Efficacy of Local Peace Building Structures, Mechanisms and Practices: A Comparative analysis of Kenya and Rwanda

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Abstract: **The term peace building entered the international lexicon in 1992 when UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali defined it in an Agenda for Peace "action to identify and support structures which tend to strengthen and solidify peace to avoid a relapse into conflict." Since then, peace building has become a catchall concept, encompassing multiple (and at times contradictory) perspectives and agendas. Studies on peacebuilding detailing their successes and limitations are abundant. Indications of substantial improvements have been made over the years, however, most scholars note that there are still considerable gaps in the development of concepts, policies and practice. Currently, peacebuilding efforts, actors, and coordination in most countries are mixed. There are various multi-stakeholder peacebuilding efforts coordinated by different groups with varying levels of membership, leadership, effectiveness, and impact. There are also varying degrees of trust, suspicion, and often competition for resources amongst the various networks and groups. This paper comparatively seeks to interrogate the practicability and efficacy of local peacebuilding practices, mechanisms as opposed to the formal negotiating table between Kenya and Rwanda. It problematizes the application of western liberal peace models at grassroots level. The aim is to illustrate specific participatory local peace building mechanisms with more attention on the role and efficacy of community led peace building within post-conflict communities.**

Key Words: **Gacaca, Genocide, peace building, conflict, grassroots, Rwanda, Community**

I. INTRODUCTION

Violent conflict is a worldwide and ancient phenomenon. Reimann (2008) postulates that conflict generates fear and uncertainty in the society, it interferes with the quality and normalcy of life, impacts people's livelihoods, causing displacements, as well as cause harm and kill people. These ugly results causes anxiety to everyone, including those in authorities and the community at large. As global comprehension of state formation and conflict grew, there was need for the UN and other bodies to begin to come up with peacebuilding as a component on its own.

The shift by the United Nations (UN) to expand beyond traditional peacekeeping into multidimensional peacekeeping with UN personnel actively engaging in efforts to transform conflict and bring about durable peace has aimed at achieving a level of reconstruction and reconciliation in which national actors could manage and resolve their own conflicts, without recourse to violence. These activities have been undertaken in a coordinated manner between UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UN development agencies through the integrated mission task and activities (Emstorfer *et.al*, 2007). Stability in post-conflict situations depends on effectiveness of initiatives adopted though no role models of such initiatives are available. The war-to- peace transition remains reversible in many states emerging from conflicts (Green & Ismael, 2009; Emstorfer *et,, al.* 2007).

Globally, Peace building efforts are said to face persistent occasioned by the chronic inability of international actors to adapt their assistance to the political dynamics of the war-torn societies they seek to support. The challenges associated with preventing, managing and resolving natural resource-induced conflicts may well come to define global peace and security in the 21st century. The internal - external disconnect manifests itself at the conceptual, policy, operational and institutional levels. This inform difficulty faced by external actors in aligning their efforts and interests to the domestic political realities of the war torn societies they seek to support (Maliga, 2007). Peace can be sustained from within the conflict torn communities hence the need to reemphasize strengthening the resilience of local peacebuilding practices and mechanisms. Peace building can include conflict prevention, conflict management, conflict resolution and transformation and post conflict reconciliation. Peace building becomes strategic when it works over the long run and at all levels of society to establish and sustain relationships among people locally and internationally (ICERM, 2014).

Kenya has a vibrant peacebuilding sector and strong civil society and other organizations that are committed to conflict prevention and conflict transformation. There are and have been various multi-stakeholder peacebuilding efforts coordinated by different groups (government, civil society, private sector, interreligious, and foreign diplomatic actors) with varying levels of membership, leadership, relevance, and impact (Emstorfer, 2019). While, peacebuilding in Rwanda on the other hand is said to be a journey, that started with a tabula rasa; an exercise during which there was precious little precedent to draw on; journey on which there was no established path to follow. Many scholars argue that Rwanda

has exercised state power in ways that give voice and legitimacy to communities and grassroots movements. Although, Sezibera, 2018, notes that there is emerging criticism that lies in its muscular, top-down approach. This article aims to bring an understanding of complex origins and legacy of the local peace building mechanisms, structures and practices in this two countries. The objectives include conflict mapping analysis; details of action in terms of peacebuilding agenda, structure, scope, coordination, activities, participation and practices; and assess sustainability of local peace building structures in Kenya and Rwanda.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted desktop review approach for data collection where data was collected from previous empirical study reports, journal and book chapter publications, government reports, non-governmental entities reports, periodicals, peace building and development plans/ frameworks and strategies. The review focus was on Comparative Review of local peace building structures, practices and mechanisms and other criterions for ranking as well as detailed review of the Socio-economic and environmental surveys on peace building efforts across two countries.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

III.1.1 Conflict Overview

(i) Kenya Conflict Overview

Kenya experiences different types of conflicts, both internally and cross-border. The country has experienced intra-state conflicts, cross-border confrontations and the spill-over effects from regional conflicts in the Horn of Africa which manifest themselves violently and non-violently. Kenya is a multiethnic country with many overlapping conflicts ranging from intercommunal violence, cycles of election –related violence whose gravity, incidence and intensity has increased in recent years (Pkalya & Mohammud, 2006). Additionally, high levels of sexual and gender-based violence and of intercommunal violence; low levels of persistent violence; cycles of election-related violence; and increasing numbers of terrorist attacks are other forms of violence experienced in the country. The incidence, gravity and intensity of violence have all increased in recent years. The conflicts in Kenya are multiple and overlapping. Across Kenya, thousands of people have been killed, hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced, and the provision of education and health services has been disrupted in number of counties including Baringo, Turkana, Wajir, Mandera, and Isiolo (KNCHR, 2014,). The Rift Valley, Nairobi, the peripheral pastoralist drylands, and the coast are among the areas most affected. The high levels of violence are a result of a range of factors including: i) ethnic intolerance; ii) border conflicts; iii) political party zoning; iv) competition over land and other resources; v) proliferation of small arms; vi) weak security; and vii) poverty, underdevelopment, and marginalization. Intercommunal violence risks being increased by competition over the fruits of devolution and elite manipulation of local communities (Rohwerder, 2018).

As stipulated in the NSC Report (2011), following the post-election violence of 2007-2008, the greatest in magnitude in Kenya's history, the country has now been thrust into an extensive reform agenda towards sustainable peace. Community peacebuilding structures consisting of ceasefire monitoring committees (CMCs), working groups, peace actors' forum and village dialogue space committees that link the various conflict corridors have been developed. The various organizations work together on different subcommittees in support of the key mandate areas of NSC: conflict analysis and early warning, capacity building and training, media and communication, and national peacebuilding coordination. All these structures are coordinated and supported by the local peacebuilding teams, with members of the ceasefire committee working with communities (Ernstofer, 2019).

(ii) Rwanda Conflict Overview

The state of conflict in Rwanda is an outcome of historical developments during the colonial and post-colonial periods, the genocide of 1994, and developments in the post-1994 period. The German and later Belgian colonial policy of divide-and-rule tended to favor Tutsi hegemony through differential education and employment access. The Belgian colonial administration amplified historic divisions by consolidating local power in the hands of the minority Tutsi chiefs and removing traditional Hutu public figures. Tutsis were given monopolies over land rights and access to socio-economic opportunities, hardening a sense of ethnic inferiority among the majority Hutu. All the while, competition over scarce land intensified as Rwanda's population increased dramatically. In its scope and intensity, the hundred-day genocide which followed was perhaps unprecedented in human history. Upward of a million Rwandans—some moderate Hutus but mostly Tutsis—were killed by their fellow Rwandans, usually in broad daylight, often by militia and ordinary people using machetes, garden implements, or other tools. Hutu extremists nearly achieved their aim of extermination. Rwanda's constricted geography and the mass participation in the killings meant that Tutsis had few ways to escape the slaughter. The genocide against the Tutsi resulted in 1,074,017 people being killed. Over two million fled to neighboring countries, millions more were internally displaced, and over 700,000 refugees (Clark, 2012; Colomba, 2013; Mcamee, 2021; Maliga, 2007).

The international community spent $1.4 billion dollars on what they called the Rwanda crisis between April and December 1994, only a third of which was spent inside Rwanda, and very little of that on Peacebuilding activities. Rwanda's efforts at peacebuilding have been anchored in ideological clarity. They are based on a critical examination of society's history (ancient and recent), the cultural values that cemented an evolving Rwandan polity over time, and the deficits of leadership and governance that brought the country to the brink of extinction (Sezibera, 2018).

Rwandans respectfully disagreed with this international consensus and embarked on a return to normalcy based on the return and reconstruction of national unity, national sovereignty, and the security of Rwandans and their property. This included democratic pluralism; promoting an economy based the country's natural resources; fighting corruption, favoritism, embezzlement of national resources, and other fraudulent activities; and promoting social welfare. Rwanda has enacted and executed policies that are aimed at ending the legacy of violence and the culture of impunity, invested in political solutions that cemented stability and allowed for the return of refugees, reconstructed the social fabric, and built an inclusive economic order. All these efforts are anchored on the ideology that Peacebuilding is development, and development is always unique everywhere, and for Rwanda, these efforts have involved making sure that basic but necessary tasks such as collecting garbage, cleaning public toilets, maintaining public markets, etc., do not fall prey to internecine struggles for power, corruption, and public sector decay (Sezibera, 2018; Maliga, 2007).

III.1.2   Local Peace Building Structures, Mechanisms and Practices

One of the persistent obstacles to more effective peace building outcomes is the chronic inability of international actors to adapt their assistance to the political dynamics of the war-torn societies they seek to support. The internal - external disconnect manifests itself at the conceptual, policy, operational and institutional levels. Two issues come to the fore. One is the perennial difficulty faced by external actors in aligning their efforts and interests to the domestic political realities of the wartorn societies they seek to support.

a.   Peace Building in Rwanda

Local empowerment through effective and efficient decentralization has been a key feature of Rwandan governance post-genocide. Given the country's history, there is a constant structured reflection and dialogue on what it means to be Rwandan— not merely a collection of clans, or denominations. The involvement of the community also implies a willingness for government and leaders to be held accountable. Accountability mechanisms exist at different levels, but perhaps the most important are citizen's perceptions of governance and service delivery (Maliga, 2007). Ultimately, the are also the three peace-building tools, Vision 2020, the Constitution, and the development of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission are means to promote peace consciousness among a deeply divided society.

(i)   Vision 2020

Economic inequalities related to ethnic identities can be considered a significant factor in creating initial divisions between Hutu and Tutsi during the colonial period. Economic instability and inequality was carried on through the regimes of Presidents Kayibanda and Habyarimana, thereby affecting the political and social landscape of the nation. Vision 2020 aims to be successful through the development of six pillars:

good governance by a capable state; productive agriculture; building the private sector through entrepreneurship and competitiveness; human resource development "encompassing education, health, and ICT skills (Sezibera, 2008; Maliga, 2007). The constitution thus brings forth agenda towards achieving economic stability for all citizens and eliminate forms of inequality. While Vision 2020 addresses the issues of economic instability, it has been criticized for its failure to address the other contributing factors in the 1994 genocide as divisions based on ethnic identification and the delivery of genocidal ideology through the political and social structures.

(ii)   The Constitution

The Rwanda constitution was voted on in the referendum of May 26, 2003 and received 90% of the nation's votes. While equitable power sharing and the rule of law aimed at improving social welfare are important, the essential elements of the document are the aspects that address genocidal ideology, identity-based divisionism, promoting national unity, and the equality of all Rwandans, especially between men and women. The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda is "conscious that peace and unity of Rwandans constitute the essential basis for national economic development and social progress" (Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, 2003). However, the challenges posed by the constitution is that it focuses heavily on the elimination of public ethnic identification as a means to forge reconciliation between conflicting groups.

(iii)   The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission

To address the specific issues related to the genocide, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) was adopted by the Parliament in March of 1999 and established by law No. 03/99 of 12/03/99 (Government of Rwanda, 1999). Comprised of three units, the Department of Civic Education, Department of Conflict Resolution, and the Department of Community Initiative Support, the NURC's main responsibility is to foster conditions where reconciliation and healing is possible and to use "all available means to mobilize and sensitize Rwandans for this task" (Government of Rwanda, 2003, art. 3 section 2). Rwandan national identity and national interests of economic stability and security are of primary importance compared to notions of ethnicity, gender, religion, and familial relations. National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (Government of Rwanda) Since it was established by the government of national unity, NURC has strived to become a platform where Rwandans of all social conditions can meet and discuss the real problems of the Nation, especially those related to unity and reconciliation, culture of peace, tolerance, justice, democracy and development. The main justification of NURC is educational function at the service of the communities.

(iv)   Itorero ry'igihugu

Itorero ry'igihugu is a traditional, home grown Rwandan cultural practice that existed prior to the colonial period and

was a "channel through which the nation could convey messages to the people regarding national culture in areas such as language, patriotism, social relations, sports, dancing and songs, defense of the nation. This is one of the programs implemented by the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission. It is a traditional civic educational forum which "promote[s] opportunities for development using Rwandan cultural values, identify taboos that inhibit the development of the country, fight violence and corruption, eradicate the culture of impunity, strengthen the culture of peace, tolerance, unity and reconciliation and eradicate the genocide ideology and all its roots" (National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, 2009, p. 8). While *itorero ry'igihugu* fosters patriotism and acceptance of a national Rwandan identity, it does not address the complex issues regarding justice, unity, and reconciliation between the victims and perpetrators of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi (Colomba, 2013).

(v) Urugwiro Village Discussions

This were basically the foundational elements of forming the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission. Named after and held at the presidential residence, the discussions took place over several months in 1998/9 guided by RPF leaders but involving representatives of all parts of society. This was aimed at helping frame the government's vision and policies for building peace and reconstructing the country (enshrined in law a few years later), which became manifest in some of the key transformations in Rwanda. The discussions were committed to align all peace building initiatives to the aim of strengthening national unity which later led to the formation of a National Unity and Reconciliation Commission established in 1999 "to educate, sensitize and mobilize the population in areas of national unity and reconciliation (Mcamee, 2021).

(vi) Initiatives by the International NGOs

Many international NGOs operate in Rwanda and fund many local initiatives, most of which are church-based, involved in the peace building and reconciliation of Rwanda. At the local level, a handful of organizations, many of them church-based, are involved in grassroots reconciliation efforts in Rwanda. Worth noting are African Great Lakes Initiative, Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC), AGLI, Catholic Relief Services, Federation of African Women's Peace Networks (FERFAP), Never Again Never again, Norwegian Church Aid: Rwanda's women peacemakers among others.

The strategies employed by these NGOs include dialogue, peace building workshops, poverty eradication initiatives. The AGLI NGO, for instance, developed its program which takes groups of people from both sides of the conflict (Hutu and Tutsi) and engages them in workshops meant to restore normal relationships between the two sides. Local Initiatives for Peace Local Initiatives for Peace (LIP) supports small-scale initiatives that encourage tolerance and mutual understanding have also been adopted. The fund supports a wide array of activities, and provides small grants to local

associations such as survivors' groups, orphans, widows/ers, women's groups and churches, and provides them with training in project management, conflict resolution, and other capacity strengthening skills. The activities of Friends Peace House are wide and varied but focus primarily on building the capacities of leaders, the state, grassroots associations, civil society institutions, and the general population of Rwanda to respond to situations of conflict and violence in their homes and communities.

(vii) Gacaca Courts

This is the Rwandan justice instrument called Gacaca, derived from a traditional, dispute-resolution mechanism. Regarded as a means to restore harmony within the community, Gacaca has been successful because it involves all Rwandans in the search for truth about the genocide, provides justice for the victims, allocates responsibility to individuals who participated, and creates an environment conducive to reconciliation (Colomba, 2013). This process is expected to allow communities to establish the facts and decide the fate of the vast majority of those accused of lesser offences, while at the same time addressing reconciliation objectives and involving the population on a mass scale in the disposition of justice. The court system continues to try planners and organizers of the genocide, while the cell, sector, and commune levels handles the rest of the cases. The most tangible benefit of *Gacaca* for many was in simply discovering where their relatives were buried. However, the system has been faulted for its limitations including lack of legal representation for defendants, a bias toward confessions. Thus, while *Gacaca* has been successful in holding perpetrators accountable for committing acts of genocide within their communities, identifying the location of corpses and burial grounds, and adding to the narrative of the events that occurred in 1994, its negative effects on the survivors only contribute to the persistence of psychological trauma (Colomba, 2013). Additionally, doubts concerning impartiality and objectivity while dealing with relatives who stand accused of genocide crimes, corruption and the possibility of having genocide suspects among the judges themselves (Clark, 2012). The winding up of the Gacaca judicial system left some of these challenges unaddressed, and therefore post-Gacaca, should be a moment of assessing what was done, and what needs to be done to achieve the country's vision of unity and reconciliation.

(viii) Integration Approach

Integration served as a conflict management strategy in Rwanda. Ex- soldiers and rebels were recruited in the Rwanda Defense Force and deployed near their native communities to help establish trust in the new dispensation among wary locals. *Ingando* approach was adopted that is, a military encampment or assembly area which served both as an ethos and a means for promoting stability, reconciliation, and professionalization within the armed forces. Upon completion of *ingando*, ex-combatants are provided with World Bank financed government aid to jumpstart the

rebuilding their lives in their respective communities. While this aid does not address problems of poverty and unemployment, it may be viewed as an incentive to "further encourage them to proclaim 'allegiance' to the government (Colomba, 2013).

This helped by growing their international reputation: professional, disciplined, and courageous troops and thus led to the RDF being called upon to contribute peacekeepers and mission commanders to Darfur and Mali (McAmee, 2021).

(ix) Ndi Umunyarwanda

Ndi Umunyarwanda ordinarily meaning am Rwandan was established in 2013, a year after the community-based *Gacaca* courts finished their work. Following the Urugwiro Village discussions, the RPF turned to *Gacaca*—a traditional forum meaning "justice on the grass"—out of practical necessity: no conventional means to hold ordinary Rwandans who committed genocide accountable existed. This involvement of all members of the society cannot be superficial, or intermittent. It has to be systemic and sustained. Local empowerment through effective and efficient decentralization has been a key feature of Rwandan governance post-genocide. Given the country's history, there is a constant structured reflection and dialogue on what it means to be Rwandan— not merely a collection of clans, or denominations—through homegrown structures he *Ndi Umunyarwanda* (I am Rwandan).

(x) Women participation/ Focus

The emergence of women in important, non-traditional roles after the genocide stirred and intersected with conversations at the national level. Ideas and experiences were eventually co-opted into the RPF's policymaking—as a core tenet. Set in Rwanda's 2003 Constitution, a law requiring that women hold a minimum 30 percent of elected positions would be improved upon in practice in ways that may never have been foreseen. In 2018, 49 women sat in Rwanda's parliament, which represented 61 percent of total seats—the highest proportion in the world. Four of the seven Supreme Court seats were also held by women. The centrality of women to all parts of Rwanda's peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery is distinct in the African context. In doing so, it has accelerated the process of overcoming the entrenched patriarchy once common in Rwanda and still pervasive across the continent (McAmee, 2021).

(xi) Theatre

According to Breed (2008) as cited by Mtukwa, 2015, grassroots associations in Rwanda used theatre as a tool to foster reconciliation, and a space for 'intimate acts of confession and forgiveness'. Hence the aesthetic space is a place of sharing personal experiences, developing feelings of trust, acceptance and courage. Over 300 theatre grassroots ensembles, also called associations, were formed throughout Rwanda. They made use of theatre, music, dance and poetry to re-build communities after the genocide. These theatre groups naturally emerged from a genuine, organic need for people to interact in the aftermath of violence.

b. Peace building in Kenya

In Kenya, peace-building occurs at all levels – in the community, nationally, and from international actors. In the past decade, the number of peace- builders working at all levels of society towards conflict management around the world has risen significantly. Kenya is one of the few countries that has a National Policy on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management, which was established in 2012. This policy has six pillars: institutional framework, Capacity Building, conflict prevention, mediation and preventive diplomacy, Traditional Conflict prevention and mitigation; and post conflict Recovery and stabilization. It is anchored more on structural peace-building oriented towards empowerment of resource users, a bottom-up approach that changes the potential of indigenous knowledge systems and institutions for sustainable management. Through the middle multiple actor-oriented approach, local governing institutions are strengthened and decentralization is promoted (GOK, 2011).

(i) Government led mechanisms

In response to the 2007–8 violence, the Kenyan government created the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) of Kenya, created by the National Cohesion and Integration Act in 2008. It is an independent government commission mandated by parliament to address and reduce interethnic conflicts, address hate speech, and promote national reconciliation. It focuses on promoting nondiscrimination amongst religions and ethnicities, collaborates with governmental and national civil society partners to implement concrete interventions at county level, and launches investigations in relation to complaints about discriminatory acts it receives.

There are various entities at the government level in charge of various levels of peacebuilding and conflict prevention activities: the aforementioned National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management, the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, a Presidential Adviser on Social Cohesion, Peace and Conflict Resolution in the Executive Office of the President of Kenya, as well as a low-key Directorate of Cohesion and Peacebuilding focused on promoting the national values system. The work of the office of the Presidential Adviser has focused on dialogue efforts on justice, peace, and social cohesion in different parts of Kenya with the aim of supporting trust-building between civil society and the state. These dialogue efforts so far have focused on different themes: gender, youth, violent extremism and radicalization, civic education, and others.

(ii) Integrated approach

This inter-agency mechanism brings together government ministries, departments and commissions, parliamentary committees, county governments, national and international

civil society organizations, interreligious organizations, academia, the private sector (including private sector networks like KEPSA, bilateral donors and multilateral agencies, and regional organizations (such as IGAD and the related CEWARN21 mechanism) — to varying degrees of participation and involvement. The various organizations work together on different subcommittees in support of the key mandate areas of NSC: conflict analysis and early warning, capacity building and training, media and communication, and national peacebuilding coordination.

More deliberate peacebuilding work led by civil society actors in Kenya emerged in the early 1990s following clashes around land after the 1992 elections. In subsequent years, more peacebuilding actors, networks, and partnerships emerged, such as the umbrella organization Peace and Development Network Kenya (PeaceNet; now Peace and Development Network Trust), or the Kenya Partnership for Peace (which brought together UNDP, the police, and two representatives of CSOs to support peaceful elections) — alongside several others. In order to support coordinated efforts amongst all actors involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Kenya, the Kenyan government established the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (NSC) in 2001, with the secretariat placed within MOSPAIS (Ministry of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security).

International donors and funders allocated large amounts of peacebuilding funding to Kenya in the aftermath of the 2007–8 crisis. They also supported the Uwiano Platform for Peace ("Uwiano" means "connection" or "correlation" in Swahili). An SMS-based information-gathering and action program was designed to ensure that the Kenyan referendum held in August 2010 on a new constitution was violence free. Uwiano was launched by PeaceNet, NCIC, and NSC, supported by UNDP. It also included the deployment of a pool of volunteer monitors to "hot spot" areas across the country and work with established peace committees on preventing intercommunal violence (Enstorfer, 2019).

The existing challenge with the integrated approach lies in the inability of the peacebuilding community to leverage the different roles that international NGOs — versus national NGOs — can play. This was noted in particular also in relation to influencing donor policies and funding decisions, new emerging topics, and policy agendas such as the prevention and countering of the violent extremism (PVE/CVE) agenda.

(iii) Constitution

The constitution of Kenya 2010 provides opportunities fr arresting negative ethnic tendencies that threaten peace and national cohesion in all spheres of life. It provides an opportunity to concretize and sharpen tools, platforms and mechanisms for further consolidation of gains made in the areas of peace Building, Conflict Management and National Cohesion. Under the Constitution, the devolved system of governance was meant to, inter alia, promote democratic and accountable exercise of power, and foster national unity by recognizing diversity; give powers of self-governance to the people and enhance the participation of the people in the exercise of the powers of the State and in making decisions affecting them; recognize the right of communities to manage their own affairs and to further their own peace (GOK,2011). The creation of a new constitution in response to the 2007-2008 election violence. Reforms of the governance and security institutions are designed to improve service delivery and make governance much more accountable and equitable across the country. Power has been devolved to the 47 counties. However, progress has been slow and there may be some potential links between devolution and the escalation of inter-ethnic violence.

(iv) Disarmament

Disarmament campaigns, increased security presence, and 'peacebuilding from below' to address intercommunal violence in the pastoralist drylands have been used in Kenya. The government launched a massive disarmament in banditry-prone counties, leading to the gun mop-up being carried out. In 2004, a Nairobi Protocol for Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes region and Horn of Africa was signed. There has been successive commitment to the process of reducing illicit firearms in various regimes. The collected firearms have been on many occasions destroyed in public.

(v) Operation Linda Nchi.

Operation Linda Nchi (Protect the Country) refers to Kenya's Defense Force (KDF) incursion to Somalia in 2011 with the aim of creating a bufferzone between unstable Somalia and Kenya. This saw Kenya send ground troops into Somalia, ostensibly to deal with the violent activities of Al-Shabaab. Attacks by Al-Shabaab have increased in Kenya since the Operation began in 2011, as Al-Shabaab has localised its jihad in Kenya. Kenyan forces' involvement in the Somali charcoal trade has served to boost Al-Shabaab's resources, which are based on revenue from the charcoal industry. These efforts resulted in the establishment of the Transitional Federal Government (2014), which failed to establish a functioning government giving rise to diverse clan-based militia groups controlling various parts of Somalia and its economic resources and making it extremely insecure. This was later completed by operation Usalama Watch Launched in 2014, which resulted in police swoops in majority-Somali neighbourhoods. The sense of 'collective punishment' increased Muslims' sense of alienation. Recent threats to deport Somali refugees and plans to build a barrier on the border with Kenya have also contributed to this sense of alienation. These counterterrorism responses are said to play into the hands of Al-Shabaab. The debate around the counterterrorism response has been politicised, which seems to have resulted in revenge attacks against different ethnic groups. (Rohwerder, 2015).

(vi) Local peace Committees

Local Peace Structure is a well-coordinated process from the national level to the grass root level. It begins with the NSC (National Steering Committee) at the national level, the Provincial Peace Forum at the second tire, the District Peace Committees (DPC) at the third tire while the Division and Location peace committees are in the fourth and fifth tires respectively. A larger proportion of the memberships of the respective peace committees are drawn from the council of elders with inclusion of women, local police, youth, civil society and religious leaders. Similarly, peace committees' approaches and methodology of managing conflicts are modeled on the customary institutions of conflict management of the communities in question. The membership in Peace Committees is by selection process and thus broadens the constituency of peace committee with cumulative effect being emergence of an all-inclusive peace building structure/approach/process. the LPCs help in advocating for human rights especially for the marginalized group. However, local peace committees' activities have been hampered by their weak structures, varying cultures (ethnic networks) as their success is dependent on efforts of the committees as well as willingness of the communities. Commercialization of their roles and responsibilities have also weakened its respective abilities to tap on skilled and experienced peace builders and have greatly undermined the rationale behind establishment and promotion of peace committees.

(vii)   Creation and renovation shared facilities/ projects (Capacity Building)

In Kenya, peace building is also advanced through creation of shared facilities including water points, health facilities, cattle dips, as well as educational facilities. The facilities aim to promote social cohesion, reduce vulnerability and susceptibility to conflicts, improve capacities/ livelihoods and serve as inter-community connector initiatives. Government support initiatives identified were: The Governments National Reconciliation Fund for Mitigation and Resettlement; the Governments National Reconciliation and Emergency Initiative; and the Social and Economic Recovery Strategy which provide financial and logistical support to the vulnerable communities. Additionally, The Community Development Funds as well as Local Authority Trust Fund (LATF) are common government sources with the affected social amenities having been beneficiaries (Pkalya & Mohammud, 2006a; Kimokoti, 2016).

IV.   Comparative Analysis of Kenya and Rwanda Peace building mechanisms, structures and practices

Both countries subscribe to the Integrated Mission concept, also referred to as Integrated Peace Support Operations, which aims to develop a common approach to peace building and reconstruction, endorsed by the relevant national governments, local and international civil society organizations. Such a platform serves as an important institutional mechanism for joint decision-making, and ultimately provides a more coherent support in post-conflict settings. Both Kenya and Rwanda are keen to ensure conception of a holistic, multi-actor, participative program in that processes, mechanisms and structures put in place generate and sustain common strategic objective among the political, security, development and human rights domains. Separate planning reconstruction processes may lead to serious operational gaps and shortfalls in funding as well as the risk of missing positive linkages between spheres. The Integrated and comprehensive intervention backed by well-established community based monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are essential. However, there is decried the absence of appropriate permanent institutional frameworks for coordination of peace efforts to ensure harmony among peace actors to avoid duplication of efforts and pool resources. There is also lack of capacity on the part of local peace structures as a constraint to sustainable peace, more so in Kenya.

Secondly, Policy frameworks and strategies are well established in both the two countries.

The picture of the state of peacebuilding efforts, actors, and coordination amongst them in Kenya though mixed is anchored on the National Policy on Peace Building and Conflict Management; vision 2030, the 2010 Constitution. Rwanda on the other hand boosts of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (Government of Rwanda) which is a platform where Rwandans of all social conditions can meet and discuss the real problems of the Nation, especially those related to unity and reconciliation, culture of peace, tolerance, justice, democracy and development. There are various multi-stakeholder peacebuilding efforts coordinated by different groups with varying levels of membership, leadership, effectiveness, and impact. There are also varying degrees of trust, suspicion, and often competition for resources amongst the various networks and groups. Additionally, Rwanda conforms to the use of the constitution and Vision 2020 to foster the agenda of peace. Though emerging criticism lies top-down approach. For instance, Rwanda has exercised state power in ways that give voice and legitimacy to communities and grassroots movements from the top-bottom perspective. *Gacaca* illustrates the scale of Rwanda's ambition in this regard.

Thirdly, both countries are geered towards balancing the need to eradicate the culture of impunity with the imperatives of national reconciliation. For example, through the *Gacaca* Justice system, female empowerment and the involvement of women in decision-making at all levels, to the promotion of access to education and programs that promote universal health care. These principles, as well as the search for homegrown solutions to deal with intractable problems, are the bedrock of and Kenya's Rwanda's return to peace, stability, and development.

Contrary to the similarities between the two countries, there are also disparities in the approaches adopted in the two countries. The national "conflict culture" that supports

divisiveness and adversarial relations along political, ethnic, and class lines, including a nonstop political campaign mode is a great challenge for Kenya. Compared to Rwanda where ethnic divisions have been addressed through *Gacaca courts, Urugwiro, Ingando and ndi-Umunyarwanda*. Such initiatives have brought about inter-ethnicity tolerance by "promoting opportunities for development using Rwandan cultural values, identify taboos that inhibit the development of the country, fight violence and corruption, eradicate the culture of impunity, strengthen the culture of peace, tolerance, unity and reconciliation and eradicate the genocide ideology and all its roots.

Another highlight will be on responses and approaches by the peacebuilding community that are sometimes out of date in the two countries, as conflict dynamics have changed significantly over time and beyond phases of specific events or crises (e.g., around electoral processes). In Kenya for instance, there is limited concerted effort to strengthen a culture of peace and ensure a conflict-sensitive approach across all segments of Kenyan society to make society more resilient to polarizing political environments. But there is not a single network or backbone structure that is currently regarded or accepted by many as a convener and facilitator of Kenyan civil society organizations for peacebuilding efforts at large. There are varying degrees of trust, suspicion, and often competition for resources and influence amongst the existing networks and groups (Ernstofer. 2019). The peacebuilding sector is insufficiently leveraging its collective power for joint advocacy and engagement of the government and donors. There is currently no broad platform for sharing learning or for using shared learning for innovation and adaptive management. There are many shared values amongst peacebuilding civil society actors, but those are not leveraged for joint action and ongoing information sharing.

V. CONCLUSION

Peacebuilding efforts that are mostly centrally driven by the national government or NGOs or the private sector in both Kenya and Rwanda. One of the most important prerequisites noted from both countries is for reconciliation to be a broad-based economic development agenda. A comprehensive strategy for peace-building should be constructed by donors, the government, opposition parties, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). For instance, Social harmony in Rwanda and in the region requires improvements in material well-being, while in Kenya without adequate development of resources and power to the regions and communities, the challenge of limited ownership at subnational and community levels may persist affecting peace building. There is need for shared goal and vision in relation to peacebuilding. This will promote a coherent, participatory, and coordinated approach to peacebuilding across governmental and nongovernmental actors in the two countries. This is pegged on the premise a more decentralized, participatory process of decision-making about how gives room for more vulnerable local communities an opportunity to decide on unity and cohesion sustainability.

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