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Infrastructure for Peace: The African Experience

Irene, Oseremen Felix

Department of Public Administration

Mountain Top University

Km 12, Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, Prayer City

Ogun State, Nigeria

Email: oseremel@gmail.com, ofirene@mtu.edu.ng

Phone: +2348026659958

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Majekodunmi, Samuel Ayodele

Department of Business Administration

Mountain Top University

Km 12, Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, Prayer City

Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated experiences of infrastructures for peace mainly in Kenya and Ghana. It also explored experiences in other parts of Africa, and proceeded to argue a case for their creation in other climes in Africa. Standing peace structures have potentials to help promote peaceful business clime and other conditions necessary for human and societal development. Over the years, unhealthy competitions for limited resources in man's environment and election triggered violence among others have been consistently increasing threats to peace and security as well as various business-

related economic activities in many communities in Africa. There are attempts by Government at various levels to curtail the alarming rate of threats to through governments' security apparatus, yet threats to peace remains. This informed the need to explore alternative approach. As a cutting-edge approach for violent prevention, conflict intervention and transformation, infrastructure for peace has been found rewarding in addressing conflicts and violent menace. This paper focused on two main examples of infrastructure for peace, which are cabinet-level Ministry of Peace and National or Local Peace Committee/Council. The study adopted a descriptive style and proceeds to propose what the role of a ministry of peace might be in Nigeria.

Key words: Infrastructure, Peace, African, Experience

Introduction

Infrastructures for peace has been described by Hopp-Nishanka (2012) as giving peace address. They are institutional structures or mechanisms for preventing and addressing conflicts at local, regional, national and global level (van-Togeren, 2011, p.45). They may be created to mediate intra-state or intra-communal violence, and through harnessing local resources enable communities to resolve conflicts through a problem-solving approach

Infrastructures for peace has become even more imperative in contemporary times in view of the increasing need to transcend the small-scale approach to peace building, peace trainings and peace activities into a large scale more effective and long term approach that involves a sustainable architecture for peace. Such peace architecture is required to help create a friendly business climate in communities and society at large. Peace can be planned. The creation of infrastructure for peace is critical to planning peace, and this underscores the necessity for infrastructures for peace (Kumar & Haye, 2011, p.14).

Using the health infrastructure as in Brand-Jocobsen analogy, it can be seen that infrastructures for peace are needed to build peace, just as health infrastructures are to health. Table 1 summarises his comparative analysis.

Table 1: Experience in medicine compare to peace building

Health Infrastructure (evolved)	Peace Infrastructure (evolving)
Health education in Institutions of learning	Education for peace in Institutions of learning
Awareness on public health	Awareness of public peace
Knowledge of health for guidance in risky activities	Knowledge of peace education for guidance in risky activities
Professionals in health services	Professionals in peace services

Hospitals and other health Institutions	Centres and Institutes for Peace
Pharmaceutical structures	Community based centre for building peace
Units for speedy response e.g. emergency wards	Units for speedy response e.g. Mediators, civilian peace forces
Systems for early warning	Systems for early warning
Governmental health structures e.g. Ministries and Departments for health	Governmental Peace structures, e.g. Ministries and/or department for Peace
Capacities for civil society organizations	Capacities for civil society organizations
Development of relevance national health policies	Development of relevance national peace policies
Mobilizes financial and political support	Mobilizes financial and political support
Promotes a 'culture of health' for healthy living	Promotes a 'culture of peace' for peaceful co-existence
International infrastructures and inter-governmental structures for support, e.g. WHO	International infra structures and inter-governmental structures for support, e.g. UN Commission for Peace-building
Promotes systematic research and lesson learned, methods and knowledge sharing.	Promotes systematic research and lesson learned, methods and knowledge sharing.

Source: Brand-Jacobson, 2010

Health infrastructures such as health education, public health awareness and knowledge, services of health professionals, health institutions such as hospitals and pharmaceutical structures, national health policies, financial and political backup, concern for prevention and the promotion of health culture as well as Governmental health structures such as Ministry of Health, etc. have unequivocally contributed in no small measure to the prevention and control of diseases and promotion of a culture of healthy living in the global society. In the same understanding, peace infrastructures will aid in the prevention of violence and the promotion of a culture of peace in the global society. As stated succinctly by World Health Organisation, just like the way the public health efforts prevented and minimized complications relating to pregnancy, injuries at workplace and contagious diseases as well as ailments following food and water contamination in different parts of the world, so the factors contributing to violence, be they attitudinal or behavioural factors, or factors relating to the broader socio-economic, cultural and political conditions can be altered (WHO, 2002, p.3) by infrastructures for peace.

Suter (2004, p.38) posited that much attention has been devoted to debating defence capacities based on military institutions, while no or very little has been devoted to debating peace capacities through a peace institutional framework. He added that we could have peace institutions with various components just as in the case of military institutions. Such peace institutions may have the following components; peace cadet corps, capacity to attract voluntary assistance, training and education, administration, jobs and career opportunities, professional status, diplomatic representation and a ministry as well as peace day and honouring peace heroes, just like the defence institutions which have all the afore-listed components among others.

The aim of this paper therefore is to present evidence on the experiences of two main infrastructures for peace in Africa, the efficacy of such peace structure in promoting peace and security required for peaceful co-existence and socio-political stability as well as enhances the development and growth of businesses in Africa.

Local and National Peace Committees

Local Peace Committees represent conflict transformation processes that use basic local peace-building methods. These are processes that engage local actors and use peace-building resources among others to defuse conflicts. They are useful local peace-building instruments. Local Peace Committee has been defined as “conflict intervention structure that integrates both traditional and modern conflict intervention mechanisms to prevent and manage or transform intra-ethnic or inter-ethnic conflicts” (Adan & Pkalya 2006, p. vii).

There are two main categories of local peace committees. There is one that enjoys formal state recognition and the other that has informal status. Local peace committees with formal state recognition are usually those created through a national peace accord, legislation or a formal statutory body as part of its mandate. Examples include Local Peace Committee in South Africa which was established following September 1991 terms of reference of the national peace accord, district code of conduct monitoring committee in Sierra Leone which was created by the political parties registration commission with responsibility or statutory mandate to mediate conflicts between political parties in addition to promoting pluralism, and the committees on inter-community relations in Serbia created under the terms of the law on local self-government of 2002, Act 63.

The informal Local Peace Committees are often established by members of the civil society and are scarcely recognised by Government. Their informal nature is both strength and weakness, even as evidence abounds as regards their increasing acceptance and application in the resolution of conflicts. Memberships of Local Peace Committees are often composed of volunteers with high passion and interest in peace in addition to the display of greater

commitment and creativity in comparison to formal local peace committee membership. Unfortunately, they often lack the clout to engage government and political leaders, as such are readily ignored by leaders who wield political powers.

Infrastructure for peace acts through “dialogue, promotion of mutual understanding and trust-building as well as inclusive, constructive problem-solving and joint action to prevent violence” (Odendaal, 2010, p. 3), intervene and transform conflict. As infrastructure for peace, local peace committees (LPC) enable communication among protagonists to address potentially destructive rumours, fears and mistrust; mediate ongoing or new disputes to achieve joint problem-solving; facilitate reconciliation; strengthens social cohesion through Local Peace Committees-facilitated dialogue - a necessary precondition for sustainable, collaborative and inclusive governance; prevent violence through joint monitoring, facilitate negotiations and joint planning for potentially violent events, including enabling local and national information flow so that local peace-building challenges can receive proper attention at the national level (Odendaal 2010).

Trust is an important part of relationship transformation. Potential actors and personal transformation is often a product of trust cum confidence building and improved relationship between stakeholders in conflicts. The inherent ability of Infrastructure for peace to help build trust and confidence makes it essential in personal transformation and in the transformation of potential actors. Also, its conflict transformation capability can be traced to its inherent potentials to build the capacities of conflict stakeholders in addition to its capacity to promote their active participation in the peace process and other forms of dialogue. According to Hopp-Nishanka (2012), it “brings stakeholders and their constituencies together, change agents and creates space for joint problem-solving as well as creates, consolidate and maintain a network of transformative actors” (p. 10).

Furthermore, it has been said that infrastructure for peace promotes knowledge transfer and capacity building, however, if it helps finds compromise, it potentially results in issue transformation. If on the other hand, “it contributes or helps bring about a change of goals of conflict parties or stakeholders, then, it potentially leads to actors’ transformation (Hopp-Nishanka, 2012, p.19). In the same vein, to achieve structural transformation, there is the need for institutional building. Institutional building when “affecting the asymmetric power balance between conflict parties” (Hopp-Nishanka, 2012, p.10) leads to structural transformation, and as posited by Ojielo (2007), the example of Ghana where institutional building, reconciliation efforts and working towards a

culture of peace come together, indicate several avenues of conflict transformation.

National Peace Council in Ghana

Ghana experienced 14 violent cases involving ethnic community groups between 1990 and 2002. The Konkomba Nanumba war that occurred in Ghana between 1994 and 1995 led to the death of 5,000 people. However, following the 2002 violent break out in Dagomba kingdom which claimed the life of the king of Dagbon and 40 others, the government declared a state of emergency in the region affected and afterwards called on the United Nations system country to come to its aid. This development could be described as the genesis of the journey to the creation of infrastructure for peace in Ghana, as the UNDP responded by appointing Peace and Governance Advisor (Odendaal, 2010) to intervene and help douse the tension following the said violent outbreak. Shortly after, with the support of UNDP, the National Peace Council (NPC) was established in Ghana. Ghana is a clear example of how national and local conflict systems interconnect. One of the key impacts following the creation of National Peace Council (NPC) in Ghana is that it helped to ensure a peaceful election in 2008 including a smooth transfer of power in Ghana.

Local Peace Committee in South Africa

Like the insight from Ghana's experience which further underscores the intervention role of infrastructure for peace, the South Africa case could be described as another example where infrastructure for peace conflict intervention capacity was again demonstrated after its impact in Nicaragua. The South Africa apartheid was characterised by violence. The desire to halt the raging violence led to the emergence of National Peace Accord. Local Peace Committees were however created from the agreement of the National Peace Accord in 1991. The Local Peace Committees worked between 1991 and 1994. South Africa could be adjudged to have succeeded in pioneering a peace structure during the year that preceded elections in 1994, building mechanisms at local and regional levels that effectively hurt violence escalation in the country. The conflict intervention role of the Local Peace Committees helped to determine South Africa's political future, including bringing apartheid to a halt in 1994 (Irene, 2015).

In South Africa, the local peace committees may appear not to be so successful in their main objective to prevent violence as the number of deaths occasioned by political violence in the later days of the apartheid struggle increased from 2649 in 1992 to 3567 in 1994, which may be indicating that the local peace committees could not enforce peace, however, all observers concurred that the local peace committees successfully

prevented several potentially violent events including the bolstering of local dialogue and problem-solving processes.

Local Peace Committee in Kenya

The Wajir Peace and Development Committee can however be described as one of the most successful infrastructure for peace, and has remained a model for conflict intervention and transformation especially at the communal level. The women in Wajir District initiated the move to peace in 1993 following the violence that raged between the Kenyan-Somalis clan that resulted to over 1200 deaths in four years. The Wajir initiative further brought together civil societies and was largely engaged in the sensitization for a need for peace in the district. The elders of different clans were incorporated into the mediation process, and after several meetings, they were made to sign a code of conduct otherwise christened Al Fatah Declaration. A further step to involve representation of formal authority, i.e. district commissioners and members of parliament was taken (Irene, 2015).

The need to ensure a coordination of peacemaking and peace building activities as well as to sustain the continuous involvement of Government led to the formalisation of the process. With time, the integration of peace initiatives into one structure brought government, NGOs and citizens group together into one, leading to the emergence of District Development Committee, and in May 1995, the Wajir Peace and Development Committee was formed following the integration of peace initiatives into one structure that would bring Government, Non-governmental Organisation (NGOs) and Citizens groups together. The success recorded by the committee in the intervention and transformation of conflicts in the region soon began to attract donor Organisations, NGOs, and National Council of Churches, among others. They began to establish several local peace committees, and the model spread to the northern region of Kenya. This motivated the national Government to establish the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management in 2001 with a view to formulating a National Policy on conflict management, and to coordinate various peacebuilding initiatives including Local Peace Committees (Odendaal, 2010).

In Kenya, Local Peace Committee was adjudged to be largely successful. The Wajir Local Peace Committee started a process that resulted to national agreement to establish Peace Committees in all districts of Kenya. The Local Peace Committees in the country succeeded in facilitating the Garissa Declaration, which was an agreement between the Government and the northeast Pastoralist clans on procedures to tackle cattle rustling in the area. The experience represents a clear example of bottom-up law-making process. It could be recalled that in spite of the post-election violence that

erupted in Kenya between December 2007 and March 2008, the northern and north-eastern provinces of the country were largely peaceful, and many people believed that the relative peace and stability in the provinces was partly due to the positive impact of Local Peace Committee in the areas.

The Collaborative in South Kordofan, Sudan

The Collaborative is a Network that is composed of Sudan and South Sudan local peace activists and has been responsible for the coordination of efforts across the new border of Sudan and South Sudan. The network was established in 2006 following a meeting which Peace Direct and PACT facilitated. The network has been largely involved in the building of at least 12 Peace Committees in South Kordofan in Sudan and South Sudan (Unity State). The members of the Peace Committees according to van-Togeren (2013) were trained in conflict analysis and finding local solutions to conflict issues. For about three years the Collaborative Network has been working to identify, coordinate and train local peace activities in communities.

Local Peace Committee in North Kivu, DRC

About a dozen of Local Peace Committees have been established in North Kivu. The peace structures provide non-partisan platforms for “consultation and analysis, reflection and action of grassroots communities around issues of reconciliation, security and participation in the management of public affairs” including direct intervention in conflict issues (van-Togeren 2013). A Nongovernmental Organisation, Centre for Resolution of Conflicts (CRC) was instrumental to the creation of the Local Peace Committees in the North Kivu in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Barza Inter-Communicataire in North Kivu, DRC

The Commission de Pacification et de Concorde (CPC) was the pre-cursor to the Barza (van-Tongereren, 2013). The CPC was established in 1997 by Kabila’s Government as a national body with provincial branches. It created Peace Cells in various region which was composed of prominent individuals “who were working at grassroots levels by organising meetings between and among leaders of antagonistic ethnic groups, and convincing small numbers of combatants to lay down their arms and reintegrate into the community” (van-Tongereren, 2013).

The Hakina Amani Network and Local Peace Initiatives in Ituri, DRC

Following the request of various Organisations for inter-community reconciliation program, Community Berazas emerged. The network was later christened Hakina na Amani (RHA) commenced its activities in 2004, and was among others composed of Episcopal Justice and Peace Commissions, human rights groups and a women’s network. Its goals include “the promotion of peace, protection of human rights, encouragement of Citizens participation (to ensure a community governed by law and

order), the opposition of identity violence and the positive transformation of conflicts through the expansion of its members' intervention capacities" (van-Tongerren, 2013).

Village Peace Committee in North Kivu, DRC

Village Peace Committee was created in north Kivu by an NGO known as World Relief Congo. The NGO organised a conflict transformation workshop and organised an election into the village peace committee. The representatives in the village peace committee according to van-Togerren (2013) include the youth leader, local authority representative, Barza members, Church leader, School leader and member of the civil society, and they usually meet every week.

The Kibimba Peace Committee in Burundi

The establishment of Kibimba Peace Committee in 1994 was a follow up to an initial training facilitated by the Central Mennonite Committee. The Peace Committee initiated a process that was committed to facilitating communication between various groups in the community, and it eventually restored normalcy to the community that was largely traumatised (van-Togerren, 2013).

District Peace Committees in the Karamoja Region, Uganda

There are District Peace Committees in Karamoja and Acholi regions in the North of Uganda. The key roles of the said peace structures include, "to prevent and resolve conflicts, assess the situation in the field and report or respond to an impending outbreak of violent conflict, in addition to following up and recovering stolen or raided livestock" (van-Togerren, 2013).

National Peace Committee in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the National Peace Committee has been instrumental in the promotion of peace. For instance, the National Peace Committee played critical role in ensuring a peaceful general election in Nigeria in 2015. Though the former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was himself committed to a peaceful election, the General Abdulsalami Abubakar led National Peace Committee however contributed in striking a balance between the presidential aspirants.

Ministry of Peace (MOP)

A ministry of peace is a governmental peace structure created at the cabinet level of the executive arm of government. Such an infrastructure for peace shall provide a political goal that is realistic, especially considering the immense potential support which such peace structure may garner across political spectrum. According to (Rivera, 2007, p.7), such peace architecture "must also provide a focus perspective that will encourage people to imagine the possibility of peace and permit them to overcome the fear that is

preventing care for the common good”. It must serve as link between the desire for domestic peace and that of global peace as well as the concern for peace with that for justice. Ministries and infrastructures for peace of various kinds are critical to effective promotion of peace and security.

The proposal for the creation of ministries of peace can be traced back to 1937, and according to Suter (1984, p. 40), “the Ministry of Peace proposal has not occurred in a vacuum. It has arisen partly out of the need to find alternatives to arms race but also partly as a fragment of a whole new move towards peace”. The proposal is anchored on a principle of Organisational change since a new quest for peace requires a new institution. The creation of cabinet-level ministries of peace is critical to mainstreaming peace perspective in government. Peace perspective in government can help channel peace perspective to grassroots level.

Suter (1984, p. 215) has argued that as soon as one government establishes a Ministry of Peace, others will begin to create it. Places outside Africa where Ministries of Peace had been created are, the Solomon Islands (Ministry for National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace) created in 2002, Nepal (Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation) created in 2007 and in Costa Rica (Ministry of Justice and Peace) created in 2009.

In Africa, South Sudan created such ministry in July 2011 and was known as the Ministry of Peace and Comprehensive Peace Agreement Implementation. It was mandated to promote peace, healing, reconciliation, unity and dialogue amongst institutions and the people of South Sudan. The Ministry has now been dissolved and a Peace Commission was created in its place. The Peace Commission is accountable to the President and the National Parliament. It is not responsible for the implementation of agreements with Sudan because it is an independent and impartial body.

The proposed overall function of a Ministry of Peace is to build a culture of peace. A culture of peace refers to “a collection of values, attitudinal conduct or behaviour as well as a ways of life which rebuffs violence and promotes violent prevention by addressing the root causes of violence in order to solve problems by the use of dialogue and negotiation involving individuals and groups as well as nations” (United Nations, 1998, p.6). The task of creating a culture of peace was one of the goals of United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). A Ministry of Peace must unify the various bases delineated by UNESCO in order to provide the leverage to create a culture of peace. The goal of creating a culture of peace was approved by a resolution A/RES/52/13 passed by the General Assembly of the United Nation.

To establish a more peaceful culture, there is the need to draw attention towards a political goal that is viable and can effectively garner broad or wider public support. At the same time, there is the need to establish or create an institutional base that will serve

as a lever for change: One key aspect of the resolution of the United Nations is that it imagines a cooperative work between Governments, the Public and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in order to establish a culture of peace. It appears obvious that to establish institutional support for a culture that is more peaceful, there is need for a bureaucratic lever within the frameworks of government and political forces that are external to it (Rivera, 2007, p.6). Eight features of a culture of violence have been recognized, and each of these has an alternative in a culture of peace. This is illustrated in the table below.

Table 2: Culture of peace in place of culture of violence

Culture of violence	Culture of peace
Belief in power that involves the use of force	Belief in dialogue to resolve conflict
Having enemies	Tolerance, solidarity, understanding
Authoritarian governance	Democratic participation
Secrecy and propaganda	Free flow of information
Armament	Disarmament
Exploitation of people	Human rights
Exploitation of nature	Sustainable development
Male domination	Equality of women and men

Source: Adams, 2005

In a culture of peace, parties in conflict often adopt the use of dialogue rather than fight to resolve any conflict. The people show high level of understanding, tolerate one another excesses or inadequacies even as they work towards a commonly acceptable point as well as show support or solidarity for their activities, while the act of enmity is shunned. A culture of peace welcomes equality of women and men, and popular participation in the governance of the affairs of the people, thereby giving room for true democracy to thrive against a dictatorial or authoritarian form of leadership. There is no restriction to the flow of information, as such creating a healthy environment that promotes freedom of press and discourages propaganda. It supports disarmament and confidence building against armament as means to promote deterrence, even as it rejects the exploitation of people and ecological exploitations for the promotion of sustainable development in the society and the nonviolent expression of human rights and responsibility.

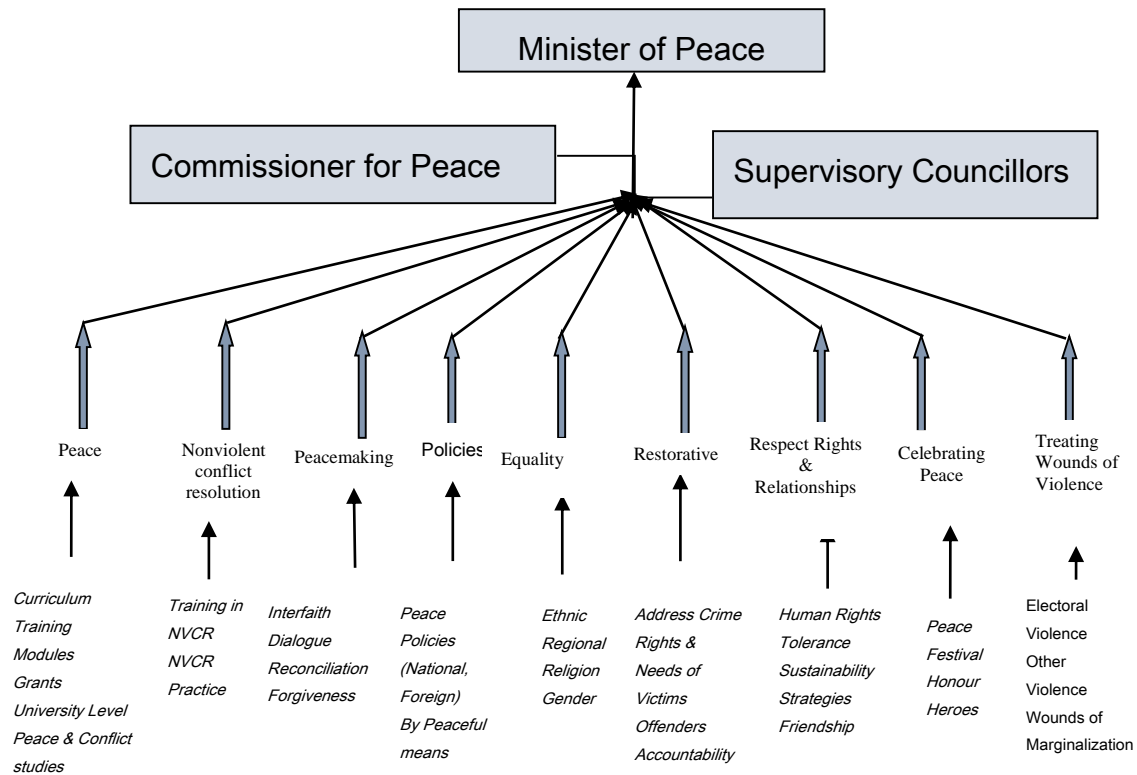
Hence, to entrench a culture that supports sustainable development, human rights, equality of women and men, disarmament and small arms control, free flow of information, democratic participation, and tolerance, solidarity, understanding as well as belief in dialogue to resolve conflict, there is the need to institutionalise peace through the creation of Ministries of Peace. In Africa, there is indeed an overwhelming need for infrastructures for peace, such as cabinet-level Ministries of Peace in Governments, Local Peace Committees in local communities and Peace Clubs in schools, in order to uproot a culture of violence and replace it with a culture of peace in the continent.

The quest for peace by peace activists and advocates including peace loving Africans stimulated the increasing calls for the creation of various infrastructures for peace in the continent. Most campaigns and advocacy for the creation of Ministries of Peace are led by Civil Society Organisations and individuals who are calling on their Governments to establish such peace structure. Civil Society Organisations such as Nigerian Alliance for Peace (NAP) working in conjunction with Centre for Peace and Rehabilitation of Displaced Persons, South Africa Peace Alliance (SAPA) among others working under the auspices of African Alliance for Peace (AAP) which is part of the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace, have over the years been largely committed to campaigns and advocacy for the creation of cabinet-level Ministries of Peace and other infrastructure for peace in Africa.

In Nigeria, for instance, the campaign flag-off event for a Ministry of Peace was Organised by Nigerian Alliance for Peace in May 2008 in Ibadan, Nigeria. This was followed by the 2nd African Alliance for Peace international summit held in Abuja in 2010. The first summit was held in Ghana in 2008. The summits were organized by AAP -the African regional arm of Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (www.gamip.org) calling on Governments worldwide to create cabinet-level Ministries of Peace.

Civil Society Organisations in Nigeria and members of the “Civil Society played vital roles in the entrenchment of the country’s democratic project” (Irene, 2017, p.204), their energy and influencing capacity to have the government establish a cabinet-level Ministry of Peace cannot be denied. Some of the specific tasks of a Ministry of Peace according to Irene (2013, p.23) are illustrated in the figure below.

Fig. 1: What a Ministry of Peace might look like



Promoting Peace Education

Promoting peace-learning and peace education through a curriculum development is critical to achieving progress in the promotion of peace and nonviolence in schools. According to Ardizzone (2003), peace education has evolved from studies connected to war and its prevention. It is committed to violence prevention in order to establish a peaceful system.

There is a dynamic relationship between peace education and peace practice. A Ministry of Peace has the political will and potentials to help promote peace education. World Bank (2005, p. 60) summarises the lessons learned from case studies of peace education initiatives, and this supports the argument that peace education cannot be seen in isolation from the wider picture of education. As such, a Ministry of Peace is expected to work in collaboration with Ministry of Education to ensure that peace-learning is well promoted both formally and informally.

Promoting Restorative Justice

The African traditional society was rich in the application of restorative justice as against the legal justice approach. Unlike the legal justice approach that is punitive conscious in dealing with offenders, restorative justice is anchored on the rights and needs of crime victims. It sees crime as harm for which the individual or group of persons responsible must be held accountable, while at the same time focuses its attention on the key value of restorative justice, which is healing the wounds, and at the same time transforming the role of the society in addressing crime. Furthermore, it approaches offenders' accountability through the promotion of reparations and rehabilitation rather than punishment (Kgosimore 2001, p. 41). A Ministry of Peace shall help in the promotion of restorative justice in the society through the promotion of restorative justice programmes including supporting trauma-affected people and healing the wounds of violence.

Promote Equality and National Integration

There is no denying the fact that inequality -an outcome of structural violence, has remained one of the root causes of violent conflicts in Africa. On the contrary, equality is a key factor in the promotion of socio-peace and unity. In fact, the formula for peace is equality, equity and mutual respect (Mattok, Seneli & Byrne, 2011, p.6). A Ministry of Peace shall be instrumental to building new socio-political structure, religious tolerance, national integration, ethnic and regional balance as well as gender balance including political participation, in order to reduce major causes of violence.

Peace-making and Civilian Peacekeeping

According to Pepinsky (2006), "peace-making focuses on how to make relationship warmer and most secured" (p. 428). Equally important as much as the outcome is the process itself, in fact, it is an accepted wisdom that process is a significant aspect of peace-making (Ker-Lindsay, 2010, p. 62). It is the task of a Ministry of Peace to follow up with the process for a fair and transparent process. A ministry of peace would be responsible for the use of peace-making and the widespread training of mediators to assist peace-making, and shall be committed to building peace-making efforts among conflicting cultures.

The role of civilian peacekeeping in peace support operations appears to be under researched and not widely known. Hence, it will be one of the tasks of a Ministry of Peace to promote knowledge, research and practices, in the area of civilian peacekeeping which mainly involves the roles of the non-military personnel during peace support operations.

Promote Respectful Relationship and Friendship

Building relationship and friendship is essential to peaceful co-existence within and between societies. It helps in reducing the likelihood of violence, especially considering the fact that when friends have conflict, dialogue should normally be adopted rather than violence in addressing the conflict. A ministry of peace would be responsible for promoting respectful relationship and friendship in the country.

Promote Non-Violent Conflict Resolution Skills

A Ministry of Peace would be responsible for promoting the skills of non-violent conflict resolution in the country. These skills focus on dialogue between conflict stakeholders in anticipation that outcome acceptable to each party can be identified. The Ministry would promote the learning and practice of these methods among the citizens, and establish institutions for mediation and conflict resolution, where parties that have not been able to resolve their conflicts can do so. In short, the Minister of Peace shall be “responsible for the non-violent resolution of conflicts with a strong concern for personal and social justice” (Suter, 2004, p. 174).

Healing the Wounds of Violence

For the victims of all forms of direct violence, a Ministry of Peace would be responsible for coordinating the healing activities and support. This would help promote reconciliation and forgiveness critical to positive peace.

Peace Policy

A Ministry of Peace would be responsible for the development, co-ordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of government foreign and national peace policies. A Ministry of Peace is crucial to directing government policy towards nonviolent resolution of conflict and to seek peace by peaceful means in all conflict areas.

Conclusion

Experiences from a cross-section of communities in Africa have shown that standing peace structure can indeed help promote sustainability in conflict intervention and transformation, violent prevention and peacebuilding as well as peace-making in local communities and the African society at large.

Typical examples of how National Peace Council and Local Peace Committees have helped curtail violence is seen in Ghana and Kenya experiences, and this has contributed in raising confidence in Africa on the efficacy of infrastructure for peace. Given this, it is important for state and non-state actors to work towards the creation of infrastructures for peace in various African societies.

Governance is also about conflict management, and a Ministry of Peace can indeed help inject peace perspective in Government and promote state-building. Infrastructure for peace is critical to promoting a culture of peace in any society, and should be encouraged in Africa by all a sundry.

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