



CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION IN POST-CONFLICT AFRICAN ENVIRONMENTS

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Abstract: There have recently been concerted efforts by many post-conflict African countries to formulate and implement policies and measures that will reconstruct and develop their societies. Much of the discussions of realizing post-conflict reconstruction and development have generally focused on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants. What is however, missing is a discussion on capacity development and capacity building initiatives to help in reconstruction in the period after DDR. This paper therefore examines the importance of capacity development in post-conflict African environment. It notes that while demobilising and disarming warring factions is important, the success of reconstruction efforts in a post-conflict environment depends largely on the ability to build and develop capacity and skills that are pertinent to helping reconstruct and promote the development goals of the countries. It is argued that post-conflict societies should have a coherent and co-ordinate approach to rebuilding, reconstructing and developing the capacity of the state in order to achieve the state's legitimacy and effectiveness. Such capacity development measures should involve the development of physical infrastructure; the building of the state's institutional structures; the promotion of good political and economic governance; skills and education training for individuals; and measures to improve and deliver security and social services.

Keywords: *Capacity development; reconstruction; peacebuilding; post-conflict environment; Africa.*

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INTRODUCTION

The period from 1990 to 2000 can be described as the lost decade period on the African continent. This is because apart from precipitous economic decline, the continent was also characterized by conflicts and wars in countries like Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, and Rwanda. Indeed, Kaplan (1994: 46) argued that in the 1990s, West Africa, as epitomized in the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone, had not only become the symbol of worldwide demographic, environmental and societal stress, in which criminal anarchy emerged as the real “strategic” danger, but also where scarcity of resources, the increasing erosion of nation-states and international borders, and the empowerment of private armies, security firms and international drug cartels were the most telling characteristics. It is important to note that such a state of affairs contrasts sharply with developments on the African continent since the beginning of the new millennium where notable political and economic progress and achievements have been chalked up in a number of countries. Politically, countries such as Ghana, South Africa and Senegal have

organized a number of peaceful elections, thereby helping to promote good political governance in their countries. Besides increasing economic growth rates, many countries were able to reduce inflationary and budgetary levels that were spiraling out of control, as well as increase their levels of direct foreign investment (DFI), aided mostly by recent oil discoveries and emergence of good governance policies. As a result of these, many countries have made progress and gains in achieving some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Accordingly, Leautier et al. (2010: 2) note that the proportion of Africans living on less than \$1.25 a day has fallen from 58% in 1996 to 50% in the first quarter of 2009. In addition, the prevalence of HIV/AIDs stabilized, while increases in primary school enrolment and progress in other areas of human development were realized.

Be that as it may, not only are there still a number of conflicts occurring in a number of African countries, but also there has been a drastic or dramatic shift in the nature of conflict, making them unique and their consequences more severe. Until recently, much of the conflict in the world had been waged by sovereign states

against each other. However, the new security challenges that nation-states in Africa have to contend with are not due to conventional inter-state tensions and rivalries. Rather, in most instances, not only are the new conflicts intra-state, socioeconomic and transnational in nature, but also they involve non-state actors and autonomous armed groups. Indeed, Shaw (2003) notes that the emerging conflicts in Africa are diverse in their causes and consequences, and they are increasingly interrelated as well as regional in character. In sum, what has recently emerged in Africa is the high incidence of civil war and conflict among non-state actors against nation-states and its institutions. These 'unique' or 'new wars' as characterised by Kaldor (1999: 5), which since the 1990s have dominated the African landscape, do not follow the conventional practices of war and conflict. In particular, it does not differentiate between civilians and combatants in inflicting damages. As a result, this new type of conflict not only has a devastating impact

on the state structures, including the political, economic and social arrangements in the country, but more importantly, civilians are often the ones who bear the brunt of the conflict given the fact that the rules of engagement as embodied in international law are generally overlooked in civil wars and conflicts. Indeed, the devastation of war often leads to a situation where the quality of life of citizens is immeasurably affected in a negative way. An issue that often crops up is how to ensure that the negative political, economic and social ramifications of war are dealt with. This is important because history shows that the consequences of war linger on even after hostility has ceased. In other words, the end of war does not necessarily lead to the return of peace to a society. Rather, it marks the beginning of a long and complex process of ensuring reconstruction and peacebuilding.² As Muggah (2005) argues, even after a ceasefire is reached, armed violence often continues, particularly violence committed by ex-combatants and informal

²Jones (2004: 55) points out that although the concept of peacebuilding began to be used a little over thirty years ago, most notably in the work of peace researcher Johan Galtung (1976), it is only in recent times that it has found widespread usage. In his 1992 *Agenda for Peace*, then Secretary General, Boutros Boutros Ghali defined peacebuilding as "action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid relapse into conflict" (cited in Jones, 2004: 55).

militia. In this vein, any attempt at ensuring peace and security in a post-conflict and fragile environment should include a means of not only adequately disarming, demobilising and integrating ex-combatants into the broader society but also reconstructing and providing capacity development, defined by the OECD (2006) as the process of unleashing, strengthening, creating, adapting and maintaining capacity over time.

While much has been written about the causes of conflict in many African countries and the measures needed to promote peace and security, what is missing is a discussion of the place of capacity development and capacity building initiatives in the reconstruction process in the period after disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR). Issues pertaining to capacity development, which includes reconstruction of physical infrastructure, support for public sector institutions, training institutions, civil society and think tanks that are crucial to formulating and implementing government priorities and policies, are often relegated to the background in the design and implementation of post-conflict reconstruction efforts because of the emphasis

placed on disarming and demobilising warring factions. In other words, with a focus of bringing conflict or civil war to an end, capacity development and other long-term initiatives, which are crucial to any attempt at ensuring stability in a post-conflict environment, although very crucial, are often considered to be secondary and thus incorporated in the peacebuilding and reconstruction process at a later time (Critchley, 2008: 4). However, the assumption on which this is built is rather shaky, since without capacity development, there is the prospect of conflict re-emerging and long-term socioeconomic development and reconstruction being further stagnated.

Through extensive review of the literature, this paper explored the ways in which capacity development can help in the process of reconstruction in post-conflict states in Africa. In addition, it analyzed the various opportunities that are provided in a post-conflict environment, including investment in education and other skills, to ensure that individuals and other stakeholders are adequately involved and participate in the various social, economic and political activities taking place in society.

In doing so, it looked at efforts to restore production capacity of individuals, improve access to social services and how best to rebuild and reconstruct the infrastructure and overall development of a post-conflict society. This paper took this focus because of the general belief that it is the structures and support systems, including the capacity development in the post-conflict era that may either help or hinder reconstruction efforts (Critchley, 2008: 3). The paper also explored some of the key capacity development challenges related to reconstruction that have bedeviled post-conflict countries in Africa. A major concern was on the challenge of securing funds and resources from domestic sources to assist in the capacity development efforts in post-conflict environments. The main argument advanced is that the most important aspects of capacity development that are likely to be successful in post-conflict reconstruction are the development of physical infrastructure; support for state institutions or institutional and organization building; the building of human and social capital; the promotion of economic and political governance; as well as the building of security apparatuses.

In making this argument, the paper provides a general theorisation of capacity development in a post-conflict and fragile environment and draws on specific experiences and examples from a number of African countries. In other words, the paper examined a number of cases in Africa in a comparative approach in order to show the importance of capacity development in a post-conflict environment. A comparison of the experiences of various countries was analyzed in order to compare responses, and also draw out conclusions. The comparative approach allowed for an explanation of what capacity development approaches work and which models face challenges. While it would have been helpful to have some hard statistical and empirical data in support of the argument advanced in the paper, this proved to be a challenge since post-conflict countries by their nature do not have reliable data given that institutions mandated to collect data are themselves run down during the conflict. As a result, the paper relied on secondary sources in support of its argument. Among the main sources used included reviews of books, journal articles and newspapers, official documents and reports of governments, and the

publications of major international and donor agencies. The wealth of knowledge collected through these secondary sources has contributed to further insights into the role of capacity development in post-conflict reconstruction efforts in Africa. Also, the discussions in the paper suggest the degree to which the strengthening of the legal and institutional frameworks, the promotion of fundamental human rights, reforms in the electoral process, and increasing the participation of the people in decision-making processes will contribute to peacebuilding in a fragile society. In addition, the paper's findings are useful to various stakeholders with an interest of understanding conflict and how to reconstruct a country that has been involved in civil conflicts. It also provides lessons that can serve as a guide to future policy initiatives and strategies in post-conflict environments.

In terms of organisation, the paper begins with an examination of some of the root causes of conflict in many African countries. Section two discusses the consequences of war in African countries. Section three analyzes the efforts at peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, in particular the attempts at DDR.

Section four focuses on the theoretical and conceptual approach to capacity development and reconstruction in the post-conflict African context. Section five examines the gaps and challenges to capacity development in the post-conflict reconstruction efforts. The final section offers suggestions and recommendations regarding how to overcome the constraints and ensure that capacity development processes help in the reconstruction attempts in post-conflict African environments.

UNDERLYING CAUSES OF CONFLICT

While conflict seems to pervade the political landscape of a number of African countries, there is the growing concern of what is behind these conflicts. This is important because as Jones (2004: 13) notes, understanding the causes of conflict are fundamental to resolving it, preventing future war and sustaining peace. However, given the inability for international relations theory to answer many questions pertaining to the domestic security of states, several prominent theories, according to Jones (2004) on new wars have emerged in recent times, each attempting to explain the

underlying causes and nature of this new brand of conflict and fill the gaps left by existing theories. Indeed, in much of the academic literature, divergent conceptual and theoretical perspectives and paradigms have been offered to help explain the reasons and motives behind conflict and wars in Africa. As Shaw (2003) argues, just as Africa is heterogeneous, so likewise are the causes and characteristics of its ubiquitous conflicts. Hence, rather than one singular perspective, it is important to note that there are a diversity of causes and courses of war on the African continent.

A theory often advanced to explain conflict in Africa relates to the issue of ethnicity (Mamdani, 2002: 22), often defined as an “imagined community,” a social and historical construction and a product of human activity and agency—a social creation, in which such commonalities and shared values as speech, language, and political organization and activities are woven into the psyche and consciousness of people who believe they share the same identity (Young 2002:3). According to Leonard & Straus (2003: 58), since Africa is enmeshed in local politics, ethnicity is often seen as the underlying

reason behind conflict. According to this perspective, many politicians and rulers in Africa manipulate and exploit ethnicity to not only promote their interests and inflict political damage on their opponents, but also to ferment tensions and conflicts. As a result, the harmony that characterizes many African countries is replaced by ethnic tensions. Ethnicity can often be mobilized and exploited by leaders when there appears to be an uneven distribution of political power, as well as socioeconomic resources in a country. Thus, while the control of resources played a role in the 25 year old civil war in Angola, ethnicity was used to trigger and sustain the conflict. Other examples of ethnicity being used to promote conflict include the 1967 to 1970 civil war in Nigeria, as well as the 1994 Rwandan genocide where an estimated 800,000 moderate Hutus and Tutsis were killed. While ethnicity is a powerful register for politics in Africa and that ethnic group membership is highly salient in facets of life (Leonard & Straus, 2003: 62), the argument of ethnicity as the basis of much of civil conflict in Africa is seen as disingenuous and an inadequate explanation and thus often challenged. Using a series of cross-country analyses,

Collier and Hoeffler (2004) argue that not only is ethnic diversity not a cause of civil conflict but that higher levels of ethnic diversity actually decrease the likelihood of domestic conflict. According to them, economic motives, commercial agendas and greed and the desire to control resources such as oil, diamonds, timber and other resources is the main motivating factor and the cause of civil war and conflict in Africa and other parts of the developing world.

Thus, it is now quite common to see the root of Africa's political conflict and wars being explained by the efforts to control resources. Indeed, Shaw (2003) notes that recent literature points to the fact that there are strong economic forces behind recent wars in Africa. In particular, efforts to control scarce resources are often a common factor in many of the conflicts and wars that have bedeviled much of Africa in recent times. Known as the natural resource-linked conflicts, LeBillon (2001: 563) argues these conflicts are "rooted in a history of resource extraction successively translated by mercantilism, colonial capitalism and state kleptocracy." Natural resources have the undesirable effect of

triggering or fuelling instability, and weakening governing institutions that makes society vulnerable to armed conflict (Le Billon, 2008: 347). While the mere existence of natural resources will not necessarily lead to war or conflict, "the desires sparked by this availability as well as people's needs or greed, and the practices shaping the political economy of any resource can prove conflictual, with violence becoming the decisive means of arbitration" (LeBillon, 2001: 563). Thus, the way resources are constructed, transformed, distributed, and mediated through power relations is what leads to conflicts in many African countries (Arabi, 2008: 27). LeBillon (2001: 564) adds that the availability of abundant natural resources would represent the prize of state or territorial control, thereby increasing the risk of greed driven by profits, while providing armed groups with the 'loot' necessary to purchase military equipment. Moreover, natural resources increase the risk of armed conflict by financing and motivating conflict. In addition, it increases the vulnerability of countries to armed conflict by weakening the ability of political institutions to peacefully resolve conflict (LeBillon (2001). In other words, the revenue that is

derived from having control over the natural resources is used to sustain the activities of warring factions and other non-state actors. In sum, groups that under peaceful conditions may not have the economic and political opportunities to access and control a country's natural resources use war and conflict to advance their own self-interests (Arabi, 2008). This was certainly the case in the conflict and violence that engulfed countries like Sierra Leone and the DRC where non-military factors, especially the protection of economic interests, played an important role in sparking and sustaining the violence (Critchley, 2008: 118).

In addition, the availability of resources increases activities by groups that will try to secede from a country, especially when they do not enjoy the benefits of those natural resources. This is because in the face of abundant natural resources, there are a large number of the citizens of countries that live below the poverty line (Migdal et al., 1994). The consequence is that poverty and other forms of economic deprivation and marginalization leads to a situation where individuals join rebel groups as a way of escaping poverty and improving their

economic circumstances. This is very much evident in the Niger Delta region in Nigeria where there is dissatisfaction with the share of national petroleum revenue allocated to the Niger Delta region, where much of the oil exploration takes place. As a result of the dissatisfaction, not only has it spawned a number of indigenous groups protesting at their lack of socioeconomic facilities and services, but it has also resulted in attacks and sabotage on key oil pipelines, and calls for secession from Nigeria. For example, having been founded in 1990 by Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) has sought an increased share of proceeds of oil exploration, increased autonomy for the Ogoni people and demands for an end to the environmental devastation and pollution on Ogonilands caused primarily by the oil spills and gas flares from Shell's oil explorations (Arthur, 2006).

Another prominent theory to emerge in recent times to explain the causes of conflict in Africa relates to the idea of 'warlord politics' that was pioneered by William Reno (1998). Reno (1998, p. 163) sees 'warlordism' as a situation where state elites in their

quest to advance their own selfish economic ends seek control over a country's resources. This is done through the entering of business partnerships and contracts between state elites, multinational corporations and regional powers. Basically, Reno (1998) sees warlords as self-interested individuals who only seek to maximize their wealth and power, avoid the acquisition of fixed assets, and also fail to provide collective or public goods such as infrastructure, education and security to the society. Using Sierra Leone, Liberia and DRC as examples of how warlordism contributes to conflict, Reno (2000: 46) states that since the ruling elites have very little prospects of gaining popular legitimacy, they do not invest state resources on infrastructure and other collective services. Not only do they secure their own financial self-interest, but also warlords use bribes and other payouts to establish a framework of rules based on personal ties that operate outside of the state institutions. By privatizing the means of political control, the rulers and leaders in conflict societies are able to engage in a shadow parallel economy that provides them with rents and revenue to perpetuate their patron-client networks. In sum, Reno

(1998) contends that given the patrimonial nature of many African countries, it is possible for their rulers and leaders to manipulate to their advantage international recognition and their sovereignty.

It would however, be incomplete to analyze the causes of war in Africa without looking at the role of neighbouring countries and international networks in sustaining conflict (Pugh, 2004). Besides deriving revenue or other forms of concessions, it is quite common to see neighbouring countries allowing their territories to be used by non-state actors and other warring factions as staging grounds for counter-insurgencies against a sovereign state. This process of regional involvement is certainly aided by the existence of the regional arms trade. The arms networks that operate in a regional environment allow licensed suppliers to covertly supply arms to states under arms embargo. The indirect supply through a neighbouring country helps to hide the final destination of the arms shipment. For example, during the Liberia civil war of the 1990s, as a result of political, economic, military, ethnic and personal motives and reasons, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso provided financial

and military assistance to Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) (Mgbeoji, 2003: 41-42). While Burkina Faso contributed men and training, Cote d'Ivoire's leader, the late Felix Houphouet-Boigny, supported Charles Taylor's NPLF by making his country the major conduit for supplies and reinforcement because Doe killed his son-in-law in 1980 (Sesay, 1996: 38). Similarly, the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo saw at least seven other countries involved in the conflict (Englebert & Tull, 2008: 109). For a variety of reasons and considerations (economic, ethnic, security), a number of countries such as Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Angola have all been heavily involved in various ways in the ongoing conflict in the DRC. Besides directly participating in the wars and conflicts, support from neighbouring countries often takes the form of technical support, the provision of military training, supply of weapons and equipment, as well as other forms of economic and diplomatic assistance (Klare, 2001).

CONSEQUENCES OF WARS AND CONFLICTS

While the reasons outlined above for civil wars and conflicts in

Africa are by no means exhaustive, one thing that is clear is that common to all wars is that they do come at severe costs to not only the participants and factions but also neighbouring countries. As Obwona & Guloba (2009: i81) point out, wars often result in poorer households falling further behind as they, for instance, lose land and livestock, thereby weakening their ability to participate effectively in productive activities and to adapt to economic reforms. Moreover, Zartman (1995: 1-5) notes that the costs of war often include increased insecurity, the flow of refugees and internally displaced people (IDP), ethnic tensions, and an inordinate amount of resources focused on diplomatic activities. For example, it is estimated that during the 1994 Rwanda crisis, almost 800,000 people were killed over a three-month period; women were raped and infected with HIV/AIDs, leaving thousands of widowers and orphans; 120,000 people were held in country-run prisons; two million people were internally displaced; and two million people sought refuge in neighbouring countries (Nad-jaldongar, 2008). A similar situation occurred during the civil wars in DRC, Liberia and Mozambique. It is estimated that

almost 4 million people lost their lives as a result of the war and conflict in the DRC from 1998 to 2003 (Coghlan et al., 2006). In Liberia, during its 14 year civil war (1989-2003), 250,000 people died from the violence, 600,000 people were internally displaced, while another 600, 000 people became refugees in various parts of the world (US Committee for Refugees, 1993; Centre on International Cooperation, 2007: 74). This mass movement of people robbed Liberia and its communities of skills, knowledge and experience, and resourcefulness. Furthermore, many Liberians and foreign investors shifted their capital out of the country (National Human Development Report Liberia 2006, 2006: 44). Similarly, one million war-related deaths were counted, and up to six million people became internally or externally displaced during the fighting in Mozambique that occurred from 1974 to 1992 (Costy, 2004: 150). Also, simmering tensions and conflicts in the Darfur region of Sudan and in Somalia has meant that many people have fled these countries and settled as refugees elsewhere.

Aside from these, there is the cost of loss of previous resources and from the damage that is

inflicted in the course of the conflict (Collier et al., 2003). As Collier & Hoeffler (1998) point out, besides the challenges that government have to contend with in terms of the financial costs of war, this is worsened by the disruptions that occur in other sectors of the economy, notably, agriculture, mining and industry and the overall development of the country. The destruction of physical infrastructure such as telecommunications, airports, ports and harbours, roads, energy supplies, and social services like health, education are also notable costs associated with wars and conflicts (Arabi, 2008: 36). In Liberia for example, the country's two largest hospitals were destroyed by rebel groups and other looters, thereby negatively impacting the delivery of basic healthcare. Similarly, in Sierra Leone, the rebel group, Revolutionary United Front (RUF), razed down police stations, the Central Bank and other major government buildings, as well as infrastructure such as electricity supply centres. By the end of the war in Sierra Leone, up to 340,000 homes had been destroyed and almost one million homes needed repairing. Aside from the fact that up to 65 percent of schools had been burned down, hospitals

were barely functioning and primary healthcare needs were not being met, putting Sierra Leone at the bottom of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) (Jones, 2004: 85). In Mozambique, Arabi (2008: 36) notes that during its civil conflict, the country closed down some railway lines that were used to transport minerals to Southern Congo and Zambia. The closing down of these facilities and the destruction of trucks and vehicles contributed to a fall in the export earnings of Mozambique. Unsurprisingly, by the turn of the 1990s, Mozambique's social infrastructure lay in total ruins. One-third of all rural clinics and about 70 percent of schools were destroyed or abandoned. In addition, access to large portions of the country was limited by road destruction, landmines, or erosion. As a result, in 1992, Mozambique ranked last on the UNDP HDI, while official aid as a proportion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rose from 43.7 percent in 1987 to 115 percent in 1993 (Costy, 2004: 150).

Furthermore, with the capturing and forcibly abducting of children as soldiers in much of contemporary African wars,

there is considerable harm done to these children. As Arabi (2008: 33) notes, during wars, children lack proper schooling, nutrition, and healthcare. Many schools are closed down due to the lack of resources and teachers, which in turn has huge implications for the human development aspect of the African continent. Aside from the physical consequences associated with participating in conflict, "the psychological effects of war on children are particularly dangerous because of the long-lasting consequences they can have for a society, especially in promoting cycles of violence" (Hill & Langholtz, 2003: 281, cited in Samaroo, 2008: 43). Moreover, wars in Africa have a devastating impact on the social fabric of the affected societies in terms of social disintegration. Social disintegration, as Busumtwi-Sam (2004: 324) points out, manifest in the breakdown of social institutions, erosion of community bonds, and the disintegration of the bases of social reproduction and exchange. Furthermore, wars tend to heighten awareness of existing social differentiation, hasten processes of collective identity formation and have the effect of transforming collective groups into corporate groups. Also, there is the destruction of homes, water

and agricultural systems and other sources of livelihood that accompanies war. This is in addition to the separation of families, the killing of people, the destruction of existing communities, the rape and torturing of people and other traumas that civilians have to experience (Ware, 2005). Finally, the negative economic consequences are not limited to the country where the conflict takes place, but often spills over into neighbouring countries, which create huge challenges and problems to those countries. For example, during Mozambique's civil war, not only was trade with neighbouring countries disrupted but also it led to economic decline in Malawi and international airport costs due to its status as a landlocked country (Arabi, 2008: 37).

**DISARMAMENT,
DEMOBILISATION,
REINTEGRATION AND
POST-CONFLICT
RECONSTRUCTION**

It is in view of the costs associated with war that concerted efforts are often made to bring it to an end and engage in peacebuilding, which is understood as the prevention of future conflict in post-conflict societies through

the removal of the structural causes of violent conflict and the channelling of conflict through peaceful means (Jones, 2004: 57). The concept of peacebuilding is based on the idea that simply putting resources, personnel and humanitarian approach in place will not lead to the end of conflict if the root causes and underlying reasons behind the conflict are not adequately addressed (Samaroo, 2006; Arabi, 2008). This is because the predatory behaviour, along with the coping strategies adopted to survive within the distorted political and economic structures that emerge during internal conflict, are often carried over into the post-conflict period and can have serious implications for both short-term and long term peace consolidation and post-conflict reconstructions efforts (Critchley, 2008: 31). As a multi-dimensional concept, peacebuilding therefore involves activities that both end conflict and prevent future wars (Jones, 2004: 57). It is in this vein that bringing conflict and war to an end and engaging in peacebuilding activities have often entails a process and mechanism of disarming, demobilising and reintegration (DDR) those who were involved. Indeed, Salomons (2005: 22) argues that the DDR process is the

cornerstone for any peacebuilding process and should be seen as the 'pentagram' that incorporates technical, military, political, security, humanitarian and developmental dimensions into one programme aimed at reducing the risk that combatants pose to the peace process. Similarly, Dzinesa (2007: 74) argues that "effective DDR can substantially reduce the chance of armed violence re-emerging and help the foundations for social and economic development to take root." In this vein, DDR programmes are often "implemented in an attempt to ameliorate the security threat posed by the continued presence of illicit arms and the ineffective reintegrated ex-combatants" (Dzinesa, 2007: 73). Moreover, not only is DDR considered an important part of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, but also it is a domain in which economic, political and individual motivations intersect, thus allowing for a better analysis of how the political and economic distortions created during a civil war can influence behaviours in the post-conflict setting (Critchley, 2008: 6).

It is however, important to point out that the successful completion of each phase of the DDR

process is crucial to the success of the next (Hitchcock, 2004: 36). In most cases, the disarmament process, which represents the first phase of trying to bring peace, is designed to remove the means of perpetuating violence and to create an environment in which confidence and security can be augmented (Critchley, 2008: 33). This phase thus entails the collection, control and disposal of weapons and ammunition from combatants (Dzinesa, 2007: 74). Given the fact that the existence of arms and other weapons create general insecurity within communities, disarmament will mean that those who used to carry guns among the civilian population will no longer have easy access to them, thereby reducing the tensions, harassment and insecurity within the society (Arabi, 2008: 81-82).

Since it is however, difficult to see what can be achieved by disarmament alone in the contemporary security environment (Spear, 2006: 173), it is important to adopt a process of demobilising ex-combatants if efforts at attaining peace are to be realized. Thus, demobilisation, which is often carried out in conjunction with the disarmament process, is when armed combatants are

either downsized or completely disbanded. This involves assembling, quartering, administering and discharging of ex-combatants. While not always the case, as part of this process, ex-combatants are sometimes given some form of compensation in order to make their transition to a civilian lifestyle much smoother. Finally, reintegration, which is generally seen as the most complex, time consuming and costly part of the process (Hitchcock, 2004: 37), is the process by which former soldiers once again become an enduring part of the social, economic and political life of their community (Willibald, 2006). The reintegration part of DDR represents the most important part of eliminating future wars and conflict because by not properly reintegrating ex-combatants, they are likely to remobilise and pose a new form of security threat to their society. As part of this resettlement process, ex-combatants are given clothing, food stuff, and also offered some job placement as well as health services and vocational training (Dzinesa, 2007: 74). The reintegration also often involves efforts to rehabilitate ex-combatants through counselling and general therapy to help clear the mental and physical effects of war, ease tensions, build trust and

overcome the memories of war (Arabi, 2008: 83). In all, effective DDR programmes also provide for the most vulnerable groups of ex-combatants, which include the disabled, child soldiers and women (Obwona & Guloba, 2009: i92).

Although the success of the DDR process is very much dependent on the successful completion of each phase (Hitchcock, 2004: 36) and the provision of programmes to the most vulnerable, it is often the case that it is bedevilled with a number of challenges and constraints. Moreover, Critchley (2008: 42) argues that DDR processes often do not dovetail with the economic interests of combatants and incentives to partake in the process tend to be aimed at rank-and-file soldiers, and do not appeal to middle-level officers who profit from the political-economy created by conflict and war. Hence, averting a return to conflict and war calls for an incentive, sometimes monetary in nature, or other alternatives that will not only ensure that security is attained but more importantly that individuals in society have a regular source of income through the availability for gainful employment. In Mozambique for example, the provision

of cash incentives over a two-year period was generally seen as contributing positively in the reintegration efforts that occurred after the country's protracted civil war (McMullin, 2004). However, the provision of cash as an incentive to ex-combatants to lay down arms does have its critics. The general criticism is that besides being unsustainable in the long-term, there is the concern that such incentives will breed resentment in the broader community, since it would seem to be rewarding bad behaviour (Willibald, 2007). In addition, it can rather serve as a disincentive in the effort to achieve long-term stability since it can encourage increasing regional trade in arms as was the case during conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Moreover, as was evident during the Namibian situation, efforts to stem demonstrations by ex-combatants with a one-time gratuity payment did little to stop them from demanding more.

Furthermore, the DDR process in the DRC for example, was hindered by the lack of funding and inability to provide alternative livelihoods to disarmed combatants. Critchley (2008: 115-125) points out that exclusion from formal economic activity, the lack of

skills, and /or training that would facilitate reintegration into the market, frustration and destitution linked to the marginalisation of certain groups from patronage networks and limited access to resources plagued the DDR process in the DRC. In both the DRC and Sierra Leone, economic issues were treated as secondary to political and security considerations, thereby undermining the peacebuilding process. Finally, as Willett (1998: 409-413) observed, many DDR programmes only deal with the symptoms that often trigger the violence and wars such as unequal distribution of power, struggles over natural resources, proliferation of small arms rather than fully dealing with the structural causes, which often include the failure to meet basic human needs, population pressure, unequal distribution of wealth, environmental degradation, poverty, unemployment and ethnic tensions

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

While the DDR process represents a positive step in the efforts towards peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, attaining long-lasting peace is more

than the mere cessation of hostilities between warring parties (Samaroo, 2006: 35). Since post-conflict reconstruction cannot be expected to succeed if the underlying structures generated by a civil war are not properly addressed (Critchley, 2008: 118), other approaches besides DDR need to be implemented in order for post-conflict reconstruction to occur. As Busumtwi-Sam et al. (2004: 315) argue, at the heart of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction is the nexus between political, economic and social development on one hand and achieving sustainable peace on the other. Development and reconstruction within peace operations is a necessary requirement for dealing with the underlying structural causes of war because of its transformational qualities (Jones, 2004: 58-59). Thus, post-conflict reconstruction, which seeks to meet the needs of societies that have come out of conflict and also identify and put in place policies to achieve their development goals, often involves the promotion of what Johan Galtung (1976) has characterised as 'positive peace.' By 'positive peace' is meant the elimination of the conditions that causes violence and the undertaking of structural changes that can facilitate overall

socioeconomic development, build capacity, and thereby help in the reconstruction of post-conflict societies. Once socioeconomic and political progress is made in society, it would take people's mind and attention away from the conflict (Arabi, 2008), and the best way to achieve this is to engage in capacity development measures that will lead to the attainment of 'positive peace' and long-term socioeconomic development and reconstruction of post-conflict societies.

Although a relatively new concept that is associated with the emergence of international development cooperation, capacity development initially focused on building the institutional infrastructure to help developing countries to formulate and implement their developmental goals, often with financial support and assistance as well as technical expertise from the international donor community. Much recently, however, capacity development has been aimed at promoting and ensuring the development of human capabilities of a society in order to achieve better governance and overall development. Indeed, Morgan (1998) sees capacity development as the ability of individuals, groups and institutions

and organizations to identify and solve development problems over time. Aside from that, the UNDP (1997) considers capacity development as 'the how' of making development work better. More significantly, it is a process by which individuals, organisations and societies strengthen and maintain their capabilities and abilities (individually and collectively) to perform functions, solve problems, set and achieve their own development objectives and priorities (UNDP, 1997). It also refers to the ability of individuals and communities to address and fulfill essential needs beyond the narrow preoccupation with the provision of basic education, training and the use of technical assistance. It involves building human, organizational and societal capacities within a broader governance framework to empower people (National Human Development Report Liberia 2006, 2006: 12). As a result, capacity development not only emphasizes better use and empowerment of individuals and organizations, but also it requires that systematic approaches are considered in devising capacity development strategies and programmes. Moreover, it calls for the creation of an enabling environment for addressing cross-sectoral issues relevant to all parts

of society (UNDP, 1997). Similarly, Hilderbrand and Grindle (1994) see capacity development as the improvements in the ability of public sector organizations, either singularly or in cooperation with organizations, to perform their tasks.

Despite the differences, underlying all these definitions is the theme and idea that capacity development aims at improving the quality of life for members of the community. As a result, capacity development is operationally defined in this paper as a long-term and sustainable approach by individuals, groups, societies, and institutions to identify, promote and realize their socioeconomic development and reconstruction goals, and thereby improve and transform the conditions of the community. Aside from planning and managing these development goals in an effective and efficient manner, from the conceptual perspective of this paper, capacity development should also be context-specific in order to achieve the goals of socio-economic development. Differences in the nature, causes, degree of destruction and consequences of war and conflict mean that a one-size-fits-all approach to post-conflict reconstruction should be avoided.

While being shaped by the environment, post-conflict reconstruction policies should be conceptually guided by the need to sequentially deliver security; develop state institutions, especially its functional capacities; promote the human and social capabilities of societies; build physical infrastructure; as well as promote political and economic governance and redevelopment.

Establishing and Delivering Security, & Maintaining Law and Order: Since the availability of security is a basic requirement in any post-conflict reconstruction efforts, one of the first and most important state structure that needs delivering and improving is the security and police apparatus. Security governance is an important desideratum for the other dimensions of capacity building and reconstruction because in the absence of a certain modicum of security, the state will be unable to undertake other responsibilities and functions. In other words, the reestablishment of long-term security, legitimate authority and law and order can serve to alter the situation that led to the war (Jones, 2004: 62). In addition, the existence of security enables parties to solve conflict through non-violent means

and prevents backsliding into violence. Without security, the transaction costs of economic activities increase, particularly production and investment, as well as enterprises' risk of failure (Obwona & Guloba: 2009: i92). Also, in the absence of good security sector reforms, many people will be unwilling to do away with their arms since they see small weapons ownership as an instrument of personal protection for themselves and their families. Thus, having in place an effective and efficient security apparatus is an important element of post-conflict reconstruction and capacity development initiative. A viable and legitimate security sector helps to uphold national security, law and order and ensure the safety of civilians (Jones, 2004: 79). Having adequate security without resorting to personal protection will not only build trust but also contribute to an environment that will ensure increased economic activity and overall socioeconomic development.

In Sierra Leone for example, Jones (2004, p. 81) points out that as part of its reconstruction and capacity development process, serious reforms were carried out by the International Military Assistance Team (IMAT), a British-led

programme with a commitment to work with the Sierra Leone army. Under this programme, British forces were filtered into the Sierra Leone army at all levels to provide expertise and training. The training and restructuring of security forces included civic and human rights education. There was also the establishment of the UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) in 2006 as a channel for continued international support for peacebuilding. UNIOSIL basically combined political support mission, and a country office to strengthen state institutions in Sierra Leone. UNIOSIL's police section for example, provided training and mentoring, with officers embedded in regional headquarters and in divisions dealing with human resources. In addition, UNIOSIL works with the Sierra Leone government to develop a youth employment strategy to address the security concerns associated with disaffected and unemployed youth (Centre on International Cooperation, 2007: 132-133).

Similarly, in Liberia, since the signing in August 2003 of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Accra, Ghana that brought an end to fourteen years of brutal war, security has basically been

provided throughout the country by troops deployed under the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). According to the Centre on International Cooperation (2009: 112-114), security reforms focused on UNMIL vetting the existence police force and providing basic training to police officers, including new recruits. A new programme to train 500 police officers for a specialized anti-crime and riot control unit was also established in December 2007. Also, with UNMIL gradually reducing the number of troops in the country, the United States is currently playing a leading role in the building of a coherent and viable security infrastructure and in the restructuring of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). The US government contracted two US private security companies (DynCorp and Pacific Architects Engineers) to create an effective Liberian army and also reestablish three army bases.

State Institutions: Wars affect the capacity and credibility of states to allocate, legislate and regulate towards growth, education and improve living standards. In destroying infrastructure, public utilities and communications, wars limit the effectiveness of state institutions (Aron, 2003:

474). As a result, reconstruction in post-conflict African environment calls for measures and interventions to rebuild the capacity of state structures and institutions, as well as the public sector, which for all intents and purposes are generally weakened after a period of conflict. Since individual as well as institutional capacities are important variables in the efforts towards reconstruction, post-conflict African countries need to improve the performance of their public sectors if their social and economic development goals, as well as efforts to alleviate and reduce poverty, and better provide services to their citizens are to be attained. According to the World Bank (2005), capacity building in the public sector needs to focus on three main areas or dimensions: human, organizational, and institutional. Human capacity building should focus on having individuals with skills to analyze development needs; design and implement strategies, policies and programmes; and also monitor results. Developing and strengthening the capacity of personnel in the public sector will enable the sector to fulfill its role and responsibilities and help ensure better performance of reconstruction efforts in post-conflict societies. At the organizational

level, this should entail a process where a group of individuals would be bound together by a common purpose with clear objectives and internal structures, processes, systems and staffing, and other resources to achieve them. At the institutional level, this should focus on both the formal rules of the game such as hiring and promotion policies in the public services, and laws and regulations defining responsibilities and power relationships among actors. This is in addition to the informal norms that provide the framework of goals and incentives within which organizations and people operate (World Bank, 2005: 7).

Building the institutional capacity also entails the functional capacities, which is seen by the UNDP (2010) as necessary for the successful creation of management policies, legislation, and programmes, which include policy design and strategy formulation, resources and budget allocation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Finally, it involves the strengthening of public institutions, especially as they pertain to better financial management. Effective financial management is important because it helps in generating and channeling resources

to productive sectors of the economy, and in the process support both private-sector and public sector growth. Similarly, public sector resource management is essential because not only does it ensure the efficient and effective utilization of resources, but also it enhances transparency and accountability in the use of public resources.

Human & Social Capabilities: Furthermore, with human and social capabilities being essential to the development of a society, especially one that has recently experienced conflict, the importance of addressing human deficiencies and thus building on the human and education capacities as part of the reconstruction process cannot be underestimated. As (Samaroo, 2006) notes, focusing on the social dimensions of reconstruction and peacebuilding, especially education draws attention to building local capacity to achieve conditions for sustainable reconstruction. Education, which should entail formal schooling for children, adult education classes, or jobs and technical training, can constitute a means through which children and youth can be taught constructive skills for economic survival and conflict resolution. It can also foster a positive

conception of peace- a conception geared towards constructing amicable relations among individuals, families, and formerly warring factions of communities (Cannon, 2003: 137, cited in Samaroo, 2006: 46). Moreover, education through schooling not only provides a sense of normalcy and routine but also it can help build a strong human infrastructure for a community emerging out of conflict (Samaroo, 2006: 59-60). Furthermore, education can be used a tool to foster greater tolerance and understanding of differences and diversity, promote skills for conflict resolution, advance healing and reconciliation as well as nurture the ideas and capacities for peace. In sum, by making education a key plank in the capacity development efforts of post-conflict societies, it would increase or enhance the prospects of long-term peace. To this end, capacity development through education in Sierra Leone's post-conflict environment involved the establishment of the Training and Employment (TEP) and Community Education Investment Programme (CEIP). Although limited in nature because of the lack of adequate funds, these programmes as Samaroo (2006: 76) points out focused primarily on providing children with

skills training and occupational placement.

Physical infrastructure: Given the destruction of physical infrastructure that often accompanies wars and conflicts, one of the key aspects of reconstruction, which is generally one of the means by which the overall national development can be chalked up in the post-conflict environment, involves building and developing the capacity of both the economic and physical infrastructure of the society. The reconstruction of the physical infrastructure should involve and include the restoration of electricity, the supply of pipe-borne water, and the construction of roads, railways etc. Building hospitals, schools and other physical infrastructure will allow citizens to see that there is another way to live other fighting (Arabi, 2008: 84). According to Critchley (2008: 128), as part of the capacity development process, the DRC government for example, entered into agreements with private and foreign companies, granting them mining concessions in return for investment in infrastructure such as roads, railways, hospitals and schools. Specifically, in 2008, the DRC government entered a US\$ 6 billion agreement with the China Railway Engineering

Corporation (CERC) to rebuild 2400 miles (3860 kilometres) of roads, 2000 miles of railway, 32 hospitals, 145 health centres and two universities. In return, China was granted concessions to mine 10 million tonnes of copper and 400,000 tonnes of cobalt, metals needed to fuel its economy.

Political Governance: Equally important to reconstruction in a post-conflict environment is the need to redevelop political institutions, re-establish political legitimacy and work democratic institutions capable of mitigating and resolving conflict through non-violent means (Obwona & Guloba, 2009: i93). Promoting good political governance is important because there is general consensus that persistent bad governance is one of the root causes of long-term economic and social decline, and the political crisis that led to the civil war in a country like Liberia (National Human Development Report Liberia 2006, 2006: 35). Promoting good political governance should involve having in place a political system and arrangement that is transparent and accountable as well as democratic and representative in nature. This is essential because in the immediate period after a conflict, the state

lacks institutionalized trust and legitimacy in the eyes of many of the citizens. Thus, one way of bridging this trust deficit, providing legitimacy and social stability as well as rule by consent as opposed to coercion, is to ensure the promotion of an accountable and transparent government as well as a democratic system that is able to deliver and promote justice. Allowing people to influence decisions that affect their lives is vital for increasing transparency, the necessary bulwark against corruption and bureaucratic abuse. It also counters efforts by economic elites to manipulate state policies to for their narrow advantage (Cheru, 2002: 207).

However, as Busumtwi-Sam (2004: 330) points out, for democracy to flourish as an instrument of reconstruction and peace in a post-conflict environment, the relevant political actors must perceive some gains from the political order and thereby come to see its maintenance as in their interests. Thus, he argues further that in addition to procedural aspects of democracy, attention should be given to what he calls 'substantive and performance legitimacy.' While performance legitimacy involves achieving agreement and consensus on desired goals and

values that inform the political game, with performance legitimacy, political authority is accepted based on the ability of those exercising political power to achieve certain ends and goals, even if they did not acquire power through the formal procedural mechanism of democracy. The efforts of promoting good political governance have been evident in places like Mozambique, Liberia and Sierra Leone that have recently conducted relatively peaceful elections since conflicts came to an end in their countries. Similarly, in Rwanda, there was institutional reconstruction in the form of the drafting of a new socially inclusive constitution, the promotion of national unity, the emergence of good bureaucratic governance, and the holding of democratic elections (Thomson, 2007).

Besides the holding of free and fair elections to choose political leaders, another important aspect of good political governance in post-conflict reconstruction relates to the decentralization of state power and the restoration of local authorities. The decentralization process, if properly adopted and implemented, can lead to efficiency in service delivery, improve access to services, promote local ownership of policies and

empower the people in the grass-roots, and also promote better governance and participation in government affairs. Also, to create an enabling environment for peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, the efforts of the state should be complemented by the activities of civil society. This is because as state structures weaken, civil society often fills in the gap with quite creative ways. For example, during the civil war in Uganda, parent organized schools provided education to the youth of the country. In this vein, there is merit in preserving or strengthening such initiatives until the state is sufficiently well established to take on its roles and responsibilities of providing education to its citizens. In addition, civil society in most cases help contribute to good governance by opening up democratic structures at the local levels, create the political space for citizens to be involved in various facets of life, provide information, and encourage power-sharing activities among various parties and stakeholders.

Economic Governance & Employment: All the foregoing policies are necessary for the rebuilding and reconstruction of the economies of countries that have experienced conflict. This is because

the effectiveness of political legitimacy and the other aspects of post-conflict reconstruction will be dependent on economic legitimacy. Economic legitimacy involves the ability to create the framework conditions for economic growth and well-being, ranging from macro-economic stability to ensuring a supportive private sector-enabling environment (Obwona & Guloba, 2009: i93). Economic activities and growth will not only give people a source of wage or income but also reduce the attractiveness of using conflict as a source of livelihood. To this end, the rebuilding of the economic governance of post-conflict societies should involve the creation of an enabling and favourable macro-economic environment that will help spur not only the domestic economic sector but also attract foreign direct investment. As Busumtwi-Sam (2004: 331) argues, underlying the process of macro-economic reforms is the transformation of ex-combatants and ex-refugees into market actors. Economic restructuring is often aimed at creating jobs and gainful employment opportunities as well as alleviating and eradicating poverty since in the absence of employment, there is a greater risk of dissatisfaction and a return to violence

(Jones, 2004: 78). It would also be the fulcrum on which a working economy could be laid in the society. There is little point in providing capacity and raising expectations at the individual level when there are no economic opportunities (National Human Development Report Liberia 2006, 2006: 14). Thus, measures to create employment have the prospects of achieving lasting peace in post-conflict environments. Employment, especially in the public sector, creates a situation where individuals will easily identify with the government, and thereby dissuade them from engaging in any activities that affect the peace and stability of the society. The sense of belonging will contribute to the promotion of loyalty to the state, and this is something that cash transfers and payment to ex-combatants cannot achieve. Be that as it may, Busumtwi-Sam (2004) states that the success of macro-economic policies will be dependent on the extent to which their contents are tailored to the conditions in the specific post-conflict society.

CHALLENGES TO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Capacity development
as a tool for post-conflict

reconstruction entails the adoption of a wide range of measures and policies, some of which have been outlined above. For example, in a country like Liberia, capacity building in the post-conflict period involved the quick infusion of technical expertise from both local and international sources, as well as putting in place measures and policies to address the kinds of social cleavages that sparked the conflict in the first place. In particular, the World Bank focused on building basic public financial management and procurement systems, promoting governance and the rule of law, and providing infrastructure and basic services. By engaging in these activities, especially restoring the capacities of the state, the necessary foundation was laid for the state to increase its governance ability, promote some form of political participation and democratic process, and ultimately its legitimacy (National Human Development Report Liberia 2006: 2006). Similarly, Rwanda chose in its post-conflict reconstruction efforts to assure its internal and external security; guarantee responsible governance and everyone's participation; assume repairable, reconcilable justice, promote human rights and fight impunity; rely on humanitarian

aid for socioeconomic development; and strengthen policies regarding women (Nadjaldongar, 2008).

Despite the foregoing efforts and accomplishments, the capacity development process in many post-conflict societies still face a number of gaps, constraints and key challenges. For example, the UN Economic Commission for Africa's African Governance Report 2005 noted that in the area of political governance, besides the fact that protecting the rights of women and children still remain a huge governance challenge in many post-conflict countries, law enforcement agencies also continue to violate the rights of many other people in society. Economically, there are also the continued constraints and challenges of doing business in a number of African countries. Besides the costs, it takes a long time to register a business, while the enforcements of commercial and contract laws are also weak. Moreover, there is the absence of transparency and availability of information in the design and implementation of economic policies. More importantly, most post-conflict governance institutions are usually weak, both in technical capacity, and effective

control of their territory, making it necessary to address this problem in the post-conflict reconstruction efforts (Obwona & Guloba, 2009: 79). Indeed, a major finding of the UN African Governance Report (2005) was that the prevalence of capacity deficits in governance institutions in many post-conflict African countries, which are of human, material and institutional dimensions, create a disconnect between legal formal provisions and stipulations, and implementation expectations.

Aside from these challenges and gaps, most post-conflict reconstruction efforts have a bias in funding the social sector that are not directly productive at the expense of laying firm foundations for wealth creation and long-term growth (Obwona & Guloba, 2009: i91). Also, there is challenge of mobilizing funds and resources from domestic sources to finance many of the post-conflict reconstruction efforts in Africa. The weakened institutions and social divisions in conflict-affected countries often result in authorities relying more heavily on peace accords and donor support to jump-start capacity development initiatives and social cohesion building (Obwona & Guloba, 2009). In providing

these funds, there is often an implicit assumption by the donor community that western state institutions can be easily transferred to African societies as part of the post-conflict reconstruction efforts. However, as Englebert & Tull (2008: 110-116) have pointed out, the reliance on external support and assumptions is one of the reason behind the failures of post-conflict reconstruction in African countries. They note that in the attempt to reform African states, donors have conditioned their aid on the states' willingness to implement specific policy prescription such as the neo-liberal structural adjustment reforms and democracy promotion. Post-conflict reconstruction efforts have seen limited success because donors have paid scant attention to the co-existence in Africa of informal political institutions and informal decision making processes that are strongly determined by personal relations and dominate national politics. In the DRC for example, the 2003-06 foreign-sponsored democratic transition merely ushered in an authoritarian and corrupt political and economic system similar to that of the late President Mobutu Sese Seko, who had ruled the country from 1965 to 1997. The limited success of donor-sponsored

market reforms and democracy promotion indicates that the grand vision of state-building, with its one-size-fits-all approach is likely to meet resistance and contribute to the failure of post-conflict reconstruction (Englebert & Tull, 2008: 110).

Furthermore, there is also the problem of most capacity development initiatives and post-conflict reconstruction efforts being externally initiated and driven by foreign experts and models of development (Englebert & Tull, 2008). According to the National Human Development Report Liberia (2006: 51-52), the inputs of national experts familiar with Liberia's social, economic and political landscape were limited, with no attempt to engage Liberia's allies, to advocate, promote and assume leadership roles affecting reforms in the country's post-conflict reconstruction. The intrusive donor and foreign involvement in key national programmes and the lack of effective voice, particularly of intended beneficiaries were exacerbated by fragmented government with poor overall public financial management capacity, and entrenched corruption in core government agencies, widespread clientelism and patrimonialism, which weakened

the pursuit of organizations' formal tasks. In addition, there is the issue of human capital flight or brain drain that stem mostly from poor public service conditions, and other socioeconomic hardships in many African countries, especially those that may have experienced conflict. With low salaries for civil servants, it becomes difficult to attract and retain skilled professionals, including those in the Diaspora, to support the urgent post-conflict reconstruction and recovery and development priorities. Moreover, with the loss to the industrialized world of trained and highly skilled personnel in post-conflict societies, there arises a deficit of skilled human capital and personnel that are essential to the post-conflict reconstruction of these countries.

THE WAY FORWARD

Based on the preceding discussions and analysis, as well as the constraints and challenges, the paper concludes with a number of recommendations and strategies that should be the fulcrum on which any capacity development policies and initiatives and post-conflict reconstruction should be built. As noted earlier, capacity development

involves the ability of individuals, organizations and the broader society to identify the varying constraints that they face. As a result, it is important that post-conflict societies put in place the requisite structures and arrangements to achieve and overcome these constraints. Moreover, the need to build country-specific initiatives, promote local ownership and participation in policies, and institutional capacity building cannot be ignored in the reconstruction of post-conflict societies. It is important to involve local and indigenous structures and institutions such as self-help associations, church groups and other grassroots organizations in the reconstruction efforts in order to ensure some success. While externally led state-building and reconstruction efforts are not always doomed to failure, achieving long-term success calls for the involvement of local actors and institutions (Englebert & Tull, 2008: 137). Thus, although some foreign institutions and models of capacity development and post-conflict reconstruction may be helpful, it is always essential that the wholesale adoption of foreign structures are discouraged because they are unlikely to achieve their desired objectives.

International institutions can help with the development of governance and public finance institutions, technical support in post-conflict situations. While there is the problem of ability to raise funds and resources from domestic sources after conflict, there should not be an over-reliance on foreign support, since questions of sustainability always arise when support only comes from external or foreign sources. In this vein, not only should local structures and institution be nurtured and allowed to grow but also it is important that local and indigenous knowledge is tapped in the post-conflict reconstruction efforts (Cheru, 2002: 208; Englebert & Tull, 2008). This will not only give a sense of ownership but will also empower the new society to ensure that these institutions become successful. Thus, governments and other stakeholders need to ensure that not only is there a heavy local involvement in the post-conflict reconstruction and capacity development process, but also initiatives and measures to realize them are culture and context-specific. This means that rather than having a template that would be followed, capacity development efforts should have a best-fit approach where initiatives and post-conflict reconstruction is

adapted to the needs of a particular country. This is because without regarding local attitudes and relationships, any attempt to instil peace will face significant obstacles, as 'locally-owned' peace and reconstruction is imperative in ensuring the sustainability (Samaroo, 2006: 21) of the various capacity development measures. In a country like Uganda, the heavy and important role played by indigenous state institutions and capacities helped contribute in a meaningful way in the country's post-conflict reconstruction efforts (Englebert & Tull, 2008: 135). Thus, "we need to see local indigenous institutions not necessarily as dysfunctional or doomed to history's ashcans but frequently as viable and necessary in the society we are studying, as filters and winnowers of the modernization process, as agencies of transition between tradition and modern, and as a means of reconciling and blending the global with the indigenous, the nationalist with the international" (Wiarda, 1998: 76).

Furthermore, participation in the knowledge-based society of the contemporary world calls for post-conflict countries to build on their human and social capabilities since without them, not only will they be unlikely to take

advantage of new opportunities that will emerge, but also new threats are likely to crop up. By building their human and health capabilities through training and retraining services, individuals in post-conflict societies can get the skills that will allow them to adapt smoothly to changing labour conditions, and also move freely between jobs and locations (United Nations, 2002). More significantly, gender must be included as an explicit aspect of capacity development and post-conflict reconstruction efforts and initiatives (Cheru, 2002; Arabi, 2008: 92-93). According to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (2007), capacity development to advance gender goals should go beyond training in how to mainstream gender into finance and planning ministries, or training gender equality advocates on how to formulate gender-sensitive macro-economic policies. In order to move gender equality to the forefront of post-conflict development interventions, it is important that a gender analysis is applied and made a core competence in policy-making bodies. This is because women in post-conflict societies and environments like Sudan where Arabi (2008) researched, are often not only strong human rights

advocates, but also enhance government capacity in the development of systems, policies and legislation to protect child and women's rights. In Sierra Leone for example, women played a unique role in reintegrating ex-combatants into the broader society by 'adopting' child soldiers and performing traditional cleansing ceremonies.

Finally, to overcome the challenges pertaining to the lack of skilled personnel, many post-conflict African countries are now relying on the numerous networks of experts from their countries that have been established in the Diaspora. These networks that link professionals abroad with counterparts at home facilitate regular discussions about issues, plans and projects, and help build trust between Diaspora and their countries, thereby enhancing the success of collaborative schemes. The benefits of such initiatives are that members of the African Diaspora are able to offer research and consultancy services as well as assist in the post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts without the massive sacrifice of returning or relocating back to their countries of origin (Tettey, 2003).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The focus of this paper was to examine how capacity development could assist in the reconstruction of post-conflict African countries. It is argued that while demobilising and disarming warring factions is important, the success of reconstruction efforts in a post-conflict environment depends in large part on the ability to build capacity and skills that are pertinent to helping promote reconstruction and the long-term socioeconomic development goals of the countries. In the absence of capacity, the efforts at post-conflict reconstruction are unlikely to succeed. Hence, it is always important that in the immediate period after conflict, society should have a coherent and co-ordinate approach to reconstruction and building the capacity of the state in order to achieve the state's legitimacy and effectiveness. While post-conflict reconstruction process is generally a long-term, multidimensional and arduous task, sometimes needing as long as two decades of concerted efforts (Collier et al., 2001), the point remains that in order to effectively transit from their war situation to a normal civilian life, societies would need to have some skills and other capacity initiatives in place in a post-conflict environment.

In other words, a successful reconstruction and peacebuilding process must include some mechanisms of ensuring that post-conflict societies do not have the incentive to take up arms again. Post-conflict societies will need reconstruction and also have some economic and security guarantees that will deter them from going back to a life of war and violence (Willibald, 2006), and this can best be attained through capacity development. Capacity and skills development is crucial to reconstruction and transforming the economic lives of people and also alleviating poverty in a post-conflict environment. Moreover, not only should the capacity development efforts that are geared towards post-conflict reconstruction be multilayered, but also success will depend on the creation of jobs and employment, and the promotion of good political and economic governance, education and justice. This is because capacity development works best in an environment that is characterised by good governance, respect for human rights, the promotion of the rule of law, and the existence of strong institutions that ensure transparency and accountability. In sum, the primary goals or pillars for post-conflict reconstruction should be on governance,

conflict resolution and security matters, infrastructure development, as well as the promotion of political and economic legitimacy and governance (Obwona & Guloba, 2009).

BIOGRAPHY

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