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Development Brief

TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE-BUILDING POLICY AND STRATEGY FOR ETHIOPIA



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Abstract

Ethiopia has recorded impressive economic growth over the last decade and is ranked among the ten fastest growing economies in Africa (AEO, 2011) and among the world fastest movers of human development (UNDP, 2010). While these impressive economic growth rates are important and should be sustained, additional efforts **are needed to reorient the country's growth trajectory towards promoting more equitable and inclusive growth by strengthening the country's capacity to tackle its broader development challenges of securing citizens' entitlements and ensuring human security among others.** In this context, the paper examines the nexus between peace and development and asserts that peace-building and human development are interconnected and mutually reinforcing processes which need to be coordinated in order to secure equitable and inclusive development. At present, these efforts are fragmented and need to be more effectively coordinated through the development of a clear and comprehensive national peace-building policy. It synthesizes current reflections on the process and content of a peace-building policy, draws on experiences of other African countries and **Ethiopia's historical and contemporary causes and nature of conflicts and its responses to conflicts, to advocate for a peace-building policy that is developmental in orientation and transformative in content.** The paper further argues that for Ethiopia to achieve sustainable development and ensure human security, it needs to coordinate and focus its interventions on empowering people and enhancing the resilience of peace-building institutions and processes.

**UNDP is the United Nations' global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. UNDP is on the ground in 177 countries, and partners with people at all levels of society to offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

1. Introduction

Ethiopia, like most countries in Africa, has continued to recorded high economic growth averaging 11.3 percent over the last decade and is ranked among the ten fastest growing economies in Africa (AEO, 2011). While government should continue to pursue prudent macroeconomic policies to sustain and even accelerate growth, additional efforts are needed to reorient the growth trajectory towards promoting more sustainable, equitable and inclusive growth. Whereas economic growth provides the necessary foundation for enhancing household and public spending, private and public capital formation and the overall social welfare of citizens, it does not by itself guarantee that stability, enhanced social welfare, and social peace will occur and prevail across the **population. Thus there is need to strengthen the country's capacity to promote human security by securing citizens' entitlements, freedoms and more importantly access to resources and publicly provided services.** Development and human development in particular should be pursued through rights-based approaches and as central feature of any conflict reduction strategy.

Conflicts erode human progress and degrade the institutional infrastructure and capacity for sustainable peace and development. It disrupts commerce, learning and the provision of health services, and plunges people into poverty and destitution, with the most vulnerable and marginalized sections of society bearing the disproportionate burden of violent conflicts. Therefore efforts to sustain rapid economic growth must be accompanied by interventions aimed at creating durable institutions and strengthened public organizations responsible for designing and implementing policies and strategies for ensuring lasting peace and human security. Creating durable institutions for peace and security begins with an articulation of a clear vision, policy and strategy on peace-building.

This paper reflects on current thinking on the need to develop a comprehensive peace-building policy and strategy as well as on context, content and process issues that need to be harmoniously synthesized and reflected in the development of such a policy. For this policy and strategy to deliver greater benefit it must be supported by synergetic and concurrent efforts to strengthen good governance and enhance transparency and accountability systems in the public administration, strengthen administrative capacities to build, maintain and sustain peace and human security, promote human rights and the rule of law, and strengthen democratic governance and sustainable development. These tenets of development have been globally endorsed and are implemented in varying degrees as dictated by country specific situations and development imperatives. In **Ethiopia, these have been implemented to support human development and achievement of the country's millennium development goals.**

The progress the country has made towards achieving its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is not only attributed to the rapid economic growth recorded over the last decade but also to consistent efforts towards ensuring peace and security. Without lasting peace, the MDGs would remain a tapestry of aspirations and an **enduring reference for Ethiopia's development challenges.** Preventing sporadic conflicts in selected parts of the country and the overall national peace and security should continue to be a priority of the Ethiopian government as slippages in peace and security will have deleterious effects on the country drive towards a major development transformation and will certainly erode the significant development gains the country has achieved so far. Failures to avert violent, especially communal conflict, **in future will threaten Ethiopia's peace and stability** and divert resources that would otherwise have been spent to enhance development and achievement of MGDs to more costly post-conflict reconstruction. There is no doubt that Ethiopia needs a comprehensive peace-building strategy. However, what requires deeper reflection and elaboration is on the process and content of the peace-building policy and strategy that invariably should deeply reflect, both in process and content, **Ethiopia's historical and contemporary peace, security and development imperatives.**

This paper represents an analysis of current reflections on the development of a national policy on peace-building in Ethiopia.¹ It does not preempt nor attempt to fully elaborate on the content and the process of developing such a strategy/policy. Rather, it shares some critical lessons from regional and country level experiences to recommend a strategy/policy that is generally developmental in its objectives and orientation and transformative in content.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: The next section articulates the nexus between development and peace-building followed by a discussion on the rationale for developing a comprehensive and durable peace-building policy for Ethiopia. The paper then examines the peace-building architecture by analyzing the causes and nature of conflicts, existing policy, legal and institutional frameworks for conflict prevention and management in Ethiopia. The penultimate section draws on existing lessons and insights to highlight some of the key contextual, process and content issues that the government of Ethiopia should consider in developing a peace-building policy and strategy. The final section of the paper synthesizes the key messages and concludes.

2. The Nexus Between Peace-Building And Development

Development as a process of societal change and a question of who gets what, how and when, operates in a context of increasing scarcity: scarcity of resources, scarcity of power, scarcity of identity and scarcity of status.² In situations where there is limited capacity for managing these scarcities peacefully, the process and state of development and specifically human development can actually contribute to the occurrence and reoccurrence of violent conflict. Development is a conflictual process and conflict is inevitable and a normal state of interaction between human beings.³ As a dynamic process, conflict is an integral part of a **society's evolution and development**. Hence, the strategic goal of peace-building is to help prevent the slide into violent conflict and not any illusory ambition of trying to prevent conflict altogether. Experiences from other countries suggest that peace-building should be engaged as part of a holistic development process (African Union, 2006), with focused attention on empowering people and enhancing the resilience of institutions and processes.

The critical link between peace-building and development is the process by which conflicts (such as ethnic conflict) are transformed into peaceful outcomes by converting the relationships, interests, discourses and, if necessary, the very socio-economic and political structures of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict" (Miall, 2004). Situating peace-building as a development effort requires interventions to protect and promote human security by addressing the structural causes of conflict. This involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by empowering people and strengthening the administrative capacities for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable, equitable and inclusive development.⁴

Broadly, there are two methodological approaches linking peace-building to development. The behavioralist approaches locates an individual or group of people as the unit of analysis both at the societal and national level. A group of people or an individual's **behavior is associated with conflict as a result of over-reaction, over-perception, and ethnocentrism**. This approach advocates for focused interventions on the group or individuals

¹ Development of a conflict prevention and Peacebuilding Strategy is one of the priority areas of engagement between the Government of Ethiopia and the UNDP

² Scarcity here is not articulated in terms of quantity but with regards to entitlement.

³ On development and conflict nexus and the political economy of conflict, see, Collier, P., Hoeffler, A., *On Economic Causes of Civil War*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998; Collier, P., "Doing Well Out of War", *World Bank Working Paper*, 1999; Grossman, Azam, J-P. 1995. "How to Pay for Peace? A Theoretical Framework with Reference to African Countries? *Public Choice*, 83, 173-84; Berdal. M and David M. Malone (eds.) 2000. *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner)

⁴ Conceptual basis for peace-building for the UN system adopted by the Secretary- General's Policy Committee in May 2007.

and their roles in society in trying to change their perception and addressing their needs in order to establish social harmony (Gurr, 1996). The structuralist/institutionalist approach posits that conflict is a result of failure of mechanisms through which resources are distributed. The approach stresses that restructuring of the political environment is the best way to manage and resolve conflicts. It advocates for social, political and economic or systemic configuration of a society (SIDA, 1999).

These methodological approaches fail to recognize conflict as a dynamic and fluid process. In a conflict situation, the issues, actors and interests change over time as a consequence of the social, economic and political **development and evolution of societies**"(Vayrynen, ed. 1991). **Empirical evidence and the evolution of** development and state-building in several African countries suggests that whilst peace is a common and shared value, it is however a product of a historical dialectical process, developmental and societal evolution. As such, the management of these conflicts must be sourced from within the context of the varied and diverse environments and forces that struggle for control of the resources of the society (Casimir, 2012).

Consequently, although liberal democracy might inform some policy choices, over-emphasizing its importance in appreciating the causes and nature of conflicts to the exclusion of social re-engineering and development can lead to misguided policy prescription. Experience suggest that, rather than adopting a liberal peace approach hoping that once liberal democracy has been consummated, peace will follow is myopic and often flawed.⁵ Against this backdrop, drawing insights from regional instruments,⁶ and other African experiences, Ethiopia should consider developing a peace-building policy that is developmental in its objective and transformative in its content.

3. Why Ethiopia Needs A Peacebuilding Policy

Ethiopia needs a peace-building policy to improve coordination and effectiveness of its interventions in promoting peace and human security. The constitution, sectoral policy pronouncements, international conventions and policy frameworks which the country has ratified, contain bits and pieces of policy pronouncements on peace-building. The articulation of values, principles, norms and policy actions on conflict prevention and management in the various policy instruments embody within them the absence of a coordinated approach. Ongoing interventions on conflict prevention and management have mostly been ad-hoc to arrest onsets of violence and prevent humanitarian crises. Moreover, attention given to sustainable resolution of long standing and deep rooted conflicts needs to be up-scaled. Also, the multi-dimensional nature of conflict prevention and management suggest that many stakeholders (sub-national, national and international) might be required to engage in simultaneous and sometimes uncoordinated action that requires effective management. A peace-building policy will provide a framework and mechanism for coordinating actions and will also facilitate effective synergies between local, national and regional efforts in conflict prevention and peace-building. Moreover, its effective implementation and monitoring will reduce duplication and rationalize the diverse and sometimes competing interests, agendas and priorities.

Developing a peacebuilding policy will reinforce and complement Ethiopia's national security and foreign policy. Unlike previous political regimes which pursued external relations and national security policies that disregarded internal **problems that were so fundamental to Ethiopia's own survival and development (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2002)**, a comprehensive peace-building policy will **strengthen and refocus Ethiopia's Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy** by providing a

⁵ See for example the case of post conflict elections in Cote d'Ivoire. Ayangafac, C "An alternative policy option to post-conflict elections in Africa" ISPI Policy Brief No 118 February 2009.

⁶ See The African Union Policy Framework on Post Conflict reconstruction and Development, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. The Charter remains the most authoritative pronouncement on democracy and governance in Africa. Ethiopia was amongst one of the first countries to ratify this Charter.

reference point for addressing internal security problems as a measure to fight poverty and strengthen democratic governance and peace.

Whilst there is consensus that security and development actors need to coordinate their actions and policies, experience suggests that different approaches have been used to address and integrate peace-building into the broader development efforts of states. For example, some countries have elaborated on a national peace-building policy, others prefer articulating peace-building objectives in their poverty reduction strategies. In some cases, a national peace-building strategy is an annexure to the poverty reduction strategy. These practices suggest that how peace-building is integrated into the development process of state is a sovereign decision that is shaped by context, capacity and prioritization.

Given the established needs, what type of policy does Ethiopia need and how comprehensive should it be? A contextual analysis of **Ethiopia's current approach to conflict prevention and management** affords an opportunity to tease out some recommendations on possible content and process issues. The attempt here is **not an assessment of Ethiopia's peace-building architecture**. Such an endeavor should be owned and driven by the GoE as one of the important first steps in the development of the policy. The aim of the paper is to crystallize important lessons from a review of how other African countries have undertaken and implemented their peace-building agendas and the analysis of emerging evidence on the causes and nature of conflict and the policy responses in Ethiopia and, on that basis, recommend the process and content issues that should be captured **and reflected in the country's peace-building architecture**.

4. The Peace-Building Architecture

4.1 Cause and Nature of Conflict⁷

The causes of conflict in Ethiopia are both multidimensional and complex. Amongst others, these include: competition for resources such as land, pasture, and water; clashes due to livelihoods competition between sedentary farmers and pastoralists; heightened awareness of ethnic identity; and political issues such as language rights and perceptions of disenfranchisement, and arguments on border delineation between regions and ethnicities (UNDP, 2007). Being an island of relative peace in a trouble neighborhood, crisis and instability in neighboring countries often spillover to the peripheral regions of Ethiopia. However, rather than create new security concerns, the spillover of insecurity from abroad has merely compounded already fragile internal security situations.

Regional border conflicts: Federalism has heightened and transformed historical territorial conflicts into contemporary inter-regional boundary conflicts. This particularly reflects the transformation of resource conflicts between pastoral communities in the lowland regions of the country into inter-regional boundary conflicts and border disputes between communities (Kefale, forthcoming). Although Ethiopia is one administrative unit, inter and intra regional border demarcation has development implications with regards to resource appropriation, mobilization and distribution. All State border disputes ought to be settled by agreement of the concerned States. Where the concerned States fail to reach agreement, the House of the Federation has powers to superintend over such disputes on the basis of settlement patterns and the wishes of the peoples concerned (Constitution of Ethiopia, 1995).

Inter-clan/ethnic conflicts: some of the major inter-ethnic conflicts observed in Ethiopia are: the Silte-Gurage conflict, the Wagagoda language conflict, the Sheko-Megengir conflict, the Anuak-Nuer conflict, the Berta-Gumuz conflict, the Gedeo-Guji conflict, the Oromo-Amhara conflict, the Borana-Gerri conflict, and the

⁷ The constitution, federal architecture and the process of democracy building and consolidation provides robust avenues and process for managing conflicts with separatist groups like the Oromo People Liberation Front and the Ogaden National Liberation Front. The focus here is on communal conflict.

Oromo-Somali conflict. Whilst ethnicity has been instrumentalised for mobilization purposes, perceived or real disfranchisement, inequitable distributions of economic and political benefits have informed these conflicts. Regional states have the primary responsibility of addressing ethnic conflict within their jurisdiction.

Natural resource conflicts: Most of these conflicts occur among pastoralist communities and pastoralists are coming under increasing pressure from natural disasters such as drought and flooding which are compounded by climate change. Population growth, increasing numbers of livestock produced for export, deforestation, environmental degradation, bush encroachment, and invasive species will further increase pressure and competition over shared and shrinking resources. These communities also have diverse settlement patterns inhabiting different ecological zones and, accordingly, practicing different production systems as well as having diverse livelihood basis. As a result, there is conflict between farmer and herder, farmer/herder versus forest users and rural versus urban dwellers. These conflicts are mostly informed by lack of properly implemented land use system and degradation of natural resources.

Religious conflicts: Ethiopia is highly regarded for its secularism, mutual respect and religious tolerance. However, there is growing evidence of religious radicalization (NewBusiness Ethiopia, 2011). Extremism in all its variants, constitutes both a cause and a consequence of conflict; deepening mistrust within and between communities can contribute to outbreaks of violence and acts of terrorism. Evidence from other countries suggests religious radicalism might be symptomatic of deeper levels of political and socio-economic discontent.

4.2 Existing Policy and Legal Frameworks

Normative Framework: There are a number of legal provisions relating to conflict prevention and management. Amongst others, these include the relevant laws contained in the Constitution through the Bill of rights and provisions relating to rights of Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples.⁸ Related provisions that bear on conflict situations are to be found in the Criminal Code and sectoral policies such as the Ethiopian Water Policy, Environment Policy, Foreign Affairs and National Security Strategy, Rural and Agricultural Development Policy and Strategy.

To compound the absence of a coherent policy on conflict prevention and management, implementation of these policy pronouncements rely heavily on the formal legal system, despite the fact that increasingly, majority of communal conflicts are settled through traditional mechanisms. A peace-building policy will strengthen the current normative framework with regards to policy coherence and convergence.

4.3 Institutional Framework

i) Ministry of Federal Affairs: One of the specific mandates of the Ministry of Federal Affairs is the task of preventing and coordinating the resolution of violent conflicts (Proclamation No. 471/2005). Through the Business Process Reengineering (BPR) of the Ministry, focus has been on capacity development as one of the core processes under which the Directorate for Culture of Peace Building and Conflict Early Warning and Rapid Response has been established. In accordance with its mandate,

⁸ See article 39 of the Constitution of Ethiopia, 1995

the Ministry has undertaken several activities including capacity building supports for the regions, peace education, mass conferences and reconciliation sessions as well as management of violence in collaboration with the regions. However there is need to sustain and expand these activities. For example, the research capacity of the ministry and regional state ministries needs to be strengthened; the capacity of the Conflict Early Warning and Rapid Response Mechanisms at the local levels also needs to be improved.

ii) House of Federation (HoF): The constitution remits the HoF as the legislative governmental organ responsible for conflict mitigation. The House is responsible for issues relating to the rights of Nations, Nationalities and Peoples. It can decide on the right of self-determination, including the right to secession and it can identify solutions to disputes or misunderstandings that may arise between states. The HoF can recommend federal interventions if any State endangers the constitutional order or violate the constitution. As part of its responsibilities, it can also determine the division of revenues derived from joint Federal State and State tax resources and the subsidies that the Federal Government may provide to the regional states. The House has launched a national conflict analysis, mapping and strategy development initiative that has to be supported. Whilst the mandate of the House seems to be limited to events of conflict, enhanced coordination and collaboration is needed with other government ministries and departments.

iii) Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Cognizance of the spillover of external conflict into Ethiopia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a central role in peace-building. In line with the Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy, the Ministry is deploying external efforts to address internal challenges **and vulnerability to threats that have negative impact on Ethiopia's development and peace-building. Some of these include Ethiopia's leadership role in addressing conflict in the horn of Africa.**

iv) Regional States and local Authorities: Regional states have a major responsibility to address local conflicts. In line with this mandate, they have undertaken conflict prevention and peace-building activities. For example, in some instances peace committees or Joint Woreda Task Forces were established to manage conflict. However there is need for expansion of these activities especially with regards to capacity building. Moreover, coordination/integration between basic local structures and intermediate (werda, zone and region) government hierarchies and the federal government should be strengthened.

vi) The Formal Justice System: Through the Comprehensive Justice System Reform Program, and the Business Process Reengineering, good progress has been made in conflict resolution and management by improving the independence, efficiency, quality and access to justice. Whilst the criminal justice system may prevent conflict through deterrence, peace-building through the criminal justice system is made difficult by: a population poorly informed of its legal rights and responsibilities; inadequate staffing of the judiciary and legal department; and the nature of the conflict and the relationships between the parties involved. Mostly, by pronouncing on legal rights and obligations, the outcome of litigation might reinforce animosity.

vii) Traditional Mechanisms: Traditional mechanisms are increasingly playing an important role in conflict management and peacebuilding.⁹ The Guurti system of the Somali regional state is an

⁹ For literature on this see Tirsit Girshaw (2004), "Indigenous Conflict Resolution Mechanisms in Ethiopia". In: *Federalism, Conflict and Peace Building*. (Addis Ababa: MoFA and GTZ)

example. Other examples include the Seera Aadaa Oromo of the Oromo peoples,¹⁰ Seera and Kitcha of the Gurage,¹¹ Mada of the Afar, Shimgilina and Erq of the Amhara, and others. The guurti are a group of advisory elders composed of clan leaders, and elders of the communities who advise the regional, zonal and woreda administration on security matters, inter-clan conflicts and other (e.g. border) disputes. These traditional leaders are integrated with the administration.

Traditional justice mechanism has the advantage of being: more accessible to the people than the formal legal methods; less costly and speedier; open and participatory.¹² However, they need to be enhanced. For examples, their mobility and documentation needs to be enhanced. Importantly, there is no mechanism to coordinate the work of traditional mechanism and the formal judicial system (Macfarlane, 2008). Moreover in some instances these mechanisms are procedurally flawed as they tend to: ignore or limit fundamental rights of citizens (e.g., the right to be presumed innocent; freedom of movement); occasionally interfere with criminal (judicial) proceedings; and they remit collective guilt, especially in inter-group conflicts (Zewde, B, 2002).

The above policy interventions reflect progress achieved and demonstrates political will to move forward the peace-building agenda. However, embodied within these interventions are challenges relating to the adequacy of the normative frameworks, institutional constraints and the capacity to implement. As a result of the wide scope of peace-building, numerous instruments and actors are emerging and there has been limited focus on ensuring that they are well coordinated. Within the orientation towards coordination and development, focused attention should be on capacity building policy coherence, reducing duplication and securing complementarity between different instruments, institutions and actors.

5. Some Issues To Consider In Developing A Peacebuilding Policy

As indicated earlier, the objective of the paper is not to pre-empt the content of the proposed policy or outline a template to be adapted by Ethiopia. Rather the objective is to tease out some of content and process issues and how other countries have approached them.¹³ In doing so, it recommends how Ethiopia could address these within the proposed policy. The issues presented here are just a few and are by no means exhaustive. Their selection is steeped in the belief that they have the most potential for transforming conflictual relationships through their impact on the actors, context, interest, and institutions, thereby linking peacebuilding to development.

¹⁰ see Endalew, T (2005), "*Luba Basa and Harma Hodha: Traditional Mechanisms for Conflict Resolution in Metekel, West Gojam*" and Girma Negash (2005), "*Conflict Resolution through Inter-marriage: The Case of the Arsi Oromo and the Sidama*" in *Proceedings of the Second National Conference of the Ethiopia Chapter of OSSREA*. (Addis Ababa: OSSREA), pp.130-155 and pp. 156-169.

¹¹ See Zewde, B (2002), "*Systems of Local Governance among the Gurage: The Yajoka Qicha and Gordana Seera*" in *Ethiopia: The Challenge of Democracy from Below* (Bahru Zewde and Siegfried Pausewang, eds). (Uppsala/Addis Ababa: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet/ Forum for Social Studies).

¹² See *Ibid*, pp. 44-46.

¹³ How these issues have been prioritized and implemented varies from country to country depending on the context.

5.1 Content Issues

i) Capacity building for peace: A need exists to develop strategies for skills training in conflict peace-building. Community readiness to embrace constructive conflict management and peace building would be fostered by requisite skills and knowledge in the field. Such skills include conflict analysis, conflict early warning and response, disaster preparedness, and conflict resolution among others. While some efforts have been made to offer aspects of capacity building for peace, there are no strategic efforts to offer broad based skills training in peace-building especially targeting people and structures involved in peace-building initiatives. Moreover, focus should be on local level (elders, religious leaders and traditional chiefs. For example, at kabele level, there is need for more involvement of the Regional Government in capacity building in peace-building besides facilitation (GIZ IS 2006). Addressing this challenge requires elaborating a regional state capacity building strategy with a focus on conflict management and mainstreaming conflict sensitivity in development planning.

In some countries, to address capacity constraints, transitional and human resource capacity building projects have been developed. The aim of these projects is to create incentives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the public service at the local level. These initiatives have targeted Senior Executive Service through which a powerful cadre of staff are identified and deployed as change agents in the public sector to restore integrity and reinvigorate operational efficiency and facilitate transfer of knowledge. These strategies should however be anchored on holistic and cohesive platform that could guarantee long-term sustainability. For example participation in senior management training and studies should be contingent on deployment to peripheral regions.

ii) Mainstreaming conflict sensitivity in development planning: This ensures that developmental interventions should pay particular attention to their redistributive effects so as not to create or exacerbate existing tension. It demands more than a checklist of appropriate activities, policies and tools. Focused attention should be on institutional capacity building to assimilate conflict sensitivity at all levels of the organization and across all programmes where necessary. This requires building a culture of how organizations could strategize, plan, implement and evaluate their work, paying specific attention to understanding the (conflict) context in which they operate; understanding the interaction between their operations and the (conflict) context; and acting upon the understanding of this interaction in order to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive impacts on the (conflict) context and the intervention. Programme assessment studies are not enough but they are a good start. Designing development projects with these in mind can go beyond simply respecting the basic **principle of "Do no harm"** and make a positive contribution to sustainable peace. The critical challenge to mainstreaming conflict sensitivity is organizational strategy and operational practice (pace and sequencing).

Whilst government should take the lead in this endeavor, practice from other countries suggest that development partners also have a responsibility. For example, in some countries, development partners have developed networks to enhance the impact of development, peace-building and humanitarian assistance through improved and more widespread mainstreaming of conflict sensitive approaches.

iii) Local Governance: democratic institutions and good governance structures should be decentralized to promote inclusive politics and advocate for pluralism in a manner that contributes positively to nation building, and that links short-term intervention measures and long-term development perspectives, including dealing with root causes of the conflict, in particular poor governance. These institutions should focus on transformation of leadership (traditional and political) and society, through processes of developing a collective national vision that delivers more cohesive and responsive systems of governance from the national to the grassroots levels.

iii) Enhancing synergies between formal and traditional mechanisms on conflict prevention and peace-building: Considering these local communities and villages are resorting to traditional mechanisms for peace-building (Huysse and Salter, 2008), there is need to explore policy options on how interpersonal and community-based practices can live side by side with state-organized forms of retributive justice. Different countries have used different strategies to enhance this cohabitation. In some countries, the traditional mechanism has been sanctioned - but with limited competence- to complement the formal judicial system through legislation and policy.¹⁴ In other countries, whilst this cohabitation has been accepted as a matter of pragmatism, they have not been politically and legally sanctioned partly due to political reasons.

There is an emerging consensus that how countries seek to approach cohabitation is contingent on making an informed decision on whether or not to focus on the perpetrator (retributive) or victim (restorative justice). The emerging policy trend suggests that integration through a national policy is the preferred option. This strategy limits the recognition of traditional mechanisms by delineating the modalities of its accommodation into the legal framework and the legal system. The strategy also incorporates some of the substantive and procedural ideals of customary criminal law into the general framework of the criminal justice system and for community participation through community court, community policing and community correctional programmes (Kakwam, 1993). This strategy also provide for operational support to ensure respect for the bill of right through the provision of assistance by paralegals appointed by the Ministry of Justice.

Conflict Early Warning and Early Response: The capacity of the early warning mechanism at MoFA needs to be improved. Also MoFA should strengthen its analytical capacity and make better use of available research and insights on the links among peace, security, and development. Translating early warning into early response requires widening the scope of end-users to include other government department and structures such as parliament. Moreover, the capacity of religious and community leaders should also be strengthen to enable them use early warning to prevent and management emerging crisis situations.

Mechanisms to address cross border conflicts: The policy should elaborate on how to deal with resources that are shared and are cross-border or transboundary in nature (competition, access, and utilization of such resources). **Experience from other countries suggests the establishment of "peace zones" with common and shared public services like schools and hospitals could help transform local and communal conflicts.**

¹⁴ An example is the Cacaca Courts in Rwanda. For more on the cacaca courts see, Huysse, L. and Salter, M. (2008) *"Traditional Justice and Reconciliation after Violent Conflict Learning from African Experiences. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance*

Culture of Peace

Justice and Reconciliation: Justice and reconciliation are critical for peace-building as a measure to transform conflict. Whatever policy action or methodology is adopted by government is informed by the imperative of how to balance the needs for different types of justice and reconciliation. Emerging practice suggest that legal accountability is conceived as an integral part of the reconciliation process, thus there can be no reconciliation without justice. Thus whilst it is important to pursue retributive justice (punishment), attention should also be on the needs of the victims and the offenders, as well as the involved community, instead of satisfying abstract legal principles. However, economic empowerment as a means of restorative justice should not replace impunity. In transforming ethnic conflicts, some countries have pursued the twin goal of reconciliation and justice through the cohabitation of formal and traditional justice mechanism. Traditional justice mechanism has taken the lead on reconciliation and restorative justice whilst the formal justice system has pursued retributive justice.

Peace Education: building social capital through a culture of peace necessitates the design and implementation of activities that generate knowledge, enhance leadership skills and inculcate attitudes that will allow people of all ages, and at all levels, to develop the behavioral changes that can **create the social conditions conducive to peace. As an agent for “inter-generational change”** peace education should incorporate the wider government policy on expanding access and improving quality of education.

For peace education to optimize its positive role in building social capital, it needs to adopt a holistic approach that addresses multiple actors and multiple methods that link the wider policy environment to the local context and vice versa. Experience suggest that beyond the narrow objective of raising awareness, peace education should empower and encourage ownership of local initiatives which bring positive change in communities. For example, by focusing on community-based learning and learning in communities the capacity of Peace Clubs should be enhanced in various topics such as managing micro project of peace, reconciliation mechanisms, leadership, human rights, local governance.

In some countries, besides the organization of events and fora such as peace forum and peace clubs, government have taken the lead in designing a manual to assist formal, non-formal and grass-roots educators and educational planners by providing ideas and tools for the development of community-based peace education learning projects that might contribute to the reduction of violence at all levels of the global social order. Such a manual should be clear on those conditions in society which educational planners and authorities seek to influence, maintain or change through the education they design and deliver. Such a manual could help in developing specific curricula to incorporate issues of communalism to eliminate negative stereo-typing; revise history text books to accurately reflect history of all groups and all nations and nationalities.

Experience sharing and Networking for Peace/Community of practice: Many organizations are currently engaged in carrying out peacebuilding, conflict management and development tasks with different communities across Ethiopia. While many are undoubtedly doing commendable work, still there is often very little collaboration or networking among them, which sometimes leads to duplication of efforts and less effective utilization of resources. There is need therefore to cultivate better networking and collaboration among peace-building and development partners in the country.

Radicalisation of Religion: Inter-religious dialogue and co-operation are fundamental to curbing religious intolerance. However, a conflict that manifests at the religious level of a constitutionally

secular state cannot be solved only at the level of the inter-religious dialogue or repression. Issues of socio-economic justices and deprivation must be addressed in government responses. To complement and support religious and inter-faith dialogue, there is need to provide and expand training coupled with mediation and negotiation skills to religious leaders.

Socio-economic development

Stable, Equitable and Inclusive growth: Experiences from other countries suggest that the provision of basic services and opportunities for employment especially targeting the youth is critical to enhance peace-building and sustainable development. In this regard, government could explore the implementation of policies and programmes that address past grievances such as the need for equitable access to and management of common resources; provide support to traditional economic activities that employ relatively large numbers of the population with a view to enabling their modernization and sharing in **the country's socio-economic** progress.

5.2 Process Issues

National Leadership and Ownership: Developing a national policy on peace-building is a political as much as it is a technical process. While the constitution and the GTP are clear in articulating a policy orientation and setting the legal basis and institutional framework for conflict prevention and peace-building, MoFA as the leading ministry and HoF as the leading institution on issues of conflict prevention and peace-building are obligated to generate a strategic framework for conflict prevention and peace-building that is aligned to the vision embodied in the constitution and the GTP.

In this regard, ownership is beyond the cosmetic need to secure local “buy-in” for an externally-designed peace-building strategy. The design should be guided by Ethiopian conceptions and perceptions. Its management and implementation must prioritize development needs and the use of Ethiopian technical expertise, with partners in a supporting role. While state leadership is often central to achieving national ownership, it is equally important to emphasize that national ownership in the context of peace-building necessarily implies more than government ownership. Ownership should be beyond the role of the federal government, regional states and local authorities should also play a role. Mass base organization such as women group should be involved.

Coordination/intergovernmental relations: Whilst there is clear need for enhanced coordination, and cognizance of the multitudes of actors, there is need for greater clarity both in its diagnosis and solution. Unrelated problems might be misdiagnosed as coordination failures because they manifest themselves as disorderliness or ineffectiveness. Experience suggests that too often, greater coordination is put forward as a remedy without considering the difficulties and risks of the solution. Best practices suggest the creation of a coordinating mechanism (in some countries national steering committee) or agency situated at the Prime Minister or **President's office**.¹⁵ Conceived as a measure to improve intra and intergovernmental relations, this mechanism should not only be mandated to develop the strategy, it should also facilitate and coordinate implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This coordination unit should also establish focal points at the regional and local levels.

¹⁵ This does not suggest the formal establishment of a structure or an institution. Rather the intention here is consistent engagement by focal points

Inclusivity and coherence of efforts: Wider and popular participation has become an entrenched principle in policy making and implementation in Ethiopia. It is thus important to ensure the participation and contribution of all relevant stakeholders in the initiation, design and implementation of the strategy. Participation is not entirely dependent on numbers alone but also on the capacity of the participants to grasp the issues under consideration and their role and function in the formulation process. Stakeholders need to be abreast with the process of developing the strategy and their role. In this regard, the federal government, regional states and civil society should lead an advocacy campaign on the rationale and process of developing the strategy. Capacity building should also be integrated throughout the Strategy formulation process to ensure successful implementation and sustainability.

Competing Interests and Lack of a Shared Vision: Different actors have variety of interests that will motivate their support for the development of a policy and strategy. Difference is not an obstacle per se. Indeed, the Strategy should be conceived as a mechanism to coalesce all the interests of stakeholders and responding to them comprehensively. Differences translate into problems only when it impedes a shared vision to guide the development process. It is thus important that concrete efforts should be taken to develop and elaborate on a clear rationale and vision for the strategy.

Resource mobilization: Conflict management and peace-building intervention strategies require long-term funding through combinations of government, donor, NGOs and community resources. The strategy needs flexible budgeting and rapid financial disbursement procedures, including national and district peace contingency funds. There must be decentralized decision-making, giving the districts and communities easy access to funds.

6. Conclusion And Final Reflections

The internal policy and political environment provides incentives and opportunities for developing a peace-building policy in Ethiopia. The political leadership in Ethiopia has demonstrated robust commitment to socio-economic development. A stable political environment coupled with impressive economy growth provides a solid foundation for reflection on the policy.

Central to using the proposed policy to link peace-building and development is the need to empower people and strengthen the resilience of institutions and processes to manage change. Development and peace-building are two sides of the same coin. Experience suggests that integrating peace-building into national development requires multiple interventions, using participatory, consultative methods to link community, local level to national level perspectives. Peace-building cannot be achieved by a simple paper work urging for coordination. Development of the policy has to be initiated and mandated by a decision at the highest possible level.

To ensure coordination and inclusivity, the MoFA and HoP should explore the option of establishing a coordination mechanism. The coordination mechanism should be charged with facilitating the design, implementation and monitoring of the policy. Membership of the coordination unit should be inclusive but functional. It could comprise relevant government departments, regional states, civil society, faith based organizations and development partners. The coordination mechanism is essential in maintaining momentum and translating the concept of peace-building into government machinery.

Attempt at developing a policy should commence with a national assessment and mapping of the context and conflict landscape. Context analysis has direct implications on the content and design of



the policy. Upon completion, the assessment should be validated and it should form the basis for a sensitization and advocacy campaign to elaborate on the rationale and vision of the policy. The vision should present several ideas from which, in a later step, priorities can be deduced.

Developing a policy is not a panacea to addressing the evolving peace and security challenges in Ethiopia. Regional states and local communities have the primary responsibility of conflict prevention and peace-building. Thus, the policy and strategy should not be perceived as a substitute of this responsibility. Rather it is mechanism for capacity building, complementarity and partnership building.

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