1 INTRODUCTION

Peacebuilding initiatives are mainly undertaken to prevent a relapse into or recurrence of conflict in countries or communities that are considered to be in 'post-conflict' situations (Gruener & Hald, 2015). These initiatives are implemented at different levels of society using varied approaches with the aim of promoting peace. This article outlines and discusses the different ways in which local actors can be included in top-down peacebuilding interventions. This is preceded by an in-depth examination of top-down approaches to peacebuilding to clarify their main assumptions and drawbacks before explaining the rationale behind the push for the inclusion of the local actors in peacebuilding initiatives as well as outlining the different ways of achieving this. Liberal peace building is used to exemplify top-down approach to peace building in this article. Inclusion of the local actors into this initiative brings rise to a hybrid model as aspects of top-down and bottom-up approaches are made to co-exist. This inclusion, though not devoid of tensions, helps navigate areas of tension between the two approaches.

However, the concept of the local may be fuzzy and the local actors not homogenous. Thus, this article discusses the concepts of peace, peacebuilding, the local and local ownership extensively. A clear understanding of these concepts guides the process of achieving inclusivity through the hybrid approach since inclusion of the local actors into peacebuilding efforts impacts significantly on local ownership and sustainability.

Finally, the article shows, using illustrations in form of case studies, that local actors can meaningfully be included in liberal peace approach and how this has been achieved. The case studies are presented in text boxes to set them out.

2 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

In this section, definitions of key terms used in the article are provided without getting into a detailed account of how they are conceptualized differently in different disciplines. The definitions aim to clarify what definitions have been adopted in the article in spite of the existence of varied conceptualizations of the same terms.

CONCEPTS: peace, peacebuilding, the local, local ownership.

2.1 PEACE

Peace as a word is used widely and adopts varied meanings based on the context in which it is used. The word is derived from the Latin word, 'pax' which was used to imply a pact, control or agreement to terminate a conflict, dispute or war between individuals, nations or groups of people (Online Etymology Dictionary, n.d.). This definition implies peace as constituting absence of conflict or war and an existence of some form of agreement or contract backing the process.

The Meriam-Webster dictionary (n.d.) defines peace as "a state of tranquility or quiet, freedom from disturbance, a state of security or order in a community provided for by law or custom, freedom from disturbing thoughts as well as a state of concord between governments." These definitions bring the aspect of internal and external peace. Peace as something experienced within an individual as well as an aspect of relationship between people and states. In addition, it emphasizes peace as the absence of war or conflict.

Galtung (1969; 1995) draws the link between peace and violence. He indicates that peace can be viewed as the absence of violence and goes ahead to introduce the concepts of negative and positive peace which denote the absence of violence or war and the integration of human society respectively. He also clarifies that violence maybe direct or indirect. Therefore, absence of violence denotes absence of all these aspects of violence.

For Rummel (1981), although peace is mostly regarded as a zero sum, he acknowledges it is a highly contested concept. He also summarizes some of the general understandings and perspectives on peace; "as the opposite of conflict and violence or war, internal states or external relations, narrow or overarching, as a dichotomy, continuous, passive or active, empirical or abstract as well as descriptive or normative and positive or negative." (Rummel, 1981, para. 4). In addition, Rummel (1981) sees peace as an equilibrium within the social field and arising out of balance of powers, negotiation of opposing interests, capacities and wills based on some forms of social contracts. In this conceptualization of peace as a form of some equilibrium, absence of violence whether direct or indirect and based on some formal or informal institutional framework is also quite prominent. Miller and King (2005) also hold a similar view; condition of justice, stability and equilibrium through social contracts guided by formal and informal institutions.

This article adopts a refined version of Galtung's conception of peace blended with a definition given by Miller & King (2005). Peace will denote the absence of violence or war; direct or indirect leading to a condition guaranteeing justice and social stability through the employment of the relevant formal and informal institutions, values, practices and norms. This definition acknowledges that the absence of conflict maybe impossible and does not define peace as the absence of conflict. In addition, the absence of violence does not necessarily imply absence of conflict.

2.2 PEACEBUILDING

At the heart of peacebuilding is the need to assure lasting peace among and within nations. This effort can be traced to the establishment of international organizations and a host of other regional organizations, after the Second World War such as the League of Nations and the United Nations, the EU, African Union etc.

Bjola & Kornprobst (2018), in one of their studies claim that they counted not less than twenty-four different definitions of the term 'peacebuilding'. Widely varying definitions hamper coordination between diverse actors in the peacebuilding space. A shared understanding of the peacebuilding endeavor is crucial to overall success of missions.

The concept of peacebuilding was introduced by the United Nations (UN) Secretariat in 1992 (Bjola & Kornprobst, 2018). The then UN Secretary General, Boutros-Ghali defined peacebuilding as a post conflict endeavor that seeks to not only identify and strengthen but also support structures that will help solidify peace in order to avoid relapse into violent conflict. The definition was later reviewed to reflect endeavors such as conflict prevention, management and reconstruction (Bjola & Kornprobst, 2018). A review of the above definitions by the UN Secretary-General's Policy Committee in 2010, later came to emphasize the need to reduce the risk of relapsing into violence and the provision of help for self-help by strengthening the

capacities of the state at all levels for managing conflicts, promoting sustainable peace as well as facilitating development (Bjola & Kornprobst, 2018). This definition is what most of the UN member states endorse and employ.

Miller & King (2005, p. 57) define peacebuilding as sets “policies, programs, and associated efforts to restore stability and the effectiveness of social, political, and economic institutions and structures in the wake of a war or some other debilitating or catastrophic event.” Peacebuilding, therefore, is both a process and tool utilized to achieve not only negative but also positive peace.

This article’s definition of peacebuilding gleaned from the above definitions, therefore, shall embrace all pre and post conflict efforts aimed at identifying and supporting formal and informal institutions and structures that will be crucial in strengthening and solidifying peace for peaceful coexistence, and reducing the possibility of emergence or relapse into violent conflict.

2.3 THE LOCAL

The concept of the local is crucial in setting priorities and perspectives. As a result, it is significant to define who the local is or are. There is varied understanding of the ‘local’ which has implication for ownership.

Hameiri and Jones (2018) hint at the problems in literature in specifying the concept of the local. This ranges from, sometimes using the term to refer to everything that is not international to relying on the notion of contact zone, and more sub-national non-state indigenous societies as well as the national actors.

As a concept in peacebuilding, Richmond (2009), describes it also as ‘fuzzy’. The local can take on many forms; from the state actors to civil society organizations and the indigenous peoples. In addition, the ‘local’ can take on the dimension of nationhood or location. The local can also comprise networks, relationships or activities (Lilja & Höglund, 2018).

On the same note, the local is not homogenous and as such involves rich divergence of views and perspectives. As a result, there is need to clearly define the local in order to begin a discussion on the local ownership in the peacebuilding efforts.

In this article, the definition of the local will shaped by Lederach’s (1997) classification of actors in peacebuilding into levels. My definition will take into account the actors at middle and the grassroots levels. At the middle level, the actors may include prominent civil society organizations, leaders and professionals while at the grassroots level there are local community workers, women and youth groups, activists and local religious as well as traditional chiefs or leaders. The middle level actors act as a link between the top and the grassroots level actors and often have not only a level of trust from both groups but also some flexibility as compared to the grassroots level actors. This classification excludes the national top state level actors since by virtue of their placement in the power hierarchy possess the capacity to implement programs in a top-down approach. This kind of categorization may also be captured in the concept of multitrack implementation where actors at track 2 and 3 are deliberately engaged and given prominence. Track 1 involves high level formal state actors, top leadership of non-state parties to conflict as well as government-to-government engagements while track 2 and 3 comprise the civil society and individuals at the community and grassroots level (Caparini & Cobar, 2021).

On the other hand, crucial to the understanding of the local is the concept of ‘agency’. According to Miller & King (2005, p. 11), agency refers to not only the ability of a person or group to act and effect change but also the subsequent occurrence of the act. Agency or lack of it dictates whether an actor gets to participate in the process or whether they are likely to have any impact. Locals, hence, need agency.

2.4 LOCAL OWNERSHIP

Related to the concept of the local is the aspect of local ownership. This concept came into being in 2001 when the then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, stressed on the role of the of the UN as the facilitator in the process of supporting the active local initiatives and efforts in achieving sustainable peace and development (United Nations, 2001).

However, this term is also not without contention. Other than debate on who the local is, the other contention is largely based on the level of participation. Edomwonyi (2003) sees it from the perspective of the peacebuilding efforts being conceived and led by the locals, while Boughton & Mourmouras (2002) see ownership taking place when the locals appreciate the peacebuilding efforts and policies’ benefits and accept responsibility for them. However, for Sending (2010) local ownership is nothing but a tool for control and manipulation based on the different mandates, perceptions and interests at the headquarters of the international actors.

For Schirch (2020), local ownership refers to the idea and the realization that people have the abilities and the resources to support processes of peacebuilding, development and conflict transformation. In departure from assumptions where the locals are seen as backward and in need of saving, this definition supports the notion of resourceful locals capable of driving their own agenda.

Local ownership, in this article, refers to peacebuilding efforts where the locals are involved and empowered in defining the problems, determining the priorities, identifying challenges and developing solutions. This definition embraces local partnerships with the external actors. The locals have agency and play active role in their peacebuilding.

3 APPROACHES TO PEACE BUILDING

In this section, a description of the main approaches to peacebuilding efforts is undertaken. Realizing this can be done in a number of ways, this article group all the approaches into two main categories based on the vertical implementation of the peacebuilding efforts: top-down and bottom-up approaches to peacebuilding.

3.1 TOP-DOWN APPROACH TO PEACEBUILDING

“Every day, [conflict] reports tell a familiar story: There was violence, the United Nations got involved, donor countries pledged millions in assistance, warring parties signed agreements, and headlines praised peace. But the violence continues... In short, leaders try to build peace from the top down. They also rely on the knowledge and resources of diplomats, U.N. peacekeepers and other foreign interveners...” (Autesserre, 2018, para. 2)

The above statement captures the common understanding of how the top-down approaches in peacebuilding are initiated and conducted. Peace and peacebuilding initiatives are imposed from above, usually with the external international actors in control, and with ready-made solutions on offer.

A dominant example of the top-down approach to peacebuilding is the liberal peacebuilding model. The liberal peacebuilding model has its origin in democratic peace theory (Campbell, 2011). According to Campbell (2011), the end of the cold war left the liberal ideology as the dominant ideology. This dominance permeated into the peacebuilding efforts by the UN, international financial institutions, and the international nongovernmental organizations. Peacebuilding, therefore, focused on the establishment or reconstruction of institutions necessary to support democratization, human rights protection, the rule of law, a strong civil society and liberal economic reforms (Campbell, 2011; Richmond, 2009; 2011). As such, liberal peace can be conceived as a form of top-down transmission chain of “ideas, language, and practice” about peacemaking and peacebuilding (Mac Ginty, 2010, p. 396). The same approach is captured in the 1992 United Nations, Agenda for Peace; building the institutions and infrastructure of nations torn by war and civil strife (United Nations, 1992. Art. 15).

It is important to note that, since the democratic peace theory postulates the absence of war between democracies which espouse the liberal ideal, the liberal peacebuilding model, therefore, seeks to establish these ideals and values as solution to consequences of armed conflicts (Richmond, 2011). International actors and donor agencies aligned to this approach in peacebuilding, often primarily engage with national governments in a bid to support the development of their ability to provide services and protection for their populations (Gruener & Hald, 2015). Their priorities are thus typically focused on strengthening institutions at the level of the state emphasizing on security sector reforms, strengthening the capacity of the justice system, and ensuring free and fair elections. Top-down peacebuilding, therefore, favors statebuilding.

Richmond (2005) suggests four strands of thought that summarize the dimensions liberal peacebuilding (top-down approach) encompasses. These four dimensions include; the victor’s peace, constitutional peace, institutional peace and the civil peace. They involve pacification through military might, introduction of the liberal ideals through constitutional and institutional alignments accompanied with some focus on social actors and movements (Richmond, 2005; 2009). Mac Ginty (2008, p. 143) also aptly captures this as “the concept, condition and practice whereby leading states, international organizations and international financial institutions promote their version of peace through peace-support interventions, control of international financial architecture, support for state sovereignty and the international status quo.”

Other than the international organizations and external actors, top-down approach can also be carried out in the country by top level actors; for instance, by leaders with high visibility and influence such as political, military, tradition or high-level government officials and leaders in a state. In this scenario, as is the case with the liberal peacebuilding, the intervention is imposed and does not necessarily reflect the needs of the local people at the grassroots level.

The top-down approach may have some significance. It has the financial and material power, to offer and enforce a unified vision unlike the bottom-up approach where diverse interests, identities and aspirations may hinder a unified approach and

the sacrifice needed for the change anticipated. In addition, the bureaucracy and technocracy in the top-down approach provides for standardization, accountability and record for monitoring and evaluation.

On the other hand, since the top-down approach rarely reflects, and often ignores, the needs of the local people and context-specific socio-economic realities, ownership and sustainability are negatively impacted. Lilja & Höglund, (2018) argue that track record for top-down approach is mixed and incidences of armed conflict are increasing.

In addition, the liberal peacebuilding has been accused of engendering ethnocentrism, cultural biases, and a narrow set of interests (Richmond 2011). On the same note, Belloni (2012) also argues that liberal peacebuilding has failed in its pursuit of democratization since structures established, supported or strengthened only portrayed superficial features of these ideals. The bureaucracy and technocracy inherent in the approach also breeds not only rigidity but also exclusion.

3.2 BOTTOM-UP APPROACH TO PEACEBUILDING

“Peacemakers and practitioners have often looked into addressing peace and conflict through silo-frameworks... This approach has often left behind traditional mechanisms and community-led peace initiatives; those from grassroots levels with emphasis on addressing communal violence and security...” (Nuriye, 2021, para. 3)

In advocating for a local turn in peacebuilding initiatives and as part of their ‘everyday peace indicators’ project, Roger Mac Ginty and Pamina Firchow (2016) carried out a study that engaged local community members in identifying and designing their own everyday peace indicators (EPI). The study revealed a gap between elite top-down and bottom-up peace narratives with the greatest difference lying in not only the politics of the narratives as well as the immediacy of the locals’ security hinterland but also in the framing of these narratives (Mac Ginty & Firchow, 2016). Thus, these differences in priorities and framing would ultimately affect the starting points and outcomes of interventions with regards to the approaches adopted. For instance, Tobias Ide (as cited in Tekenet, 2021, para. 4) captures this reality when citing the danger of excluding local voices as “the exclusion of these efforts from environmental peacebuilding analysis and efforts can convey a problematic representation that local people in developing countries cannot solve environmental and conflict issues on their own.”

Also known as local peacebuilding, bottom-up approach refers to initiatives owned and led by the local communities on a small or wide scale (Peace Direct, 2019). The bottom-up approach is built around a focus on the needs, priorities and rights of the local indigenous communities. It is locally led and owned as opposed to locally managed and implemented. Locally managed or implemented peacebuilding conveys the notion of passivity and external control.

According to Netabay (2007), this approach is not only people-centered but also calls for the embracement of peace and reconciliation from within the affected communities. This peacebuilding approach also campaigns for developing institutions from the grassroots level, developing local capacity and resilience in an inclusive manner that utilizes the resources and capacities of the local people. Bottom-up approach has greater local ownership and utilizes local capacities and resources as opposed to the top-down approach.

Nuriye (2021), posits that while top-down peacebuilding efforts are mostly re-active and often emphasize on addressing issues during or in the aftermath of violent conflicts, bottom-up peacebuilding endeavors possess the unique potential of being more pro-active. As a result, they are effective not only in preempting conflict but also in addressing the different stages of peace and conflict as well as the post-conflict peacebuilding period. Perhaps, one of its core strength lies in its focus on identifying and building on commonalities and connectors amongst communities than on divisions that could fuel conflicts (Nuriye, 2021; Blin, 2020).

However, bottom-up approaches also need not to be romanticized as they also have some drawbacks. This is because not everything local can be useful and beneficial. Some local customs or practices may serve exclusionary purposes that the top-down approach is criticized for. Paffenholz (2015), suggests that local actors such as women and the civil society may not always be as good as they are perceived.

Perhaps, this may serve as a reminder that all peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives have their own strengths and challenges. It should also be acknowledged that the framing of these strengths and weaknesses may also not be immune to bias by the framers of such narratives. For instance, some African customs such as the *Guurti* custom in the Somali community, though useful in including traditional institutions within the democratic one, has also endangered the peace process as it engenders patronage system (Belloni, 2012). In addition, the diverse interests and identities may be a cause for division and exclusion.

4 INVOLVING LOCAL ACTORS IN TOP-DOWN PEACEBUILDING EFFORTS

In this section, the article explores not only the hybridization or hybridity concept but also the challenges faced in its implementation as well as the rationale behind its implementation. In addition, it briefly explains some practical ways of meaningfully including local actors in top-down peacebuilding endeavors.

4.1 CHALLENGES IN ACHIEVING INCLUSION IN PEACE BUILDING

Exclusion, active or passive, has played a great role in causing or fanning violence (Paffenholz, 2015). Active exclusion results when deliberate efforts are made to exclude segments of the society from taking part in political or socio-economic decision making. On the other hand, a section of the community may lack the ability to gain access or the voice to get their grievances noticed and their efforts included in the peacebuilding process (Sen, 2000). Caparini & Cobar (2021) suggest this may also occur due to geographical distances, language used as well as skewed power relations and privileges.

According to Paffenholz (2015), two main challenges inhibit successful inclusion of local actors in the peace process. Often, international communities and other external actors approach the process of inclusion from points of untested hypothesis and normative biases assuming that inclusion may hinder efficiency of the peace process which contradicts research evidence (Paffenholz, 2015). As a result, inclusion becomes more of ticking the right boxes in attempts at political correctness. Inclusion, thus, remains a rubberstamp to a flawed process.

On the other hand, challenges related to overemphasis on the role of the negotiation table have been identified (Paffenholz, 2015). Based on recent studies on inclusion in peace processes, Caparini & Cobar (2021), believe that multitrack approach is gaining traction. Paffenholz (2015; 2014), contends that inclusion can be carried out at all phases and cadres of the peacebuilding process taking into consideration the varied unique contextual features.

On the same note, the lack of clarity in who or what constitutes the local as well as the highly fluidly dynamic and multiple roles locals play may confound external actors. Local actors may be instigators, victims or supporters of violence. If their role is not clarified engaging the relevant actors becomes difficult and peacebuilding effort becomes an exercise in futility.

4.2 HYBRIDITY IN PEACEBUILDING

'The greatest resource for sustaining peace in the long term is always rooted in the local people and their culture' (Lederach, 1997, p. 94)

Rosaldo (2005, p. 15) sees hybridity "as the ongoing condition of all human cultures, which contain no zones of purity because they undergo continuous processes of transculturation." Mac Ginty (2010), considers it a "geometry of peace whereby different actors coalesce and conflict to different extents on different issues to produce a fusion peace." Belloni (2012) posits that hybridization refers to a situation where liberal and illiberal norms coexist or clash. Anam (2018, p. 42), also asserts that hybridity encompasses the proposition to "accommodate various institutions and norms where local-particular values and interests can be negotiated with the so-called 'universal human values' advocated by the liberal peacebuilding approach." Thus, liberal peacebuilding is made to accommodate the local conflict management and peacebuilding norms.

Echoing the need for hybridity, Richmond (2009) advocates linking the top down and the local bottom-up peacebuilding approaches. This may take the form of the co-option of the local actors (or a bottom-up) into top-down. Critics of top-down approach to peacebuilding in general, and liberal peacebuilding in particular, argue that no conflict can be understood nor solved sustainably without putting its cultural context into consideration (Lederach, 1997). Liberal peacebuilding has largely not been successful because of over-emphasis on state building at the expense of programs relevant to the needs of the local communities (Boege et al., 2009).

The clamor for the need to involve local perspectives can be traced back to 2001 through the initiatives by the then UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan (*see section on local ownership*) with the same repeated by the critics of liberal peace such as Curle (1994) and Lederach (1997). Contention then rests on the form of this involvement and the understanding of the meaning of inclusion of the local.

The United Nation Security Council (2012, p. 11), defines inclusivity as "the extent and way the views and needs of parties to conflict and other stakeholders are represented, heard and integrated into a peace process."

This, according to Dumacy (2018), involves more of creating opportunities for actors with a stake in sustainable peace to shape it rather than in granting everyone a seat at the negotiating table. In addition, inclusivity also involves preventing the

views and needs of the elites to override or out-shadow those of the larger community. A mistake often made by external actors when seeking out collaboration in the host countries.

After a discussion on the two major approaches to peacebuilding, it is important to note that the two approaches are not entirely mutually exclusively. Aspects of approach can be co-opted into the other. In addition, the peacebuilding environment has a number of actors. Successful peacebuilding relies on how these actors and stakeholders engage one another.

In addition, there is need to realize that both of the approaches to peacebuilding discussed earlier are not perfect (Lilja & Höglund, 2018). While international and external actors may be accused of imposing alien solutions, the local actors and institutions may be the cause, too weak or lack the legitimacy to address conflict (Lilja & Höglund, 2018). Hence necessitating the need for an external party.

On the other hand, involving local peacebuilding actors is cost effective. There are minimal bureaucratic and logistical procedures, lower cost of personnel, and with a local face (Hellmüller, 2018).

In the Case studies' 1 and 2 presented in the text box below, though generally locally led and managed and therefore qualifying as an example of bottom-up approach to peacebuilding, there are aspects of top-down approach as well where the state actors are involved. Case study 4 represents an example of external and local actors working together in a peacebuilding context for mutual benefits.

4.3 CASE STUDIES

The following brief case studies are used to illustrate some of the discussions on approaches to peacebuilding. In addition to this, examples have also been used extensively within the other sections of this article.

Together, the illustrations within the articles and the case studies all help the readers visualize the discussions by providing real life contexts.

Five case studies are presented in the text box below:

Case study 1 – Guurti in Somaliland

Guurti is a council of elders established in 1988 in Somaliland. Membership consists of traditional elders and intellectuals formed during the struggle of Somali National Movement (SNM). The term originally applied to groups of elders selected to resolve specific problems or conflict within a clan or between clans. In Somaliland, the Guurti is instrumental in any political and social conflict resolution initiatives.

Guurti led peace efforts has had significant impact on the overall political future and stability in Somaliland which enjoys greater degree of stability as compared to the rest of Somali territories. Most notable about this initiative is the absence of external international interventions.

Case study 2 – Peacebuilding financing in Somaliland

Somaliland is part of the greater Somalia. The greater Somalia is in turmoil even after series of peace making and peacebuilding initiatives. It also has an external peace keeping force tasked with providing security and supporting the fledgling Somali federal government. On the other hand, Somaliland has no such external force and intervention. Peace has been largely possible through local conferences and funding from internal sources. (Eubank, 2012)

Case study 3 – Idjwi, the Island of Peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo

In Congo, amidst civil strife and violence, stands out Idjwi. It has all the ingredients for turmoil. However, locally led peacebuilding initiative dubbed ‘culture of peace’ has kept the Island safe and peaceful in the sea of violence. Other than some measure of autonomy and improving economic infrastructure, peace has been possible due to a mix of dense and active social networks and associations as well as ancestral beliefs. In the event of conflicts, resolution is channeled through social networks, the religious congregation and customary chiefs instead of the formal state authorities (Autesserre, 2018; Blin, 2020).

Case study 4 – Mutual collaborations - the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

In North and South Kivu region of the DRC, a Swedish organization, Life and Peace Institute, is engaged in a symbiotic relationship with the local people. They facilitate learning sessions where they empower the local people to analyze conflict, explore and implement solutions. The sessions also help the organization to document experience with bottom-up policy engagements as part of their organizational learning. (Autesserre, 2018).

Case study 5 – Gacaca courts in Rwanda

After the 1994 genocide, a process of transitional justice was initiated in Rwanda. The local Gacaca courts were revived as part of the national process of reconstruction and reconciliation to achieve community healing and local level reconciliation.

With some external funding, about 12000 courts were established and staffed by locals and served the locals. By 2012, it had issued about 1.2 million sentences. It managed in spite of some human rights concerns to provide some balance between the need to combat impunity as well as propel the communities beyond the genocide. (Öjendal, Leonardsson & Lundqvist, 2017; Brouneus, 2008).

Fig. 1. Case studies

4.4 WAYS OF INVOLVING LOCAL ACTORS IN TOP-DOWN PEACEBUILDING

Worth mentioning before discussing the ways of meaningfully involving the local in top-down peacebuilding, are the various ways in which the local has been treated. For instance, there has been a history of co-opting local ideas but excluding them in the process or using a ‘template approach’ which leaves out the bottom-up approaches or uses local actors as mere rubberstamps.

Perhaps, as a precursor to negotiations and subsequent peacebuilding efforts, wide consultation can never be underestimated. The prior consultations shape negotiations, clarify agenda as well the crucial stakeholders to the whole process (Paffenholz, 2015). In addition, inclusion should deliberately be provided for in the official structures of the peacebuilding process to enhance its legitimacy and reduce sidelining within the formal bureaucracy (Paffenholz & Ross, 2015).

All in all, below are some of different ways of meaningfully engaging the local actors in top-down peacebuilding efforts:

4.4.1 LOCALS AS INTERMEDIARIES AND ENTRY POINTS

Top-down approaches facilitated by third parties may need access and entry points into local communities. Peacebuilding process not only relies on legitimacy for its success but also trust and acceptance by the locals. Some local actors may therefore act as intermediaries and gatekeepers (Futamura & Notaras, 2011; Schirch, 2020). Sometimes, local organizations may act as these intermediaries.

For instance, in Myanmar a local organization, *Nyein* Foundation acted as such an intermediary for a Swedish organization called *Swisspeace*. The external organization gained access and trust from the community.

However, since the local actors have diverse interests and identities, the interests of the intermediaries may not reflect the needs of the community. Some local actors may be the cause or beneficiaries of conflict. As such, collaboration with such local actors may be counterproductive. Hence the need to determine who is not only local but also legitimate (Futamura & Notaras, 2011)

4.4.2 LOCALLY LED ANALYSIS, PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

This involves allowing the local actors to analyze and understand their situation. Their understanding of the local history, politics, religion and language places them in a position to best understand and analyze a situation as compared to external actors (Schirch, 2020). In addition, locally led analysis contribute to efficient prioritizations. Moreover, ownership is enhanced when the local actors take responsibility for policies and programs and take active part in its implementation.

An example of this is shown in Case study 4 above where the Swedish organization facilitates the process while the locals actively undertake the analysis. However, this can have a drawback in the sense of competing interests and diverse identities becoming a source of conflict. Futamura and Notaras (2011) acknowledge that local actors include a variety of actors who may speak in different voices. Therefore, thorough prior consultations and careful stakeholder mapping may be necessary.

4.4.3 PROVISION OF FUNDING

The peacebuilding process has cost implication. The reconstruction and strengthening of structures and institutions require adequate funding to be realized. External actors and donors such as the UN and other international and regional organizations can provide the requisite funding.

For instance, *Peace Direct* and *Swedish Development Agency* have offered grants to local actors and partners in the DRC. Some of these funds are used to support social movements, awareness campaigns etc.

On the other hand, donor funding come with conditionalities. For this reason, compliance may override delivery for local organizations. Time may be spent in churning out paperwork. In addition, there is also danger of local actors developing an attitude of expectations and donor dependency (Hellmüller, 2014). On the other hand, Mac Ginty (2011) suggests, funding gives the international actors substantial powers over the local actors. Hence Funding can be a source of control and manipulation.

Case study 2 involving peacebuilding financing in Somaliland shows an interesting case where the local provide funding in return for democratic and institutional reforms by the state in the peacebuilding process. The collaboration of the state and the local community may represent a form of top-down and bottom-up accommodations.

4.4.4 CAPACITY BUILDING, RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS AND CONSULTANCY

Collaborative learning strengthens partners in the peacebuilding process. The external actors bring in expertise while the locals, in addition to having expertise, also possess rich knowledge of their local situation. The partners can develop their capacities through trainings, consultations, networking and technical assistance. Where necessary locals may have their capacity built.

For instance, a Swedish organization called *Swisspeace* ventured into Myanmar in 2011 through provision of consultative services to a local partner organization, *Nyein* Foundation. The local organization was involved in community dialogue. The collaboration helped build trust and granted the organization wider access into the community (Schirch, 2020). Another notable local expertise that the state level actors involved in peacebuilding process is the *Gacaca* local community tribunals in Rwanda which helped try some lesser cases of genocide to help clear cases backlog (Mac Ginty, 2011).

However, there usually is a misconception that external actors are the experts while the locals can only provide information and labor. This can give rise to antagonistic relationship derailing the peacebuilding efforts.

4.4.5 SUPPORT TO LOCAL BUSINESS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Killick (2015) suggests that local businesses are not neutral in conflict. Firstly, their owners and executives play a crucial role in the community not only as members of but also influential in generating instability and conflict. Examples of how business contribute to conflict may include cases such as the illegal logging in Liberia and Cambodia, cocaine trade in Colombia and diamond mining in Central Africa.

It is also important to realize that part of reconstruction after a conflict or war is economic empowerment of the society. International finance organizations and state actors can provide microfinancing facilities to support the private business sector as a way of rebuilding a community and nation (Killick et. al, 2015). This provides a practical step in helping locals rebuild their lives. In some cases, such as in Latin America, external actors and states have had to consider investing in empowering the local communities in seeking alternative livelihoods as a concession for abandoning illegal activities such as drug trafficking or growing.

The Case study 2 involving financing of peacebuilding initiatives in Somaliland once again shows how local businesses and private sector play a role in peacebuilding. They proactively engaged the state actors for concessions that would help sustain peace for stability and economic development.

4.4.6 LOCALS AS EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS

The general perspective of seeing locals as ignorant and in need of saving and enlightening can be misleading. The locals may possess the expertise needed to offer expertise and skills needed to steer a peacebuilding process to success. This expertise may be complemented by the rich understanding of the environment.

5 CONCLUSION

The article attempted provided not only the definitions of key terms but also described the two main approaches to peacebuilding citing their benefits and the challenges they face. In addition, I have explored the concept of hybridization and outlined the different ways of involving local actors meaningfully for achieving greater impact and success.

Other than showing that no single approach is without a drawback, this article has attempted to also make a case for hybridization. In doing so, top-down approaches other than those involving external actors have also been explored such as is the case in Somaliland. The emphasis on hybridity has been for the mutual benefits of all parties; bridging the gap between the goals of the external actors and the aspirations of the local communities.

REFERENCES

- [1] Autesserre, S. (2018, October 23). *There's Another Way to Build Peace. And it Doesn't Come from the Top Down*. The Washington Post. Retrieved April 25, 2021
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/10/23/theres-another-way-to-build-peace-and-it-doesnt-come-from-the-top-down/>.
- [2] Belloni, R. (2012). Hybrid Peace Governance: Its Emergence and Significance. *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*, 18 (1), 21-38. doi: 10.1163/19426720-01801004.
- [3] Bjola, C., & Kornprobst, M. (2018). *Understanding international diplomacy: theory, practice and ethics*. Routledge.
- [4] Blin, A. (2020, November 25). *Idjwi Island in Congo (DRC): Peace through local action and security «from below»*. Retrieved December 2, 2022, from <https://commonspolis.org/en/proposals/idjwi-island-in-congo-drc-peace-through-local-action-and-security-from-below/>.
- [5] Boege, V., Brown, A., Clements, K., & Nolan, A. (2009). Building peace and political community in hybrid political orders. *International peacekeeping*, 16 (5), 599-615.
- [6] Boughton, J. M., & Mourmouras, A. (2002). Is Policy Ownership an Operational Concept? *IMF Working Papers*, 02 (72), 1. doi: 10.5089/9781451849356.001
- [7] Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). Peace. In *Cambridge Dictionary*. Retrieved April 29, 2020
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/dispute>.

- [8] Campbell, S. (2011). Construing Top-down as Bottom-up: The Governmental Co-option of Peacebuilding - From Below. *Explorations in Anthropology*, 11 (1), 39-56.
- [9] Curle, A. (1994). New challenges for citizen peacemaking. *Medicine, Conflict and Survival*, 10 (2), 96-105. doi: 10.1080/07488009408409148.
- [10] Dumasy, T. (2018, July 01). *Why does inclusion matter for peace?* Retrieved December 1, 2022 <https://www.c-r.org/news-and-insight/why-does-inclusion-matter-peace>.
- [11] Edomwonyi, O. (2003, January 1). Rwanda: The importance of local ownership of the post- conflict reconstruction process: Peacebuilding. *Conflict Trends*, 2003 (4).
- [12] Eubank, N. (2012). Taxation, Political Accountability and Foreign Aid: Lessons from Somaliland. *Journal of Development Studies*, 48 (4), 465-480. doi: 10.1080/00220388.2011.598510.
- [13] Futamura, M., & Notaras, M. (2011). *Local Perspectives on International Peacebuilding*. Retrieved April 26, 2021, from <https://unu.edu/publications/articles/local-perspectives-on-international-peacebuilding.html#info>.
- [14] Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, Peace, and Peace Research. *Journal of Peace Research*, 6 (3), 167-191. doi: 10.1177/002234336900600301.
- [15] Galtung, J. (1995). Violence, Peace, and Peace Research, Essays on Peace: Paradigms for Global Order, ed.
- [16] Gruener, S., & Hald, M. (2015, May 18). *Local perspectives on inclusive peacebuilding: A four-country case study*. Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation. Retrieved May 4, 2022 <https://www.daghammarskjold.se/publication/local-perspectives-on-inclusive-peacebuilding-a-four-country-case-study/>.
- [17] Hameiri, S., & Jones, L. (2018). Against Hybridity in the Study of Peacebuilding and Statebuilding. Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: *Critical Conversations*, 99-112. doi: 10.22459/hgpd.03.2018.06.
- [18] Hellmüller, S. (2014). *International and Local Actors in Peacebuilding: Why Don't They Cooperate?* Retrieved April 25, 2021, from https://www.swisspeace.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Media/Publications/WP_4_2014.pdf
- [19] Hellmüller, S. (2018, April 25). *Six Aspects to Consider on the Interaction Between Local and International Actors in Peace Processes*. Retrieved April 25, 2021, from <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2018/04/six-aspects-interaction-local-international-actors-peace-processes/>.
- [20] Killick, N. (2015, September 04). *The Role of Local Business in Peacebuilding*. <https://gsdrc.org/document-library/the-role-of-local-business-in-peacebuilding/>.
- [21] Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- [22] Lederach, J. P. (2015). *Preparing for peace: Conflict transformation across cultures*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, Alternate Formats Library.
- [23] Leonardsson, H., & Rudd, G. (2015). The 'local turn' in peacebuilding: a literature review of effective and emancipatory local peacebuilding. *Third world quarterly*, 36 (5), 825-839. doi: 10.4324/9781315232263-1.
- [24] Lilja, J., & Höglund, K. (2018). The Role of the External in Local Peacebuilding: Enabling Action—Managing Risk. *Global Governance*, 24 (3), 411-430. doi: 10.1163/19426720-02403007.
- [25] Mac Ginty, R. (2008). Indigenous Peace-Making Versus the Liberal Peace. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 43 (2), 139-163. doi: 10.1177/0010836708089080.
- [26] Mac Ginty, R. (2010). Hybrid Peace: The Interaction Between Top-Down and Bottom-Up Peace. *Security Dialogue*, 41 (4), 391-412. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26301105>.
- [27] Mac Ginty, R. (2011). Indigenous Peacebuilding. In *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance* (pp. 47-67). Palgrave Macmillan, London. doi: 10.1057/9780230307032_3.
- [28] Mac Ginty, R., & Firchow, P. (2016). Top-down and bottom-up narratives of peace and conflict. *Politics*, 36 (3), 308-323. doi: 10.1177/0263395715622967.
- [29] Mac Ginty, R., & Richmond, O. P. (2013). The Local Turn in Peace Building: A critical agenda for peace. *Third World Quarterly*, 34 (5), 763-783. doi: 10.1080/01436597.2013.800750.
- [30] Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Peace. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved April 29, 2020 <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/peace>.
- [31] Miller, C. E. & King, M. E. (2005). *A Glossary of Terms and Concepts in Peace and Conflict Studies*. University for Peace Africa programme. Addis Ababa Ethiopia.
- [32] Mohamoud Barawani, M. A. (2017). Somaliland and Somalia Peace- Building Process: Actors, Interventions, and Experiences. *International Journal of Development Research*, 7 (8), 14248-14259.
- [33] Mondré, A. (2015). The Effects of International Dispute Settlement Procedures. In *State Transformations in OECD Countries* (pp. 87-105). Palgrave Macmillan, London. doi: https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137012425_5.
- [34] Netabay, N. (2007, March). *Bottom-Up Approach: A Viable Strategy in Solving the Somali Conflict*. Retrieved April 25, 2021, from <https://www.beyondintractability.org/casestudy/netabay-bottom>.

- [35] Nuriye, A. H. (2021, December 20). *Bottom-up approaches to peace: A holistic approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding*. Retrieved November 29, 2022, from <https://www.accord.org.za/analysis/bottom-up-approaches-to-peace-a-holistic-approach-to-conflict-prevention-and-peacebuilding/>.
- [36] Öjendal, J., Leonardsson, H., & Lundqvist, M. (2017). Local peacebuilding: Challenges and opportunities. *Stockholm. EBA Report, 5*.
- [37] Online Etymology Dictionary. (n.d.). Peace. In *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Retrieved April 24, 2021 <https://www.etymonline.com/word/peace>.
- [38] Paffenholz, T. (2015). Inclusivity in peace processes. *Briefing paper for the UN High-level Review Panel*.
- [39] Paffenholz, T., & Ross, N. (2015). Inclusive peace processes—An introduction. *Development Dialogue, 63* (Part 1), 28-37.
- [40] Peace Direct. (2019, June 6). *Local peacebuilding - What works and why*. Retrieved April 25, 2021 <https://www.peaceinsight.org/reports/whatworks/>.
- [41] Richmond, O. P. (2005). *The transformation of peace*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. doi: 10.1057/9780230505070.
- [42] Richmond, O. P. (2009). A post-liberal peace: Eirenism and the everyday. *Review of International Studies, 35* (3), 557-580. doi: 10.1017/s0260210509008651.
- [43] Richmond, O. P. (2011). *A Post-liberal peace*. London: Routledge.
- [44] Richmond, O. P., & Franks, J. (2009). *Liberal Peace Transitions: Between Statebuilding and Peacebuilding*. Edinburgh University Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1r27r6>.
- [45] Rummel, R. J. (1979). *War, power, peace*. Beverly Hills: Sage publications.
- [46] Rummel, R. J. (1981). *The just peace*. London: Sage.
- [47] Schirch, L. (2020, May 2). *7 approaches to local ownership and 4 problems with trickle down peacebuilding*. Retrieved December 13, 2022, from <https://lisaschirch.wordpress.com/2020/05/02/7-approaches-to-local-ownership-and-4-problems-with-trickle-down-peacebuilding/>.
- [48] Sending, O. J. (2010). *Learning to build a sustainable peace: Ownership and everyday peacebuilding*. Retrieved from <https://www.cmi.no/publications/3732-learning-to-build-a-sustainable-peace>.
- [49] Tekenet, R. (2021, February 16). Experts spotlight bottom-up approaches and the impacts of conflict on infrastructure in the next wave of environmental peacebuilding. Retrieved December 1, 2022 <https://www.newsecuritybeat.org/2021/02/experts-spotlight-bottom-up-approaches-impacts-conflict-infrastructure-wave-environmental-peacebuilding/>.
- [50] UN Security Council. (2012, October 8). *Peacebuilding in the aftermath of Conflict: Report of the secretary-general*. Retrieved December 1, 2022, from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/50f3fd382.html>.
- [51] United Nations. (1992, June 17). *An agenda for peace - A/47/277 S/24111*. UN documents: Gathering a body of global agreements. Retrieved December 13, 2022, from <http://www.un-documents.net/a47-277.htm>
- [52] United Nations. (2001). *Secretary-General's Reports Submitted to the Security Council in 2001 Security Council*. Retrieved April 24, 2021 <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/secretary-generals-reports-submitted-security-council-2001>.