



HARVARD Kennedy School

JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

HARVARD AFRICA POLICY JOURNAL

VOLUME 7, 2010–2011

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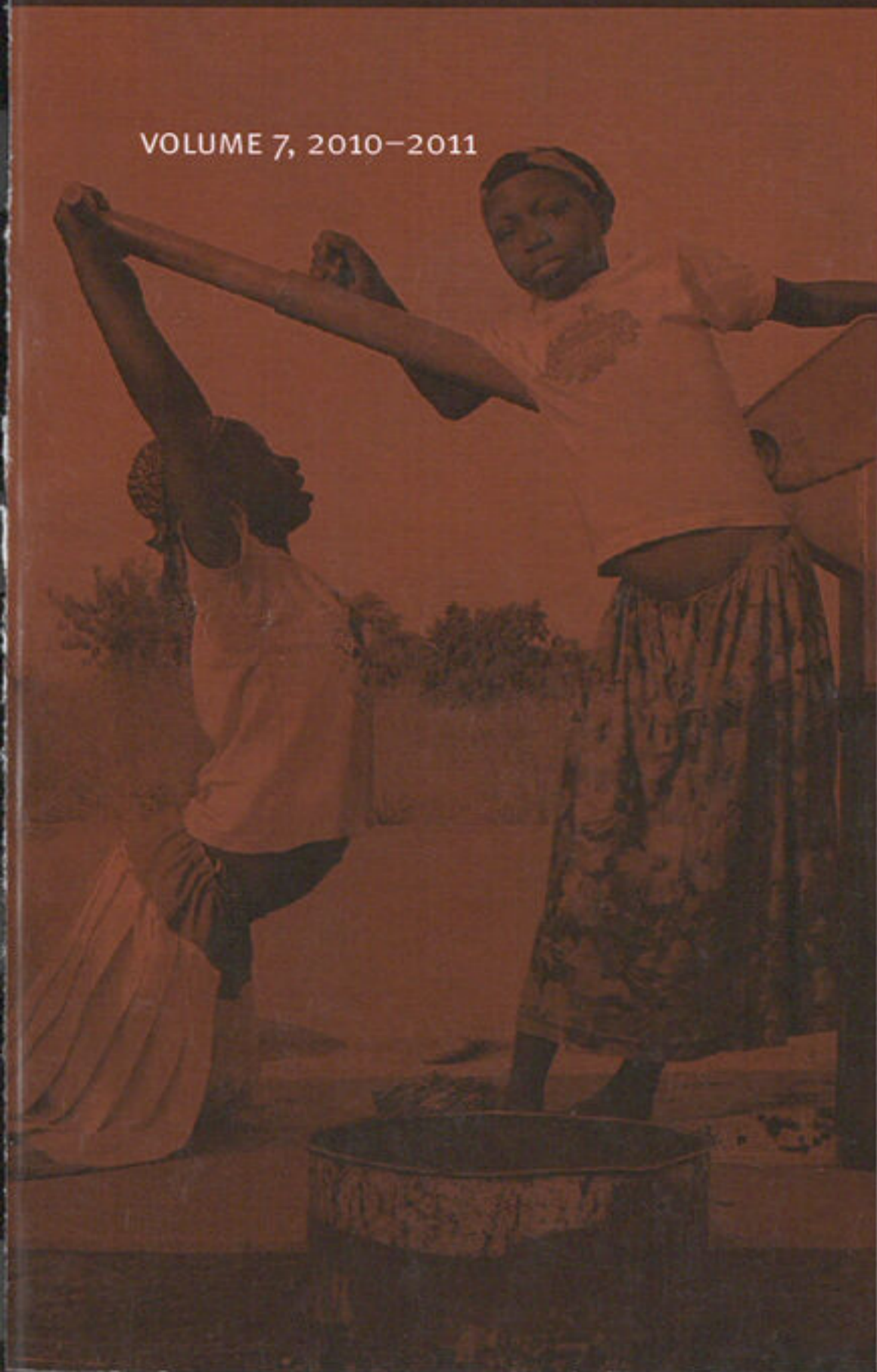
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PHOTO ESSAY

Life Without Lights



COVER PHOTOGRAPH is by Peter DiCampo, whose work is also featured in "Life Without Lights: A Photoessay."

In the cover photo, from the series "The Fiery Serpent," children wait to fetch water at a drilled borehole well in Wantugu, Ghana. Several such wells have been installed as an attempt to solve the village's severe water shortage, but the water table in the ground is too low, and sometimes it can take up to forty-five minutes to fill a single head-pan of water. Wells like this one are free of Guinea worm, but cannot provide enough drinking water for the entire community.

Guinea worm, scientifically called *Dracunculiasis* and nicknamed The Fiery Serpent based on presumed biblical references, is a water-borne parasite that causes a painful blister from which a worm emerges. The disease can be so debilitating that a patient is unable to walk for several days or even weeks until the worm is completely removed.

Closely tied to issues of water shortage, Guinea worm is spread when a patient with an emerged worm walks inside a source of drinking water and the worm lays its eggs. In Ghana's Northern Region, many communities have only one small, contaminated dam from which they fetch their drinking water, causing the area to be one of the few remaining places on earth that are highly endemic with Guinea worm disease.



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We are incredibly grateful to our generous donors without whom this issue would not have been possible. Our thanks go out to Antoine Artiganave, Rachel Tulchin, Adibeli Nduku-Agwu, and Nishan Degnarain as well as the following institutions at the Harvard Kennedy School: The Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy; the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business & Government; and the Women and Public Policy Program.

Finally, our gratitude goes to *Africa Policy Journal* alumni. We thank our founder and Kennedy School alum, Sam Unom, whose vision and dedication to African policy we are honored to carry on, as well as the *Africa Policy Journal* alumni who supported us with their wisdom, ideas, and insights from around the globe.

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EDITORS' REMARKS

We are proud to introduce the seventh edition of the *Harvard Africa Policy Journal* (APJ).

This edition marks the journal's third year of print publication. As part of our continuing effort to amplify new perspectives and underrepresented voices in African development policy, this year we solicited submissions that reflect on Africa at fifty years of independence, report progress on the Millennium Development Goals as viewed from the ground, and present innovative solutions or challenge conventional wisdom in the field.

This year, we received a record number of submissions from all over Africa, the United States, and Europe. We are pleased to present the resulting collection of insightful, intellectually rigorous, and policy-relevant pieces. Samuel Atuobi's assessment of the Economic Community of West African States' work in mediation illustrates both the need for, and unique capacity of, African institutions to play an innovative role in solving regional conflict. Peter DiCampo's photo essay reflects on the challenges and progress of infrastructural development in a uniquely vivid way—through portraits of life without electricity in the rural north of Ghana. *APJ's* conversation with Christopher Fomunyoh of the National Democratic Institute considers elections at the half-century anniversary of African independence, touching upon the January 2011 referendum in South Sudan and the 2010 presidential elections in Ivory Coast.

These are but a small sampling of what our seventh edition offers. We are especially pleased to publish an even more robust version of this volume on our newly launched Web platform. Hosted by Harvard University, the new Web site is part of our effort to increase access for readers from across the globe. Our deepest gratitude to the dedicated editorial staff of *APJ*, without whom this edition would not have been possible.

Happy reading.

Elana Safran
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The Progress and Potential of African Economies and Selected Implications for African Policy Makers

by Mutsa Chironga, Acha Leke, and Susan Lund

Mutsa Chironga is an Engagement Manager at McKinsey & Company's sub-Saharan office, where Acha Leke is a Senior Partner. Susan Lund is Director of Research at the McKinsey Global Institute, McKinsey & Company's business and economics research arm.

AFRICA'S RECENT GROWTH: MORE THAN A RESOURCES BOOM

Africa's economic pulse has quickened, infusing the continent with a new commercial vibrancy. Africa's real gross domestic product (GDP) rose 4.9 percent per year from 2000 through 2008, more than twice its pace in the 1980s and 1990s making it the third fastest-growing region in the world, after Emerging Asia and the Middle East. Moreover, Africa's growth was widespread: of Africa's thirty largest economies (which together account for 97 percent of Africa's combined GDP), all expanded from 2000 through 2008, and twenty-seven of them grew more rapidly than in the 1990s.¹

Though Africa has certainly benefitted from the surge in commodities prices over the past decade,² the commodities boom explains only part of Africa's broader growth story. Natural resources accounted directly for just 24 percent of Africa's GDP growth from 2000 through 2008. The remaining three-fourths came from other sectors.

Key reasons behind this growth surge include enhanced political stability as African governments ended several deadly conflicts and healthier economies as governments reduced their average inflation rate from 22 percent in the 1990s to 8 percent after 2000, trimmed their foreign debt by one-quarter, and shrunk their budget deficits by two-thirds. In addition, African governments adopted pro-business, microeconomic reforms such as privatizing state-owned enterprises, increasing trade openness, lowering corporate taxes, and strengthening regulatory and legal systems.³ Although many governments have a long way to go in this regard, these microeconomic reforms helped fuel an African productivity revolution across sectors and countries, resulting in average annual productivity growth of 2.7 percent per year since 2000, in contrast to negative productivity growth in the preceding two decades.

AFRICA'S PROMISING LONG-TERM GROWTH PROSPECTS

While short-term risks remain, Africa's long-term growth prospects are strong, propelled by both external trends in the global economy and internal changes in Africa's domestic society and economy. To start, the global race for commodities will continue to fuel Africa's economic growth. McKinsey Global Institute research finds that the world's liquid fuel

consumption will increase 25 percent over the next decade. Projections of demand for many hard minerals show similar growth. Meanwhile Africa boasts an abundance of riches: 10 percent of the world's reserves of oil, 40 percent of its gold, and 80 to 90 percent of chromium and platinum metal groups.

And those are just the known reserves; no doubt more lies undiscovered.

At the same time, Africa is gaining increased access to international capital. The annual flow of foreign direct investment into Africa increased from \$9 billion in 2000 to \$62 billion in 2008, an amount that exceeded both aid and remittances. And while Africa's resource sectors have drawn the most new foreign capital, it has also flowed into tourism, textiles, construction, banking, and telecom, as well as into a broad range of countries. Today, the rate of return on foreign investment is higher in Africa than in any other developing region in the world, a fact conducive to continued high foreign investment into the continent.

Domestically, three seismic demographic shifts will provide fuel for growth. First, in many African countries, healthy urbanization is already boosting productivity, demand, and investment and will likely continue to do so if well-managed. In 1980, just 28 percent of Africans lived in cities. Today, the number is 40 percent, a portion comparable to China's and larger than India's. By 2030, 50 percent will be urban dwellers and the continent's

top 18 cities will have combined spending power of \$1.3 trillion.

Second, Africa's working-age population is projected to expand from more than 500 million people today to more than 1.1 billion by 2040, overtaking China's and India's workforces.

Over the past three decades, an expanding workforce has contributed two to three percentage points to Africa's real GDP growth. With the needed education and skills, Africa's growing workforce should continue to contribute to growth.

Finally, many Africans are joining the ranks of the world's consumers. In 2000, roughly 48 million African households had an income of \$5,000 or more,⁴ the threshold above which they start spending roughly half of their income on nonfood items. By 2020, there will be 128 million such households. Already today, Africa has more middle-class households (defined as those with annual incomes of \$20,000 or more) than India.

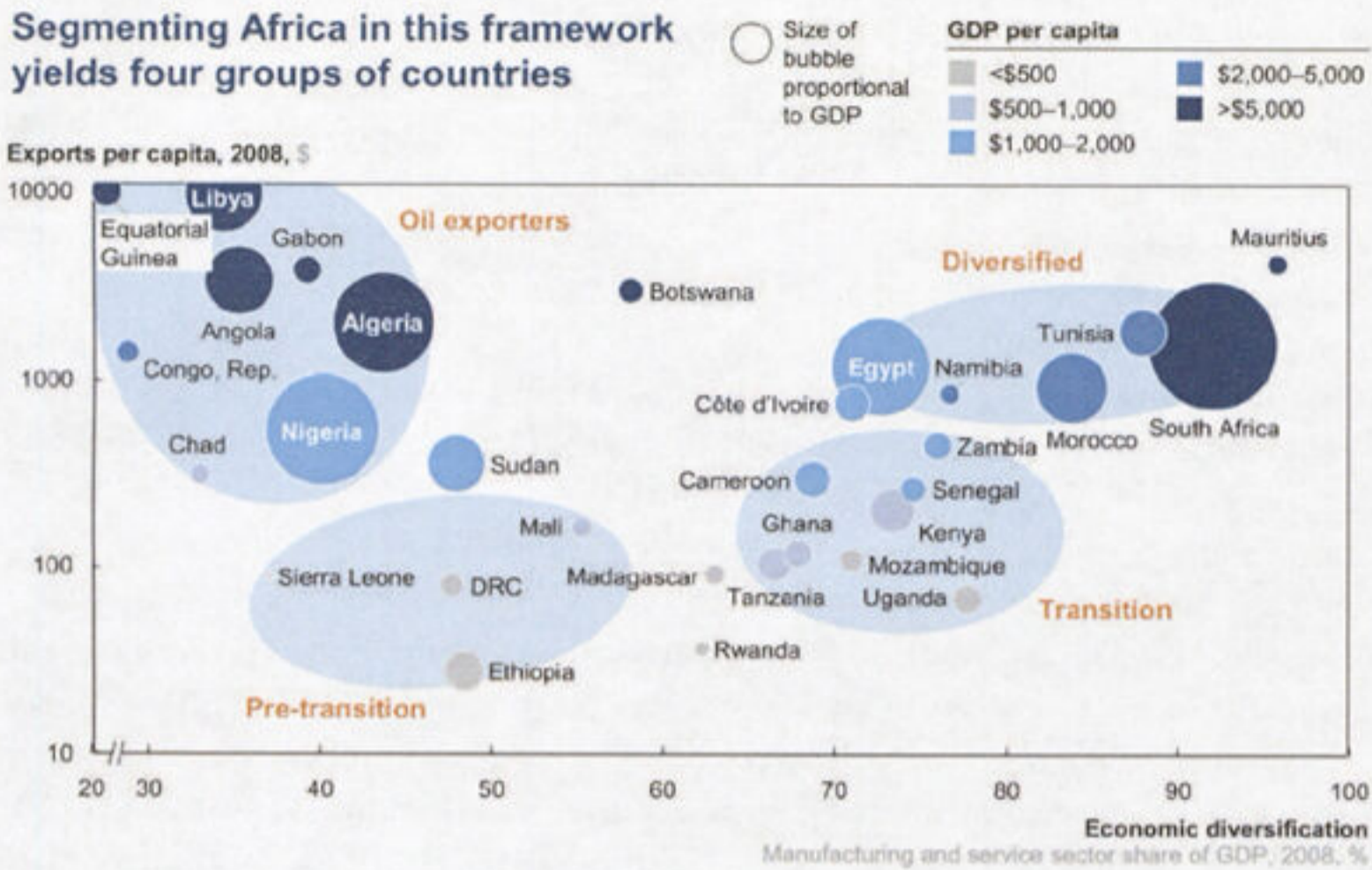
Africa's rising consumption will create more demand for local products, sparking a cycle of rising domestic growth.

AFRICAN ECONOMIES' DIVERSE GROWTH PATHS

While Africa's collective long-term prospects are strong, countries' individual growth trajectories will differ. In our research, we classify twenty-six of Africa's largest countries⁵ according to their levels of economic diversification and exports

❖ *Africa's long-term growth prospects are strong, propelled by both external trends in the global economy and internal changes in Africa's domestic society and economy.*

Figure 1 — Economic diversification and exports per capita in four groups of countries in Africa



per capita.⁶ Taking this approach, four groups of countries emerge, each with different growth opportunities and challenges (see Figure 1).

Diversified Economies: Africa's Growth Engines

Africa's four most advanced economies—Egypt, Morocco, South Africa, and Tunisia—are already broadly diversified. Manufacturing and services together account for 83 percent of their combined GDP with domestic services, such as construction, banking, telecom, and retail, accounting for more than 70 percent of their growth since 2000. While domestic consumption has been the largest contributor to growth in these countries, increasing at 3 to 5 percent annually since 2000, the diversified economies face the challenge of expanding their exports. Apart from Egypt, these countries' exports have grown much more slowly than those of other emerging markets.

This is in part because these countries' unit labor costs (wages divided by output per worker) are two-to-four times higher than those in China and India. Like other middle-income countries, such as Mexico, Malaysia, or Brazil, these African countries must move toward producing higher-value goods and continue to build on their competitive advantages, which include their proximity to Europe and facility with European languages.

OIL EXPORTERS: ENHANCING GROWTH THROUGH DIVERSIFICATION

Africa's oil and gas exporters have both the highest GDP per capita and the least diversified economies with manufacturing and services contributing just one-third of GDP. Economic growth in these countries remains closely linked to oil and gas. The three largest producers—Algeria, Angola, Nigeria—earned \$1 trillion from petroleum exports from 2000 through 2008, compared with just

\$300 billion in the 1990s. And for the most part, they used this revenue to reduce budget deficits, fund investments, and build their foreign exchange reserves. However, they still have some distance to travel in terms of diversification. For example, Indonesia's manufacturing and services account for 70 percent of GDP, compared with less than 45 percent in Algeria and Nigeria—even though all three countries have produced similar quantities of oil since 1970. Africa's oil exporters generally have strong economic growth prospects if they can use their petroleum wealth to make continued investments in infrastructure and education and undertake further economic reforms to spur a dynamic business sector. But like other petroleum-rich countries, they face acute challenges in maintaining political momentum for reforms and maintaining political stability—in short, avoiding the “oil curse” that has afflicted other oil exporters around the world.

Transition Economies: Building on Current Gains

Africa's transition economies—such as Ghana, Kenya, and Senegal—have lower GDP per capita than the first two groups but have begun the process of diversifying their economies. The agriculture and resources sectors together account for as much as 35 percent of the transition countries' GDP and two-thirds of their exports. But they increasingly export manufactured goods, particularly to other African countries. As they have diversified, their annual real GDP growth has accelerated from 3.6 percent a year in the 1990s to 5.5 percent after 2000.

Expanding intra-African trade will be one key stepping stone for the transition economies' future growth. They are small individually, but their prospects improve

as regional integration creates larger markets. Ultimately, the transition countries could compete globally with other low-cost manufacturing exporters if they improve their infrastructure and regulatory systems. For example, one study found that factories in these African countries are as productive as those in China and India, but the Africans' overall costs are higher because of poor infrastructure and regulation—problems that could be fixed with the right policy reforms (Ramachandran et al. 2009).

Pre-Transition Economies: Embedding the Basics

Africa's pre-transition economies are still very poor, with GDP per capita of just \$353. However, three of the largest—the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, and Mali—grew at an average 7 percent per year since 2000, after no growth in the 1990s. Nonetheless, their growth has been erratic at times and could falter again. Although they differ greatly in their individual circumstances, they typically suffer a lack of basics such as good governance, stable macroeconomic conditions, and sustainable agricultural development. Their key challenges will be to maintain peace, get their economic fundamentals right, and create a more predictable business environment—conditions essential for growth. They can hasten progress with the support of international development agencies and new private philanthropic organizations that are developing new ways to tackle poverty and other social issues.

❖ *Africa's economies have stirred in the past decade, growing at an accelerated rate of close to 5 percent per year, the third-fastest growth rate of any region in the world.*

A PRO-GROWTH POLICY AGENDA FOR AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS

Four clear policy implications flow from the preceding analysis. They are by no means exhaustive. Clearly, there are many other important policy challenges for the continent in areas such as health care, the environment, reducing corruption, and so forth, but they fall beyond the scope of this article. The four policy implications outlined in this section stem directly from this research and are among the most important for Africa to address to sustain and boost its economic growth.

Maintain Political and Macroeconomic Stability and Adopt Further Microeconomic Reforms

As outlined earlier, foreign direct investment into Africa grew more than sixfold from \$9 billion in 2000 to \$62 billion in 2008 and GDP growth increased to an average of 4.9 percent per annum between 2000 and 2008. To build on this momentum, a critical prerequisite is to sustain political and macroeconomic stability. If any one of Africa's major economies falls into political conflict, investor sentiment toward these countries, or indeed the continent at large, could worsen dramatically. Hence, policy makers must keep inflation low, government fiscal balances robust, and government debt manageable—all key to attracting long-term, job-creating investments. In addition, pro-business

microeconomic reforms must continue apace. Our analysis showed that GDP growth accelerated by two percentage points more in the countries that adopted such reforms than in those that did not. For instance, liberalization of the telecommunications sector helped propel telephone penetration in Africa from 2 percent in 2000 to 36 percent in 2008. Microeconomic reforms can be a catalyst for investment and growth in other sectors that are operating below their potential. For example, in the power sector, additional private investment would enable faster growth in generation capacity, and in the financial sector, many financial products are under-penetrated, for example, mortgages, credit cards, insurance, and so on.

Catalyze Infrastructure Investment

We estimate that Africa's infrastructure investment needs could be as high as \$200 billion per year by 2020. In spite of \$72 billion of average annual infrastructure investment in Africa from 2005 through 2008, we estimate Africa already needs an additional \$46 billion of infrastructure investment per annum immediately. Of this "infrastructure gap," \$34 billion is in energy alone. By some estimates, several African countries, including Nigeria, South Africa, Morocco, and Angola, will each need more than 10 gigawatts (GW) of additional generating capacity in the next decade. Several emerging economies (e.g., China, Brazil, and Mexico) have

increased their energy-generation capacity by more than 20 GW since 1990. These economies used private-sector participation to catalyze investment in their energy sector, in particular through independent power producers.⁷ In addition, as more Africans move into cities, their economies will require large urban infrastructure investments in areas such as housing, transport, water, and sanitation. In countries that have managed to catalyze such investments, such as Morocco, the infrastructure has broadly kept up with the urban population growth while creating new jobs in the construction sector.

Educate Africa's Future Workforce

As discussed earlier, Africa's working-age population is increasing. This will be a boon to growth if the continent's young people are educated enough to be productive workers. So far, Africa has made commendable strides in increasing its primary and secondary school enrollments. Since 1999, primary school enrollment has reached 76 percent, up by fourteen percentage points, while secondary school enrollment has reached 35 percent, up ten percentage points.

However, the quality of education, as measured by grade five and grade six scores in reading and math, has regressed in several countries, including Zambia, Tanzania, Senegal, and Cameroon, despite spending comparable to that of other countries.⁸ Spending levels, by themselves, are not enough to ensure quality. Studies show that adding teachers and resources does not necessarily improve student learning. Among other things, it is important to provide better teacher training, more detailed and scripted lesson plans, strong school leadership, and robust performance management

systems. Ghana and Tunisia have shown that successes are possible, recording among the largest gains in the world in science scores from 2003 to 2007—improvements that other African governments should learn from and aspire to.

Deliver on Intra-Regional Integration

Greater intra-regional integration can create larger-scale markets out of many relatively small national economies and exposes African firms to regional competition. However, although there are more than a dozen overlapping regional economic groups and trade zones, Africa's intra-regional trade remains at 12 percent of its total trade, extremely low relative to that of other regions.⁹ This is in large part because few African countries produce the manufactured goods that constitute most of Africa's imports. Secondly, Africa's cumbersome bureaucratic procedures and poor transport infrastructure frustrate importers and exporters. For example, it takes thirty-nine days to import goods into Africa, compared to an average twenty-five in Brazil, India, and China.

However, in spite of the challenges, between 2000 and 2008, trade within the East African Community countries of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, trebled to more than \$1.4 billion, up by 21 percent per annum since 2000.

More broadly, in Africa's transition economies—such as Kenya, Tanzania, and Ghana—manufacturing exports have grown 27 percent per year since 2000, compared with 16 percent per year for their commodity exports. Interestingly, more than 62 percent of their manufacturing exports are for the regional market. Regional markets can serve as an important stepping stone for Africa's manufacturing exporters as they move toward

competing in global markets, and as such an important enabler of the industrialization of African economies.

CONCLUSION

Africa's economies have stirred in the past decade, growing at an accelerated rate of close to 5 percent per year, the third-fastest growth rate of any region in the world. Our analysis suggests Africa's growth prospects remain strong due to several structural trends. However, to sustain and further accelerate Africa's growth, African governments will do well to sustain macroeconomic and political stability and pro-business reforms; catalyze investment in infrastructure, including through private-sector participation; increase not only the quantity but also the quality of education; and continue to promote intra-regional trade. Among other policy imperatives, these four will be important to fueling Africa's future development and prosperity.

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FOR FURTHER READING

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ENDNOTES

¹ The information in this article stems from original research by the McKinsey Global Institute Africa team, published in Roxburgh et al. 2010. Unless otherwise cited, assume the information and facts and figures herein are derived from the research for that report.

² Oil prices rose from under \$20 per barrel in 1999 to more than \$145 in 2008. Prices for minerals, grain, and other raw materials also soared on rising global demand.

³ Among numerous other examples of microeconomic reforms, Nigeria privatized more than 116 enterprises between 1999 and 2006; Morocco and Egypt struck free-trade agreements with major export partners; Rwanda lowered its export tariffs and corporate tax rates; Nigeria consolidated its banking sector, reducing the number of banks from eighty-nine to twenty-four; and South Africa enacted the National Credit Act in 2007, helping to prevent its consumers from becoming as heavily indebted as those in many other countries.

⁴ Measured in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP). This takes into account the relative prices of non-tradable goods in different countries.

⁵ These countries had either GDP of roughly \$10 billion or greater in 2008 or a GDP growth rate of at least 7 percent per year from 2000 to 2008.

⁶ This is because our analysis suggests that economic diversification is associated with long-term development in a wide range of African and non-African countries and because exports per capita are an indicator

of an economy's ability to import the capital goods required to build a modern economy's infrastructure.

⁷ Independent power producers (IPPs) are a popular method for securing private-sector participation in power generation. Typically IPPs work by an independent investor being granted a concession to build a power station. The government typically guarantees to buy the output of the power station or at least offers a (partial) guarantee to buy it in the case where the IPP cannot recover its revenue from the private customers.

⁸ For example, African countries collectively spend 5 percent of their combined GDP on education, only marginally lower than the OCED countries' 6 percent, but greater than the equivalent proportion in Latin America and some Asian countries. Furthermore, African governments spend about 20 percent of their government budgets on education, almost twice the OECD level of 11 percent.

⁹ For example, see the intra-regional trade percentages in the following: Western Europe (61 percent), Asia-Pacific (39 percent), and Latin America (21 percent). Moreover, more than half of intra-Africa trade is in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), where South Africa is a major trading partner.

Puntland and the Quandary of Somali Piracy

by Mohamed Samantar and David K. Leonard

Mohamed Samantar is Professor of Economics, Puntland State University. Samantar was trained as an economist at the Somali National University (1969-1973) with the assistance of the University of Padua (Italy) and also as a development economist (1976-1979) in Italy. Samantar obtained his DPhil in development studies (1990-1994) from the University of Sussex (U.K.) with a thesis on the development of pastoralists' strategies in the region of Nugaal (Puntland). Samantar, by the same token, has developed strategies of pastoral conflict resolution based on cooperative game theories substantiated, among others, with case histories by Nugaal pastoralists. Most recently (June 2007-December 2008), Samantar joined the UNFPA Project in Puntland as a development economist for the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC). Since 2009, he has been the UNDP-MoPIC project's team leader for the Macro-Economic & Public Sector Reform Unit.

David K. Leonard, Professorial Fellow in Governance, Institute of Development Studies (Sussex), has spent his career, dating back to 1963, working on governance issues in sub-Saharan Africa. He has lived for more than a dozen years in four African

countries and done short-term work in another twenty. His graduate teaching and supervision of doctoral candidates (of which he has had more than seventy) have covered governance issues in the whole of the developing world. The theme underlying most of his work has been methods of improving the delivery of public services in the rural areas of Africa, both directly through managerial and policy reform and indirectly through partnerships with private actors. He has contributed to organization theory, the new institutional economics, and comparative politics and administration (including decentralization). He has employed a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods in his research.

Somali piracy on the northeast Horn of Africa illustrates the complexities facing weak states and the mixed role members of the international community play regarding such states. To date, almost all of the piracy has been based in the fishing villages of Puntland, a semiautonomous region of northern Somalia, which faces the major shipping lanes of both the Gulf of Aden (leading to Suez and, thus, navigated by about 20,000 ships a year) and the Indian Ocean.

ORIGIN OF PIRACY IN SOMALIA

The origins of the piracy problem are international. After the collapse of the Somali state in 1991, illegal trawlers began fishing its seas with an estimated US \$300 million of tuna, shrimp, and lobster being taken each year. These foreign trawlers reportedly also used internationally prohibited fishing equipment, such as nets with very small mesh sizes and sophisticated underwater lighting systems. This process undeniably depleted stocks previously available to local fishermen. In addition, Puntland waters

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have been used for the dumping of toxic waste, including nuclear waste, which further damages the fisheries (UNEP 2005). European companies find it very cheap to get rid of their waste in Somali waters, at a cost of as little as US \$2.50 a tonne versus charges in Europe in the vicinity of US \$1,000 a tonne. Between illegal trawlers and the dumping of waste, Somalia's fishing industry has collapsed in the past nineteen years. Somali piracy began in 2005 with attacks on the vessels perpetrating this damage (Rice and Hassan 2008; Eden n.d.; Wikipedia n.d.b). Now that Somali entrepreneurs have recognized the profitability of piracy, however, almost all ships are vulnerable to attack and the economic recovery of Somali fishing alone is not going to stop it.

COMBATING PIRACY

Puntland is the northeastern region of the former Republic of Somalia that has jurisdiction over the largest part of the country's coast — about half or 1,600 km. The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia has nominal internationally recognized authority over this coastline. But the TFG is a state only in international law, faces serious domestic resistance from Islamic rebels, and has operational control over no more than a portion of the old capital of Mogadishu. The territorial government of Puntland recognizes the authority of the TFG but, unlike it, has established state institutions and a modicum of domestic order,

which matters greatly to the welfare of its people.

Nonetheless, the government of Puntland is weak and underfinanced, with most of its tiny budget of US \$26.8 million absorbed by still inadequate security services and less than 3 percent dedicated to social services (Ministry of Finance 2009). These conditions make it difficult for Puntland to impose solutions that serve the collective interests of its citizens. Puntland is unable to finance a coast guard to control its coastal waters.

Thus, the navies of two dozen nations, including NATO and China, have taken on the task of countering piracy in Somali waters (Lehr 2008; NATO 2010; UNEP 2005, 47). In addition, commercial vessels are taking more serious security measures, international aid has been pledged to Puntland for building a number of prisons in Garowe and Gardo and rehabilitating the Bossaso one (now holding 245 pirates), and assistance for the beginnings of a small coast guard is being provided by Saracen (a private security company).

Further, NATO navy commanders who patrol Somali waters have negotiated with elders—with Puntland's cooperation—in the coastal towns to drive out pirates. Local residents have complained that the presence of so many armed men in the form of the pirates makes them feel insecure and that their free-spending ways cause wild fluctuations in the local exchange rate and drive up prices. The

dissolute lifestyle of the pirates also is offensive to the conservative local Muslims (BBC News 2009). On the other hand, both fishermen and marine biologists attribute the recent growth of marine stock to the pirates scaring away the large factory trawlers of foreign fishing fleets. And there are many other residents who appreciate the rejuvenating effect that the pirates' onshore spending and re-stocking of fish has had on their impoverished towns. The presence of the pirates has often provided jobs and opportunity where previously there had been none.

into the district of Mudug, which is contested between the government of Puntland and Islamist rebel groups.

FUTURE EFFORTS TO CONTROL PIRACY

Further attempts to get Puntland officials and elders to control the pirates face two major dilemmas. First, since the Somali entrepreneurs who are planning and financing the piracy operations are largely outside of the country (Associated Press 2008) and now have resources that completely overshadow those of the Puntland government and its leaders, they could easily corrupt any efforts to contain

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Officials from Puntland have welcomed NATO patrols and approved the presence of private security contractors in their waters (Horseed Media 2010). As well as fighting piracy, Puntland would like to see these international security efforts extended to combating illegal fishing and toxic waste dumping (Basel Convention 1992; Waldo 2009).

These various efforts have had an effect. Although sources differ considerably on the exact figures, it does appear that the frequency of piracy attempts is still rising but that the percentages of successful captures have peaked (Costa 2010; Goodman 2011; Wikipedia n.d.a; Wikipedia n.d.b). Although the number of captures and the amount of ransoms demanded remain troubling, pirates appear to have left the various ports and villages they have used in the northern Puntland districts of Sanaag, Bari, and Nugaal. However, they have moved south

their endeavors and thereby undermine the fragile attempts to rebuild the capacities of the state. Second, even if Puntland (with NATO help) was successful in stopping pirates operating from Puntland's ports, the effect would be to push the pirates south into the territory of the Islamist forces. Capture of income from piracy by the latter would pose an additional problem to the international community.

Clearly, then, the primary focus of efforts against Somali piracy must be international and take place at sea. Arming the merchant vessels would create problems in international shipping law and put the lives of the crews at greater risk. An alternative would be for the vessels to move in convoys, accompanied by navy ships. At the moment, however, commercial owners and captains have refused this option as the cost of delays while waiting for a convoy to form is higher than the

insurance premiums against piracy (despite a reported tenfold increase). Finally, ships could be required to sail within strictly defined shipping lanes, where they would never be far from a protective naval vessel. For this option to be viable, however, all the navies engaged against piracy in the area would have to cooperate (which the Chinese so far are unwilling to do) and commercial captains would have to stop taking shortcuts outside the lanes (which they are resisting) (from interviews by author David Leonard in Rome, Italy, with NATO officers, 2010).

The point, in summary, then, is: the problem of Somali piracy was caused by undisciplined profit seeking by international fishing fleets; further measures against the pirates from within Puntland and elsewhere in Somalia are both infeasible and undesirable; however, pirates could be contained by convoys or shipping lanes if the international commercial merchant powers wished to do so. The focus of attention therefore should not be on Puntland but on the international community itself.

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Narco-TrAfrica: Why West Africa Is the World's Newest Alleyway for Illicit Substances and Why the Global Community Should Care

by Jason Warner

Jason Warner is a sub-Saharan Africa analyst for the U.S. Department of Defense in the Army's Foreign Military Studies Office. Warner holds an M.A. in African studies from Yale University, where he served as the editor-in-chief of the Yale Journal of International Affairs. Warner has a B.A. in international studies, Africa, from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has served as a research assistant for Nigeria's ambassador to the United Nations, interned at the United Nations Development Programme in Abuja, Nigeria, and worked as a public school teacher for the French government in Cayenne, French Guiana.

ABSTRACT:

Within the past five years, West Africa has seen a spike in the confiscation of illegal substances, most notably, cocaine. Due to the instability that this development portends in a region already beset by stability concerns and a lack of government capacity, a thorough understanding of the reasons underpinning West Africa's new narco-prominence is necessary. This article assesses how the new West African

drug trade undermines regional stability as well as U.S. and global security interests, investigating both the external (geopolitical) and internal (domestic African) factors creating the contemporary environment in which the drug trade exists. Specifically, it offers case studies of three countries—Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, and Mali—to contextualize this troubling situation.

TEXT:

For years, Baobab Island, a forgettable sliver of land off the coast of the oft-forgotten West African nation of The Gambia, played host to an equally unremarkable guesthouse. Owned by a Dutch national who also ran a local fishing company staffed by Venezuelans, the shabby inn received tourists only infrequently. But when Gambian authorities paid the inn a visit in June 2010, they found more than sun and sand; they found cocaine—nearly two and a half tons of it. Imported to the continent by the Venezuelan fisherman and hidden in the shell of the Dutchman's dilapidated hotel, the haul was valued at more than \$1 billion, making it the largest drug seizure ever in West Africa and serving as a symbol of the region's ever-growing prominence in narco-trafficking (Bojang 2010).

Historically only marginally involved in the global drug trade, West Africa has become one of the world's hottest spots for drug trafficking in the last five years. Between 2000 and 2003, cocaine seizures in West Africa amounted to an average of only 427.7 pounds annually (Vulliamy 2008), leading the United Nations (UN) to describe the problem of African drug trafficking generally as "insignificant" (Neal 1998). Recently, however, the continent's participation in the global

narco-trade has risen exponentially, primarily fueled by activity in West Africa. By 2006, cocaine seizures in Africa had increased to more than thirty-three times their 2000 levels to 16.5 tons (Vulliamy 2008) (see Table 1). Of the total African seizures of cocaine for that year, West and Central Africa accounted for an astronomical 96.8 percent. Current estimates suggest that some 50 tons of cocaine pass through West Africa each year, with two-thirds of all drugs reaching Europe having been transited through the region (McConnell 2009). At the time of this writing, the West African drug trade was worth an estimated \$6.8 billion (Editorial Board 2010).

As a result of the region's new prominence in the global narco-trafficking circuit—and the effects that this development has on regional and global security—a more thorough consideration of the reasons for this spike in trafficking is required. This article makes such an attempt.

the region. Specifically, this latter discussion centers on the roles played by low state capacity, poverty, and unique geography, as well as a specific “x factor” in three countries—Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, and Mali—in creating an environment conducive to narco-trafficking. The thrust of this essay is that it is the very confluence of both external (geopolitical) and internal (domestic African) factors that has made the region so attractive to West African narco-traffickers. Only by understanding the nexus of these can both the macro- and micro-processes underpinning the trade be comprehended and thus mitigated.

THE WEST AFRICAN DRUG TRADE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Paralleling the historically marginal role it has played in the global drug trade, West Africa has also languished on the periphery of global security interests. But apathy toward the region is a luxury that the international community can no longer

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This article first enumerates various ways that the recent upsurge in West African drug trafficking threatens regional, U.S., and global security interests. The article then focuses on the contemporary environment in which the drug trade exists, inclusive of the external (geopolitical) factors effectively “pushing” the trade to West Africa and the internal (domestic African) factors “pulling” trafficking to

afford if it is to tackle the trafficking problem. To be sure, though West African narco-trafficking is not a preeminent global security interest, the proliferation of drugs passing through the region does fundamentally undercut many efforts to bolster regional governmental capacity and stability.

Table 1 — Cocaine Seizures in Africa, 2000-2006, in Pounds*

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Cocaine	997.3	1,028.9	1,319.8	2,444	7,911.2	5,641.7	33,111.3

*Figures converted from kilograms in original document to pounds (Wylter and Cook 2010).

Most overtly, the connections between terrorist groups and the international drug trade have become clear. Reports from the U.S. State Department indicate complicity in West African drug trafficking by pro-Hezbollah members of the Lebanese diaspora living in the region, as well as members of the FARC rebel faction of Colombia (Wylter and Cook 2010). A 2008 report by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security revealed the existence of a clandestine air route (employed by craft as large as Boeing 727s) between South America and West Africa. Authorities revealed it to be used by FARC to send cocaine, arms, and other provisions to smugglers in the Sahel (Gaynor and Diallo 2010). The awaiting recipients: affiliates of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) (Gaynor and Diallo 2010). Apart from its connections with FARC, AQIM maintains friendly relations with drug traffickers of West African origin. In 2009, U.S. federal prosecutors accused three Malian nationals of running a trafficking ring through the Sahara. The Malian defendants revealed that members of Al Qaeda served as the security arm of their operation, and in exchange for their help, the traffickers frequently offered AQIM food and fuel (Traub 2010).

Moreover, the entrenchment of the drug trade puts in even greater peril a region characterized by its chronically unstable states. Through the efforts of bilateral partners from the United States and the European Union, as well as international

organizations like the United Nations, the international community has long been engaged in attempts to develop African state capacity, including efforts at democracy building, anticorruption campaigns, rule-of-law initiatives, and gender and human rights projects (Wylter and Cook 2010). Without a doubt, the transformation of the region into a trafficking hub hinders the pursuit of these objectives. Not only does narco-trafficking create black-market economies operating independently from state-taxation mechanisms, it further highlights to local citizens the gaping holes in their states' policing and national security capabilities. In a region where state consolidation has been a priority since independence, the recent influx of drugs only hampers such a pursuit.

Aside from its impact on stability and state capacity building efforts, the drug trade has decidedly deleterious impacts on human security in the region. The new presence of the drug trade obliges African states with already limited budgets to spend more on security measures to combat traffickers, thus rendering the states less able to offer the social protections of health care, education, and infrastructure so desperately needed by their populations. Further, as proven in South America and the Caribbean, a typical accompaniment of drug trafficking is violence. So-called turf wars between rival traffickers are common (e.g., in Juarez, Mexico, and Kingston, Jamaica), and frequently, innocent

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civilians are caught in the cross fire. Further, human rights are jeopardized as more people have taken to serving as drug mules, hiding drugs on their bodies while crossing international borders (Drug Policy Task Force 1996).

Epidemiologically, security is particularly threatened by increased intravenous drug use that follows an influx of cocaine and heroin into a region. Given that the African continent has the highest proportion of HIV/AIDS infected persons in the world, the potential for disease transmission is exacerbated with the greater availability of drugs (Drug Policy Alliance n.d.).

Cognizant of the instability that this development could breed, the United States and European countries are engaged in mitigating the spread of narco-trafficking in West Africa. For its part, the U.S. military's Djibouti-based Combined Joint Task Force — Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) has taken stock of the threat the West African drug trade engenders and has given assistance in communications training to the Mauritius Port Authority to help combat drug trafficking, among other threats, in the Indian Ocean (U.S. Embassy, Mauritius 2008). In West Africa, the United States has partnered with the archipelago nation of Cape Verde to stem the flow of ocean-bound drug shipments by supporting a maritime security coordination center near its capital of

Praia (Crawley 2010). Further, in 2007, the U.S. Navy along with several global allies, including France, Italy, Germany, and Brazil, established the African Partnership Station, a West African-based initiative intended to assist African navies to more effectively patrol their waters against piracy, terrorism, and drug and human trafficking (Jontz 2010).

As Europe is the most typical final destination for Africa's drugs, NATO too has become increasingly concerned with West Africa's newfound prominence in the global drug trade. European states like France and Britain have provided bilateral assistance in various forms, the most successful of which have been military (Ellis 2009). The two most notable European-funded antinarcotics centers are the France-based Mediterranean Anti-Drug Coordination Center and the Portugal-based Maritime Analysis and Operations Center—Narcotics (Wylter and Cook 2010). More recently, in a May 2009 ceremony in Abuja, the European Union collectively pledged 120 million to combat the flow of drugs (Amalu 2009).

Despite these truths, the reality is that in no way is the mitigation of the West African drug trade the most pressing foreign policy concern of the United States or its allies. Instead, thanks to narco-trafficking, the region represents a mid-level threat: not a full-blown crisis, but neither a development to be overlooked as innocuous. Thus, in a world of

exigencies, the United States and the rest of the world should be concerned about the state of the region not simply for what it currently is, but for what the future repercussions of a drug-filled West Africa could be for our allies both on the continent and around the globe.

For these reasons, the drug trade in West Africa necessitates attention if regional security is to be preserved. So as to aid in this pursuit, the remainder of this article brings into focus just why West Africa has seen such a spike in narco-trafficking in the past decade. The next section focuses on factors external to the region (related to the geopolitics of narco-trafficking), while the section that follows focuses on specific internal state-level criteria from Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, and Mali that make these areas so very attractive to those involved in global drug trafficking.

EXTERNAL FACTORS: THE GEOPOLITICS OF WEST AFRICAN NARCO-TRAFFICKING

As is the case with any type of trafficking, the drug trade in West Africa cannot be looked at in isolation, but must instead be situated within the context of the larger global narcotics community. Indeed, to understand West Africa's new prominence in this arena, one must understand the geopolitical conditions outside of the continent that led to this new rise.

To trace the flow of narcotics into West Africa, one must first begin with the point of origin: South America. The nations of Venezuela and Colombia are the producers of the majority of the cocaine passing through West Africa. Though long engaged in the drug trade, within recent years, traffickers from these states have been forced to retool their routes in accordance with new global realities. Historically, shipments were funneled

from South America to countries like Jamaica, Panama, and Mexico before making their way to Europe and the United States. However, tighter international policing of Central American and Caribbean routes has rendered these avenues increasingly difficult to navigate, and ever-powerful Mexican drug cartels have shut off access through their country (Vulliamy 2008). Moreover, the concurrent drop in cocaine demand from the United States coupled with the spike in demand from Europe has meant that market dynamics have shifted east, necessitating new routes (Traub 2010). Enter West Africa.

From South America, most drugs arrive to West Africa by airplane. The planes, which range from Cessna turboprops to Gulfstream II jets (Traub 2010; Logan 2010), are normally privately owned and are typically outfitted with fuel reinforcements (Traub 2010). The craft often land on abandoned or little-used airstrips in West Africa or simply use ad hoc runways, as did a Boeing 727 that touched down on a packed-sand runway created by camel caravans in Mali (Gaynor and Diallo 2010). Pilots carrying drugs are also known to request last-minute changes in landing location, hoping that airports accepting them at the spur of the moment will lack personnel to conduct thorough cargo screenings. Some pilots opt to put fake tail numbers on their craft. Others disguise themselves as humanitarian envoys, such as the narco-plane emblazoned with a fake Red Cross insignia that touched down in Sierra Leone's Lungi International Airport in 2008 (Gaynor and Diallo 2010).

Once inside West Africa, drugs are commonly brought to large African cities, at which point human drug mules transport them to Europe on commercial

flights. In this scenario, willing local participants either ingest or conceal pre-wrapped quantities of cocaine or other drugs on their person while flying from West African hubs such as Lagos, Nigeria, Dakar, Senegal, or Accra, Ghana, to Europe. One Nigerian commentator noted that amongst his female compatriots some “women . . . go as far as inserting the wraps in their private parts in the [sic] bid to escape detection” (Editorial

wrapped cocaine into the ocean miles off African shores, where local traffickers then retrieve them to bring ashore (Walt 2007). Once within the borders of African countries, a vast and complex network of transportation awaits.

Most frequently received on the littoral of West Africa—in states like Guinea-Bissau, The Gambia, Senegal, and Nigeria—the drug shipments must then find their way

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Board 2010). European nationals also take part in commercial smuggling, such as two Britons arrested in Accra’s international airport attempting to smuggle some six kilos of cocaine in their laptop bags (Times Online n.d.). One major boon to traffickers employing the commercial airways was the 2009 inauguration of the Turkish Airways flight from São Paulo, Brazil, to Dakar, Senegal, the first nonstop flight connecting South America to West Africa. Seizures of cocaine on that flight have already been made (Ellis 2009).

But airplanes are not the only means of transport; so too do boats make the trip across the Atlantic. Smugglers often use commercial fishing boats or smaller ships traveling only at night. During the day, the small ships, which can make the trip in four to five days, are covered with blue tarpaulins to avoid being spotted by surveillance craft above (Vulliamy 2008). Near land, the ships then drop parcels of

to the intended markets of Europe over land. Shipments are transported through the Sahel and Sahara deserts via truck or four-wheel-drive vehicles until they reach North Africa. Smugglers frequently travel through the Sahelian countries of Mali and Niger, employing routes once used by ancient nomadic traders to transport salt (Middle East Online 2010), which are today used for the movement of not only heroin and cocaine but also cigarettes, weapons, and even humans (UN News Centre 2008).

While drugs carried by mules via commercial plane have destinations of Paris or London, the shipments that cross the Sahara by truck or foot instead will enter Europe through the Mediterranean. Boats departing from Tunis, Tunisia, or Tangier, Morocco, will move the product into coastal states such as Italy and Croatia, where the UN has recorded traffickers working in partnership with Italy’s Calabrian mafia as well as what it terms “Balkan mobsters” (McConnell 2009). So

too do smugglers use the Spanish Canary Islands as a shipment point for drugs. Located some 154 miles from the coast of Western Sahara, in February 2009, Spanish officials on the archipelago intercepted a Venezuelan-crewed boat named the *Dona Fortuna* some 780 nautical miles from the island of Las Palmas. From that ship, law enforcement officials confiscated approximately five tons of cocaine (McConnell 2009).

While the vast majority of the drugs that flow through West Africa is ultimately destined for Europe, emerging market countries, in particular, China, are displaying increasing avarice for Africa's drugs. As the country's middle class of adults grows accustomed to the accoutrements enjoyed by their counterparts in the West, so too are China's youth gaining an appetite for recreational drugs, already popular amongst urban teenagers in Hong Kong. As Stephen Ellis astutely notes, given growing interactions between Chinese and African merchants as well as the country's massive consumer base, China has the potential to contribute more than any other country to the world's increased drug trade (2009). Similarly, increasingly affluent middle classes in other developing countries such as India, Turkey, and Brazil could also have the potential to drive up global drug demand.

INTERNAL FACTORS: THE DOMESTIC RECIPES OF GUINEA-BISSAU, NIGERIA, AND MALI

Unquestionable, then, is West Africa's newfound starring role on the stage of international narco-trafficking. In the previous section, the discussion focused on factors *external* to the African continent that have led to the region's heightened participation. In this section,

attention turns to *internal* country-level aspects of three West African countries that play an equally important role in explaining the region's rising participation. Low state capacity, poverty, and geography are not only common characteristics amongst Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, and Mali, but are also the very reasons that they have been so profoundly implicated in the global drug trade.

Guinea-Bissau

If popular nicknames are any indication of infamy, Guinea-Bissau's sobriquet as Africa's first "narco-state" should be telling (Hinshaw 2010). Nestled on the Western coast of Africa between southern Senegal and northern Guinea, the former Portuguese colony of Guinea-Bissau is undoubtedly West Africa's *problema do dia* in the fight against the transnational drug trade. As an example, in 2007, the value of cocaine passing through the country's borders was more than the country's total national income (Afrol News 2010).

Perhaps the most readily visible reason for Guinea-Bissau's narco-prominence is the troubling reality that it is, for all intents and purposes, a failed state. The country has been beset by chronic instability since its 1974 independence. An army-led coup in 1998 embroiled the country in civil war (Tran 2010). In 2009, the Bissauan army assassinated the president of the country, João Bernardo Vieira (BBC News 2009), and in April 2010, the country's prime minister, Carlos Gomes Júnior was captured by military forces and placed under house arrest (Tran 2010). Aside from political instability, the country is devoid of any semblance of a criminal justice system. Guinea-Bissau is infamous for having but one prison that, in all irony, lacks a

lockable door (Skelton 2010b). The prison has no water, no electricity, let alone a working phone, radio, or computer; all four of the country's police cars are in desperate need of repair (Walt 2007). Because of the government's poverty—it had an external debt of just over \$1 billion in May 2010 (Tran 2010)—civil servants go months without getting paid (Walt 2007), and the state's ability to provide basic goods and services to citizens is almost nonexistent. The rule of law carries little gravitas (Skelton 2010a). As one citizen mused, it is not surprising that the country is a hub for narco-traffickers: "Guinea-Bissau is a failed state anyway, so [for traffickers] it's like moving into an empty house" (Vulliamy 2008).

But this empty house is more akin to a hovel than a mansion; the country's very real poverty is the second domestic factor encouraging Guinea-Bissau's participation in the global narco-trade (U.S. Department of State 2010a). In a country where the average family lives on \$720 per year and the average lifespan is a meager 47.9 years, economic opportunities are limited (Walt 2007). Though average citizens do engage in the trade as one of Guinea-Bissau's few viable income-generating activities, members of the country's police and military—who are paid infrequently by the fledgling state—appear to be the country's most active traffickers (Guardian 2010). As exemplary of the collusion of the country's security apparatus with traffickers, in 2010, the United States named Jose Americo Bubo Na Tchuto, the former chief of staff of the Guinea-Bissau Navy, as one of the region's prime personalities hampering anti-trafficking efforts (Skelton 2010a). Tellingly, a local journalist quipped, "Everybody is saying that [the arrival of drug traffick-

ing] is a blessing from God because the government does not have the money to pay people" (Walt 2007).

In addition to its weak state capacity and pervasive poverty, Guinea-Bissau's coastal geography is the third factor that makes it a drug baron's playground. Off its west coast lie eighty-eight remote islands collectively known as the Bijagos archipelago (Gaynor and Diallo 2010), of which only twenty-one are officially inhabited, typically by fishermen and small-scale farmers (Skelton 2010a). Surveillance of them is low; only one "rusty old ship" patrols the entire 220 miles of the country's coastline (Vulliamy 2008). One observer noted that because of a lack of a Bissauan Coast Guard "small planes with cocaine coming from Venezuela and Colombia regularly land on [the uninhabited islands] before moving the drugs [to the mainland] by canoe" (Skelton 2010a). Further, Guinea-Bissau's forested interior, which is also largely outside of state control, presents problems. Though not currently a site for trafficking, observers worry that deep within the jungle new manufacturing labs may exist (Skelton 2010b).

Indeed it is precisely because of these three factors that Guinea-Bissau's "x factor"—its so-called narco-bourgeoisie—has been able to thrive. Beginning in 2004, handfuls of Colombians and Venezuelans—ostensibly working as exporters of fish and cashews (Walt 2007)—began moving to the country's capital city of Bissau and its outskirts, constructing what one observer called "exclusive Spanish-style haciendas with wide verandas, turquoise swimming pools and gates patrolled by armed guards" (Tran 2010). Though businessmen, their object of trade is not nuts or fish, but cocaine. This wealthy and growing cadre

of narco-traffickers has arguably filled the void left by the inefficient Bissauan state and, in collusion with the military, is profoundly undermining the already limited legitimacy of the national government. Their permanent presence and unrivaled material resources bode poorly for the future of the world's first narco-state.

Nigeria

"This house is not for sale," read spray-painted stenciling on otherwise new-looking homes in Lagos. After a spate of schemes in which fake Nigerian real estate agents would "sell" houses to buyers while the homes' real owners were away, many in the country were forced to make public declarations—in the form of such spray-paintings—to ward off would-be scammers. The fake house sale is but one of many so-called Nigerian "419" schemes, ploys infamous in the country intended to make quick, easy cash. Such scams are typical in Nigeria and exemplify the highly entrepreneurial, creative, and questionable lengths that some in the country will go to in order to generate income, including their very real participation in the narco-trade.

Despite a history of strong-armed attempts by the state to combat trafficking, including a 1984 decree handing down death by firing squad for those implicated in drug trafficking (Nigeria National Drug Law Enforcement Agency n.d.), the notoriously unstable government of Nigeria has limited capacity to fully monitor or mitigate drug flows, which have been on the rise in the past decade. Tasked with providing services to some 150 million people (it is Africa's largest country and the world's ninth-largest), the Nigerian state has historically been regarded suspiciously by its citizens,

who view it to be corrupt, lecherous, and maintained only by greedy elites. This perception does not help ingratiate the state—or its antinarcotics arm, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency—to its citizens. Frequently, law enforcement officers at local, state, and national levels are accused of protecting or working in collusion with traffickers (Vulliamy 2008). Lawmakers are themselves involved in the process, such as Nigerian politician Eme Zuru Ayortor who was caught in 2009 with some five pounds of swallowed cocaine in his stomach. When questioned as to his motives, Ayortor replied, "I needed to do it to finance my campaign" (CNN 2010).

To be sure, the low income levels of the average Nigerian have played an important role in the country's new narco-prominence. In 2008, per capita income in the country was \$1,160, and 70 percent of Nigerians were classified as poor (International Fund for Agricultural Development n.d.b). This widespread poverty coupled with insufficient opportunities for work has led some Nigerians to turn to the drug trade to meet familial obligations. Afolayan Elizabeth Adeniyo was arrested in November 2009 for attempting to smuggle cocaine on a flight to Paris. When questioned, the mother said that she became involved in trafficking to pay her children's school fees:

I lost my husband ten years ago and I have seven children. A lady that used to give me money and food is the one that led me into the drug business. She wanted to take my daughters but I refused. I want them to be educated because I could not go to school. She took me to Benin where I swallowed 60 bitter kola [nuts]. She then gave me N10,000 [approximately \$67]. After

that she gave me the drugs to swallow and took me in her car to Lagos airport. She promised to pay me 3,000 Euro [\$3,811], out of which she gave me 1,000 Euro [\$1,270]." (Uma 2009)

Arrested cocaine smuggler Udide Afam Okwudili, an auto parts dealer from Lagos, told authorities, "I did it because my father's burial is [in] January and I am the first son [so I must pay for the ceremony]" (Uma 2009). Put succinctly by apprehended trafficker Mustapha Latifu, "It is poverty that made me to [sic] smuggle drugs" (Ogunseye 2010).

Nigeria's geography plays some role in its trafficking participation but less than Guinea-Bissau's. A longer journey than Guinea-Bissau for South American traffickers, Nigeria's main geographical asset is that its bustling business metropolis of Lagos is found on an easily accessed port. Trafficker Obi Okonkwo told reporters that he and his associates most frequently used Lagos as a point of departure, employing speedboats going out into the Bight of Benin to pick up drugs from waiting boats, doing so only at night so as to avoid security officers (Ibagera 2000). Recently, five Nigerians working as inspection agents at a Lagos port (along with a Taiwanese and Chinese national) were caught attempting to smuggle a half ton of cocaine worth \$26.6 million originating from Chile (Yahoo.com 2010). Once inside Nigeria, the limited surveillance of the country's northern regions, which provide easy access into the Sahel and Sahara, are also a boon to traffickers. If geography plays a minor role, Nigeria's undisputed "x factor" in the drug trade is its massive global diaspora. Nigeria's large population (which accounts for one out of every four sub-Saharan Africans) can be found

residing in every corner of the world, from Europe to South America, from the Indian subcontinent to China. This global swath of citizens means that contact points for drug export markets exist everywhere. Some members of the sizable Nigerian diaspora living in the United Kingdom frequently facilitate trafficking deals there; in 2005, 85 of the 151 Nigerian women held in custody by U.K. authorities were accused of drug-related charges (Jeavans 2005). The Nigerian diaspora's reach extends beyond just Europe into lesser-considered drug markets in Asia. A newspaper out of New Delhi recently reported how "Nigerian gangs" were using young Indian women from the northeastern region as drug mules, paying them to carry picture frames to Europe in which were hidden bags of cocaine purchased from Afghanistan (Makkar 2008). So too do Nigerians play a substantial role in the trade in other parts of West Africa. In 2007, five Nigerian women were arrested for smuggling 49 kilograms of cocaine on the border of Burkina Faso and Mali, while a stash of opium found in Guinea in 2009 was sourced from "Nigerian groups based in Pakistan" (Telegraph 2009).

MALI

Home to the famed intellectual mecca of Timbuktu, Mali's nearly singular tourist draw is emblematic of why the country has recently been implicated in the global drug trade. Located in the deepest Sahara, the city flourished between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries as a meeting place and center of Islam for traders in an otherwise desolate area (Timbuktu Educational Foundation n.d.). Today, the very desert remoteness of Mali is drawing clandestine drug traffickers who are all too willing to use the unsurveyed space to

traverse the Sahara on their way to European drug markets.

Although Mali ranks nowhere near Guinea-Bissau or Nigeria in its participation in the trade, it is notable for its unique role as a geographic middleman. Without a coastline, Mali does not often serve as an entry point for drugs on the continent. Rather, situated squarely in the center of West Africa, overland traffickers are obliged to pass through the deserts of Mali, Niger, or Mauritania on their way to Europe. Being geographically central of the three, Mali tends to be the most frequently employed. Despite its differing role in the process of trafficking, the same phenomena present in the previous two states underlie its attraction for smugglers.

Poverty, pervasive in the country, once again serves as a benefit to traffickers. With an average gross national income of \$590 per year, Mali is the poorest of the three countries examined, ranking at 168 out of 172 countries in the United Nations' 2009 Human Development Report. This poverty is particularly pronounced in the northeastern Sahelian and Saharan regions of the country, where 77 percent of rural inhabitants live below the poverty line (International Fund for Agricultural Development n.d.a). In a region where camel caravaning (which generates \$100 to \$200 per month) is one of the most lucrative professions, many rural Malians are all too willing to engage in trafficking. For participation in just one cocaine run across the desert, officials in Timbuktu estimate that citizens can make \$9,000 to \$11,000 (Gaynor and Diallo 2010).

As in Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria, issues of low state capacity plague Mali. As is typical in other West African counties,

officials both within the Malian capital of Bamako and outside it are sometimes willing to accept bribes to ensure traffickers' safety (Logan 2010). The state's prime weakness, however, is its inability to monitor the vast majority of the land within its borders. Though endowed with legal sovereignty, the Malian capital of Bamako, like many others in Africa, lacks *de facto* control. The extreme difficulties faced by the Malian state in this regard were highlighted in 2009, when authorities found the burned-out fuselage of a Boeing 727 abandoned in the desert in the eastern part of the country.

Subsequent investigations revealed that the craft had likely been flown in from Latin America completely undetected by Malian authorities, landed unnoticed in the desert, and unloaded an estimated 10 tons of cocaine. At the time of this writing in January 2011, there was no evidence that national authorities had made any definitive arrests in this case.

In no way are Bamako's troubles lessened by the country's massive size, which is arguably the most influential variable in its role in trafficking. Covering a landmass the size of California and Texas combined, the country's 474,764 square miles of Saharan desert are perfect hideaways for traffickers, unquestionably outside of the state's limited purview (U.S. Department of State 2010b). One such geographically onerous spot is the eastern city of Gao, some 500 miles from Bamako, which, due to its remoteness, has become a hub for human traffickers who use the city as a transit point before going to Europe (IRIN 2007). So too is the northern Timbuktu region of the country, an area approximately the size of Switzerland so vast and dangerous that it is now inaccessible even by government troops (Gaynor and Diallo 2010). Local

officials have noted that traffickers have free reign of the desolate desert and often pass through with four-wheel-drive vehicles and global positioning systems and protect themselves with caches of automatic weapons (Gaynor and Diallo 2010). Said a Malian citizen to a reporter, “There is now a red line across northern Mali, nobody can go there. If you go there with feeble means . . . you don’t come back” (Gaynor and Diallo 2010).

Rendering Mali particularly unique is its “x factor”—the profound connection between the transport of drugs and U.S.-designated terrorist groups. Unlike Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria, where narco-trafficking has typically been limited simply to criminal rings, Mali is bringing to light connections between traffickers and terrorists. Specifically, the Algerian-originated group known as the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat appears to be the most active in the country’s drug trade. A vocal ally of Al Qaeda, the Maghreb-based group has been linked to a series of bombings in Mali (Logan 2010) and has been allegedly involved in the 2003 kidnappings of some thirty-one European tourists (Gaynor and Diallo 2010). This branch of AQIM frequently works to traffic drugs with the region’s Saharan-dwelling peoples known as the Tuaregs, whose distrust of the state, unique knowledge of unsurveyed parts of the country, lack of income-generating activities, and commitment to fundamentalist forms of Islam potentially make them ideal allies for traffickers. Attempts to mitigate trafficking in West Africa will need to take into serious consideration the large swaths of the country controlled by these groups, which constitute a difficult variable within this increasingly drug-filled region.

CONCLUSION

At the present moment, West African narco-trafficking represents a mid-level threat to West African stability as well as to the interests of the United States and the global community at large. In addition to the developing evidence of links between West African narco-traffickers and AQIM, FARC, and Hezbollah, the presence of the trade puts in undue peril the peoples and governments of the region while simultaneously creating new security risks for NATO allies in the intended markets for the drugs in Europe. Though not a preeminent global security concern in a world of Afghanistans and Iraqs, Irans and North Koreas, Somalias and Pakistans, the sown seeds of the trade in the region nevertheless have the potential to grow into something much more poisonous, thus necessitating serious attention.

In light of the new security issues that the trade engenders, this article has sought to underline both the geopolitical factors that have “pushed” the drug trade into West Africa and those country-specific realities, including weak state capacity, poverty, and geography, that have “pulled” it into the states of Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, and Mali. Of these three countries, Guinea-Bissau is the only one that has gained the colloquial distinction of “narco-state.” But without increased vigilance of the process of narco-trafficking, it could well go from being the neighborhood exception to the neighborhood rule.

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ECOWAS and Mediation in West Africa: Toward an Enhanced Capacity

by Samuel Atuobi

Samuel Atuobi is a Researcher and Head of the International Institutions Program based at the Research Department of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra, Ghana.

ABSTRACT:

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has been involved in mediation in West Africa for the past two decades. Over the years such mediation efforts have produced mixed results, successes and failures alike. This article provides the background to ECOWAS mediation and recommends the following for the future: (1) All stakeholders should support ECOWAS's efforts to establish a mediation-facilitation division to bridge the gap between its mandate and capacity; (2) ECOWAS should combine president mediators with professional mediators who have expertise and experience in creating win-win solutions; (3) ECOWAS should develop enforcement capacity for decisions arrived at through mediation; and (4) ECOWAS should explore traditional modes of conflict resolution to supplement modern methods.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was formed in May 1975 to “promote cooperation and integration, leading to the establishment of an economic union in West Africa in order to raise the living standards of its peoples, and to maintain and enhance economic stability,” as written in Article 1 of the 1993 ECOWAS Revised Treaty. ECOWAS is now better known for its involvement in conflict prevention, management, and resolution through mediation and peacekeeping. Between the 1990s and early 2000s, ECOWAS intervened in such a manner in four member states: Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, and Côte d’Ivoire. More recently, ECOWAS has been involved in mediation in two additional member states, Guinea and Niger; in addition, the resurgence of political crisis in Côte d’Ivoire following the disputed November 2010 election calls for ECOWAS’s reengagement to restore stability.

ECOWAS’s involvement in the mediation of interstate conflicts in West Africa raises a number of questions. First, where does the organization derive its mandate to mediate in member states? Second, how has this mandate been pursued and how effective has it been? And third, what can be done within policy circles to improve mediation processes in West Africa? This article attempts to answer these questions by discussing ECOWAS mediation and offering suggestions for the consideration of policy makers. The article recognizes ECOWAS’s efforts to improve mediation and conflict prevention processes but posits that a gap remains between its mandate and the capacity to successfully mediate regional crises (see Nathan 2007 for a similar argument).

The first section examines ECOWAS’s mandate to mediate in regional conflicts

while the second looks at ECOWAS's role in selected West African conflicts since the 1990s. The third sections draws lessons from these cases. Finally, the fourth section offers recommendations for the consideration of policy makers toward the enhancement of peacemaking capacity in West Africa. The article concludes by suggesting that ECOWAS and the entire West Africa region stand to benefit from a more institutionalized and professional approach to mediation and conflict prevention.

would be used to resolve any conflict between two of its member states (in its Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance of Defence, Article 17). In 1993, ECOWAS again committed itself to the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes among member states, including the use of mediation (in its Revised Treaty, Article 4). Then, in 1999, in order to develop a more comprehensive peace and security architecture, ECOWAS adopted the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management,

❖❖❖ *ECOWAS has made efforts to improve mediation and conflict prevention processes but a gap remains between its mandate and the capacity to successfully mediate regional crises.*

THE MANDATE OF ECOWAS TO MEDIATE IN INTERSTATE CONFLICTS

This article defines mediation as a third-party intervention to assist groups in conflict to arrive at a mutually acceptable settlement. In West Africa, a region characterized by conflicts, mediation has been used to limit the spread or escalation of crises with a regional dimension and to promote an environment for better relations between conflicting parties. Given that ECOWAS is a regional body, mediation in West Africa should be understood within the context of its mandate to mediate in conflicts, promote peace and stability, and protect civilians.

ECOWAS's mandate to mediate in conflicts in its member states to promote peace and security in West Africa has evolved over time and is captured in number of protocols and documents. In 1981, ECOWAS declared that mediation

Resolution, Peace-Keeping and Security. In Article 58 of this protocol, ECOWAS committed itself to "employ, where appropriate, good offices, conciliation, meditation and other methods of peaceful settlement of disputes." Under Article 4 of the Mechanism, the Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Mediation and Security Council, and the ECOWAS Commission have specific roles to play in mediation and conflict prevention, resolution, and management in West Africa.

The Authority of Heads of State and Government, the highest decision-making body of ECOWAS, is mandated to act on all issues relating to conflict prevention, management, and resolution. On its behalf, the Mediation and Security Council decides on all matters relating to peace and security, conflict prevention, and authorization of the deployment of

❖ *ECOWAS and the entire West Africa region stand to benefit from a more institutionalized and professional approach to mediation and conflict prevention.*

military and political mediation missions. The Commission implements decisions of the Authority and the Mediation and Security Council relating to conflict prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping, and security in West Africa.¹ In line with this responsibility, the president of the ECOWAS Commission deploys fact-finding and mediation missions and appoints members of the Council of Wise. This body, formerly named the Council of Elders, is made up of eminent personalities from all fifteen ECOWAS states who use their good offices and experience to play the role of mediators, conciliators, and facilitators on behalf of ECOWAS (as in Articles 17 and 20 of the Mechanism). Members of the Council are not necessarily professional mediators.

Next, in 2001, ECOWAS made further attempts to improve its systems when it called on its member states to institutionalize national mediation in Article 36 of its Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. In spite of this call, such efforts in West African states and within ECOWAS itself have been slow and responses to conflicts in the region have been largely ad hoc.

Finally, in 2008, the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) was adopted to institutionalize and enhance mediation capacities in West Africa. The ECPF, among other documents, commits ECOWAS to the development of a comprehensive preventive diplomacy architecture that seeks to address gaps in

mediation with the participation of major stakeholders. Preventive diplomacy, according to ECOWAS, is considered to be an operational conflict-prevention tool to deal with imminent conflict. It is to be used to promote conflict resolution within member states through good offices, mediation, conciliation, and facilitation based on dialogue, negotiation, and arbitration.

ECOWAS MEDIATION: FROM MANDATE TO PRACTICE

ECOWAS interventions in the 1990s, beginning with the Liberian conflict, were initiated with a rudimentary and weak mandate. The organization's security architecture and authority to mediate in regional crisis evolved gradually in response to conflicts in the region. This may explain in part the reason why some conflicts (such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire) have been protracted in spite of ECOWAS intervention.

The conflicts in which ECOWAS has intervened that are examined here share similar characteristics: they were civil conflicts based on a struggle primarily for political power and, at times, over resources. While ECOWAS's approach in these situations has been similar (using mediation, peacekeeping, or the threat of military intervention), each engagement has produced different outcomes. The following cases detail ECOWAS mediation in six of its member states: Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, and Guinea.

Liberia

Conflict broke out in Liberia in December 1989 when the National Patriotic Front of Liberia led by Charles Taylor launched a rebellion, ostensibly to overthrow the government of Liberia under the presidency of Samuel Doe. At the height of the conflict the number of both internally displaced persons and refugee flows into neighboring states grew dramatically. For example, the population of the Liberian capital of Monrovia grew from 600,000 in 1991 to approximately one million at the height of the crisis, while refugees flowing into neighboring countries were estimated at 700,000 (Ero 1995). In response to the unfolding catastrophe, ECOWAS intervened in Liberia in line with its mandate to promote peace and stability within member states, prevent the regionalization of the conflict, reduce human suffering, and protect civilians.

ECOWAS's approach was to set up a Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) in August 1990 that approved the formation of the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to intervene militarily in the conflict as peacekeepers (Ero 1995). In addition to peacekeeping, from 1989 to 1997, when the first post-conflict elections were held, ECOWAS mediation efforts resulted in thirteen peace agreements. This article reflects on the major peace agreements and why some of them failed to bring peace to Liberia.

First, the Lomé Peace Agreement in February 1991 led to the formation of the Interim Government of National Unity, which was conceived earlier under the ECOWAS Peace Plan for Liberia in December 1990. But mediation efforts unravelled as Taylor refused to cooperate with the interim government because he believed he could capture state power through military action; Taylor's National

Patriotic Front of Liberia was the biggest of the rebel groups. At the time there were allegations that Côte d'Ivoire was backing the rebellion.

Second, four more rounds of mediation by ECOWAS under the auspices of the late Côte d'Ivoire President Félix Houphouët-Boigny led to the Yamoussoukro IV Accord in October 1991 to salvage the peace process. A major false step was the selection of the then-president of Côte d'Ivoire, who was alleged to be supporting one of the factions, to mediate in the conflict. The fairness of the mediator was in doubt. It is therefore not surprising that the Yamoussoukro IV Accord suffered setbacks due to continued fighting between the rebel groups amidst doubts about ECOMOG's impartiality (Ero 1995). Mediation efforts continued in 1992, this time with the participation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU, now the African Union) and the United Nations (UN). Joint efforts from ECOWAS, OAU, and the UN resulted in renewed talks in Cotonou, Benin, and Accra, Ghana, in September and October 1994, respectively. Both mediation efforts resulted in some agreements but failed to resolve the conflict largely due to lack of commitment by the main factions (Ero 1995).

One important reason for the failure of most of the peace agreements was the inability of ECOWAS to enforce the agreements and or support the parties in their implementation. The last of the agreements during Liberia's first civil war (from 1989 to 1997) was the Abuja Peace Agreement of 1995. The reason why Abuja may have held is likely because Taylor saw the possibility of him coming to power through elections. Indeed, the

1997 elections paved the way for Taylor to become the president of Liberia.

In 1999, a second civil war started with the formation of new rebel groups, the Liberia United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), which considered Taylor's government undemocratic and sought to overthrow it. With this resumption of conflict in Liberia (from 1999 to 2003), ECOWAS embarked on another peacemaking and military intervention. The most significant outcome of ECOWAS mediation held in Accra was the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2003. The agreement was signed between the government of Liberia, LURD, MODEL, and Political Parties. This agreement, unlike previous ones, made room for the participation of civil society groups in the negotiations and their eventual inclusion in the transitional government. The agreement also facilitated the formation of a government of national unity, which led the country until general elections were held in October 2005.

The success of the 2003 peace agreement could therefore be attributed to the unity of purpose of West African leaders, most of whom were now committed to lasting peace, and to the inclusion of civil society organizations in the peace-building process and the transitional government. The combined efforts of ECOWAS and a strong UN peacekeeping force made it possible to sustain the peace.

Sierra Leone

While ECOWAS was trying to resolve the conflict in Liberia, another conflict broke out in neighboring Sierra Leone in March 1991. A rebel group known as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), led by Foday Sankoh, began a rebellion to

overthrow the All People's Congress government, led by President Joseph Momoh, and restore democracy. The conflict lasted until January 2002, during which some 70,000 people lost their lives and 2.6 million people were displaced (Kaldor and Vincent 2006, 4).

The search for peace in Sierra Leone was prolonged as a result of military coups (1992, 1996, and 1997) that brought leaders to power who preferred military solutions over negotiations. However, when a democratically elected government took office in February 1996 (under Ahmad Tejan Kabbah), negotiations began, and the Abidjan Peace Accord was signed in November 1996. ECOWAS played a less visible role in the 1996 peace negotiation. Instead, it was hosted by the government of Côte d'Ivoire and driven by the OAU (Lord 2000, 23). But, following a military coup in May 1997 that overthrew Tejan Kabbah and led to his exile to Guinea, which made the implementation of the Abidjan Peace Accord impossible, ECOWAS became more engaged in the quest for peace. The organization met with the military leadership of Sierra Leone and adopted a six-month peace plan in Conakry, Guinea. The primary objective of the plan included the ending of hostilities and the restoration of the government of Tejan Kabbah. When the military junta in Sierra Leone refused to comply with the peace plan, ECOWAS worked through its military wing, ECOMOG, to depose the military junta and restore Kabbah to office in February 1998. This paved the way for another round of peace talks in May 1999 in Lomé under the auspices of Togo President Gnassingbé Eyadéma, who was at the time the chairman of ECOWAS. In the Lomé peace talks, ECOWAS was part of the mediation

committee alongside the UN and OAU, among other interest groups (Lord 2000, 30). The Lomé Peace Accord of July 7, 1999, gave amnesty to the rebel leadership and instituted a UN peacekeeping force with a robust mandate. After an attempt by the RUF to violate the peace agreement, its leader, Sankoh, was arrested by UN forces and imprisoned.² The Lomé Peace Accord remained the key road map to peace in Sierra Leone until the war was declared over in January 2002. The first post-conflict elections were held in May 2002, contributing to the restoration of democracy.

It should be noted that the peace was sustained in Sierra Leone largely due to the presence of a UN peacekeeping force with a sufficiently strong mandate and personnel to enforce the peace agreement.³ This is because, like in Liberia, the rebel leadership in Sierra Leone showed a lack of commitment to respect the peace agreements it had signed.

Thus, in looking for ways to improve negotiated outcomes in West Africa, ECOWAS and the international community needed to become better at designing peace agreements that would have the true commitment of conflicting parties. The peace process in Sierra Leone also showed that there is the need for a strong peacekeeping force to enforce peace agreements in West Africa.

Guinea-Bissau

In June 1998, Guinea-Bissau became the third ECOWAS member state to become involved in violent conflict, triggering the need for mediation and peacekeeping. The conflict began when President João Bernardo Vieira fired the head of the armed forces, Brigadier Ansumane Mane, accusing him of allowing arms to be smuggled to rebels in the southern

Senegalese province of Casamance (BBC News 1998). Compared to the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia, this was not a large-scale conflict. It lasted for just eleven months, but it had a devastating effect on the people of Guinea-Bissau (Massey 2004, 1).

ECOWAS got involved in mediating the conflict with backing from the OAU and UN, alongside other mediators, most significantly, the community of Portuguese-speaking countries (CPLP) (Massey 2004). Initial mediation efforts by ECOWAS produced a cease-fire agreement in August 1998 and the Abuja Accord in November 1998. The key highlights of the agreement were the deployment of ECOWAS forces, formation of a government of national unity, and the holding of elections by March 1999. While efforts were underway to implement this Abuja Accord, a coup d'état on May 7 1999, ousted President Vieira, brought the peace process to an end, and prompted the departure of ECOWAS forces from Guinea-Bissau. Thus, the case of Guinea-Bissau is similar to that of Sierra Leone in that a military coup disrupted efforts by ECOWAS to implement a mediated solution. It is therefore difficult to assess whether this solution would have succeeded in establishing a lasting peace. In any case, ECOWAS's involvement in Guinea-Bissau helped avert large-scale conflict as was experienced in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire was the fourth country to experience violent conflict in West Africa after the establishment of ECOWAS. The conflict in Côte d'Ivoire began on September 19, 2002, when a section of the military started a rebellion (which was initially believed to be a mutiny) in

several cities including the capital of Abidjan. The result of the rebellion was a country divided into the rebel-held north and the government-controlled south.

ECOWAS's initial response resulted in a preliminary agreement in September 2002 and a cease-fire agreement signed in Bouake, Côte d'Ivoire, the following month, leading to talks in Lomé in November 2002. The Ivorian peace process follows the same pattern as the previous cases described above: several mediation processes were undertaken resulting in numerous, in this case ten, peace agreements. What further complicated the peace process was the proliferation of actors. Although ECOWAS was the lead mediator in the conflict, other actors such as France, the African Union (AU), and the UN played roles at different stages of the conflict. For instance, the role of France led to the Linas-Marcoussis Peace Agreement in January 2003. Equally, the role of AU through Thabo Mbeki, then-president of South Africa, resulted in the Pretoria I and II Agreements in 2005. Finally, in 2007, the mediation process reverted to the leadership of ECOWAS. The then-chairman of ECOWAS, Blaise Compaoré, became the lead mediator and brokered another peace agreement, the Ouagadougou Peace Accord of March 2007. This accord provided for a power-sharing arrangement in which the leader of the rebellion, Guillaume Soro, became the prime minister of the sitting president, Laurent Gbagbo.

Again, the Ivorian peace process has shown ECOWAS's commitment to peacemaking in West Africa. Further, it shows that the efforts of ECOWAS always need to be complemented by the AU and UN. For instance, the presence of a UN mission in Côte d'Ivoire has contributed

immensely to upholding a level of stability in the country.

The elections of November/December 2010 marked the last stage of the peace process and were designed to bring about lasting stability. Instead, such hopes have been dashed as violence has broken out over disputed results. As of the time of this writing in January 2011, both presidential candidates, Alassane Ouattara and Laurent Gbagbo, are claiming the presidency. Renewed hostilities in Côte d'Ivoire call for renewed negotiations. The resurgence of conflict in Côte d'Ivoire shows that perhaps the previous peace process did not address all the fundamental causes of the conflict. On the other hand, it can also be argued that the current post-election dispute and violence in Côte d'Ivoire is another example of election-related violence in Africa (similar to that of Kenya and Zimbabwe) and may have nothing to do with the previous peace agreements. Either way, there is therefore the need to ensure that the quest for peace this time around creates the opportunity for lasting stability.

Niger

ECOWAS became involved in Niger when the sitting president, Mamadou Tandja, attempted to change the country's constitution. He sought to run for a third term in office in 2009 in contravention of the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, which prohibits unconstitutional change of government.

ECOWAS's response to this situation was to suspend the country from its membership while appointing a special representative to resolve the crisis. General Abdulsalami Abubakar, a former president of Nigeria, took charge of the Niger crisis. ECOWAS requested that "Niger

authorities suspend indefinitely the holding of legislative elections scheduled for October 20, 2009, in favor of dialogue with other leading political parties on resolving the political crisis in the country” (ECOWAS 2009b). The statement by ECOWAS added that “failure by President Tandja to comply with the decisions of the Authority would lead to the automatic and immediate imposition of full sanctions.” Niger did not comply with the above decision of ECOWAS. Rather, on October 20, 2009, President Tandja went ahead with the legislative election, which was boycotted by the opposition. In a move to demonstrate that ECOWAS would not tolerate the continuing refusal of Niger to comply with its decisions, the regional body stated that it would no longer recognize the presidency of Tandja (BBC News 2009).

The refusal of Niger to comply with ECOWAS’s decision is a further demonstration of the unwillingness of ECOWAS member states to comply with the decisions of the organization, its mediated solutions, and the principles to which they have signed. Usually ECOWAS continues to engage members who refuse to comply with its decisions because there is a limit to what the organization can do; it does not possess the capacity to remove an erring president by force, for example. Even if it had this capacity, ECOWAS believes in mediated solutions and is unlikely to apply force unless it is absolutely necessary, especially where West African populations are at risk.

A coup d’état in February 2010 ended formal ECOWAS mediation in Niger with a call on the new military leadership to work toward the restoration of democracy. Although all coup d’états are in

contravention of ECOWAS norms and the formal engagement was ended, ECOWAS continued its engagement with the new military leadership in trying to work toward returning the country to constitutional rule.

Guinea

Following a coup d’état on December 23, 2008, ECOWAS joined with the AU, UN, and EU to condemn the situation in line with the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. On January 10, 2009, ECOWAS also suspended Guinea from its meetings until constitutional rule was restored (ECOWAS 2009a). The security situation in Guinea deteriorated over time: first, on September 23, 2009, security forces in Guinea opened fire on supporters of opposition parties who had gathered at a stadium in Conakry. The demonstration was organized by the opposition to protest against the apparent intention of Captain Moussa Dadis Camara, the leader of the junta, to stand for presidential election in January 2010. Human rights groups estimate that more than 150 people were killed and 1,700 injured (International Crisis Group 2009). Second, the attempted assassination of Camara on December 3, 2009, exacerbated the already tense political atmosphere. As a result, the military launched a crackdown on people they believed could be linked to the attempt. Following these developments, on December 13, 2009, ECOWAS threatened to intervene in Guinea with “preventive deployment force” for civilian protection (Ouedraogo 2009). On the political front, ECOWAS appointed President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso to mediate in the Guinean crisis. ECOWAS engagement in Guinea continued until elections in October

2010, when the opposition leader won and was installed as president.

ECOWAS mediation efforts have succeeded in Guinea for two major reasons. The first is the patience of ECOWAS and the international community to continuously engage the military leadership and opposition parties in Guinea in spite of initial challenges. The second point is the realization of both ECOWAS and the military leadership in Guinea that violence or the use of force was not the best alternative to negotiated settlement. (Initially ECOWAS had threatened to use force if the military junta did not show commitment to the restoration of democracy (Ouedraogo 2009)).

LESSONS FOR IMPROVING MEDIATION PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES IN WEST AFRICA

Several lessons can be drawn from this history of ECOWAS's mediation. First, most of ECOWAS's interventions, especially in the 1990s, began on an ad hoc basis and were backed by a weak mandate. Both the Liberian and Sierra Leonean conflicts took place at a time when ECOWAS's security architecture was still evolving—before the revised ECOWAS treaty of 1993 and the other protocols that mandate ECOWAS to mediate and resolve regional conflicts. As a result, most often there was lack of consensus among leaders of West Africa on how the crisis should be resolved. In fact, some leaders in West Africa were alleged to have offered support to some rebellions (Liberia, for example).

Second, although ECOWAS's security architecture and mandate to intervene in regional conflicts are now relatively well-developed, there are gaps between its mandate and its capacity to intervene. The mediation processes in the region

that have been seen in the past few years have lacked the institutional structures that would have provided expert support for designing peace agreements that could hold in the field. Thus, often, peace agreements have broken down as soon as there were signed.

Third, in West Africa there has been an overreliance on mediators who are presidents. Usually, mediators have been chosen either because they are the chair of ECOWAS or because of a belief that they could use their influence as elders and experienced leaders in the region. For example, between 2002 and 2006, to be a mediator in the Ivorian conflict was “to validate one's own diplomatic credentials, to raise the profile of oneself and one's country, and to show oneself a champion of political correctness and of democracy. What is validated here is the function [and position] of the mediator, not the success of the mediation” (Dévérin 2006). Most often, once a president becomes the chair of ECOWAS, he or she automatically assumes the role of mediator in the region's conflicts. This logic ignores the fact that mediation is a challenging endeavor that requires training and professionalism. The point also needs to be made that sometimes it is difficult to guarantee the neutrality of a president mediator, and the choice of someone perceived to be biased complicates the conflict rather than solves it. There is a tendency for sitting presidents to propose solutions instead of allowing the parties to do so themselves. Under such circumstances, parties to the conflict sign peace agreements out of reverence for the president mediator but are unlikely to follow through with the implementation. Sitting presidents who serve as mediators may also not have the luxury of time to allow mediation processes to take their

course, leading to a rush to have an agreement, which may end up being premature and difficult to implement. The mediation process of the Ivorian conflict, in which twelve mediators were current or former country presidents (from Togo, Mali, Ghana, Gabon, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Congo, Burkina Faso, and two from Senegal) and most were also chairs of ECOWAS or AU (Dévérin 2006), is a good example of the overreliance on president mediators in West Africa conflict.

A fourth lesson is that there is lack of commitment by parties to conflicts in West Africa to respect mediated agreement by ECOWAS. The cases above show that parties to conflicts in the region will respect ECOWAS's settlements only when it is in their interest. This shows the absence of a culture of respect for agreements in the region, which needs to be addressed. Most often, the rebel leadership in West Africa is unable to bring members of its groups to follow the implementation of agreements the leaders have signed, perhaps because the leaders have weak control over their followers. In some cases where the peace agreements address the needs of the rebel leadership rather than the entire group and the populations affected by the war, it is not likely to be respected and implemented.

Fifth and finally, ECOWAS still does not have the capacity to enforce its own decisions without the involvement of external actors, especially the UN. In Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire, the UN had to take over the peacekeeping missions and the implementation of the peace agreement. Although within the global context there is nothing wrong with joining hands to solve a regional crisis, ECOWAS's ability to enforce its own decisions would help improve its

leverage in West Africa. In this issue, it is expected that when the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) becomes fully operational it will have the capacity to intervene in conflicts to enforce ECOWAS decisions and restore stability.

RECOMMENDATIONS: TOWARD AN ENHANCED PEACEMAKING CAPACITY IN WEST AFRICA

Based on the lessons identified above, the article makes several policy recommendations. First, to address the gap between mandate and capacity in mediation processes in Africa, this article echoes calls for setting up mediation-support units within the AU and regional organizations. Such units would be staffed by personnel with adequate skills who would provide technical support for African mediators. Within ECOWAS there is a gradual policy shift toward closing the gap between the mandate of the organization to mediate in conflicts and its capacity to do so. Under the ECPF, ECOWAS has crafted a new vision of preventive diplomacy through which it intends to address such capacity gaps. The process has already started to set up a mediation-facilitation unit to provide technical and expert mediation support for the Council of Wise and Special Mediator. The proposed ECOWAS mediation-facilitation unit should be properly mandated and resourced to discharge the function of providing professional mediation support to ECOWAS. The implementation of the ECPF should lead to the availability of skilled and professional mediators with the necessary institutional and financial support to peace mediation in West Africa. Efforts by ECOWAS to set up a mediation-facilitation division should therefore be supported by all stakeholders as one of the measures to help bridge the

...❖ *People still hold their cultures and traditions in high esteem, [so] it is important for ECOWAS to explore what contribution traditional conflict resolution methods can offer.*

gap between mandate and capacity and to improve mediation in West Africa.

Second, there is the need to address the challenges associated with using president mediators. To improve peacemaking in West Africa there is the need to combine president mediators with professional mediators who have expertise and experience in mediation and who have greater neutrality. In the long term, however, appointment of mediators in West African conflicts should be based on the competence of the mediator to help the parties work toward win-win situations.

Third, there is the need for ECOWAS to further develop the capacity to enforce its decision arrived at through mediation. To this end, it should ensure that the ESF is well-equipped, has adequate personnel, and is fully operational. It also requires that the civilian dimension of the ESF be given equal attention as the military component to ensure that ECOWAS has the full capacity of future missions or intervention. This is in recognition of the fact that ECOWAS has made a lot of progress with regard to its military preparedness under the ESF, but the same cannot be said of its civilian component.

Fourth, in view of the difficulties encountered in resolving conflicts in West Africa and in light of the fact that the region remains largely traditional in which people still hold their cultures and traditions in high esteem, it is important

for ECOWAS to explore what contribution traditional conflict-resolution methods can offer. For instance, the capacity of traditional rulers, in particular, in conflict resolution can be built, and they can be supported to utilize their own traditions to aid national and regional mediation efforts.

CONCLUSION

Faced with the challenges of conflict and political instability, ECOWAS has undergone the necessary transformation that has positioned it as the leading institution for conflict prevention, management, and resolution in West Africa. The organization's involvement in mediation is part of a comprehensive approach to the promotion of peace and stability within its sphere of influence. ECOWAS's involvement in mediation in West Africa is clearly defined in several important documents, but what has not yet emerged is a clearly defined approach and practice of mediation. For two decades, ECOWAS mediation has been ad hoc and has revolved around president mediators. Such an approach has been short of professionalism and strong institutionalization. There is the need to step up the implementation of the preventive diplomacy component of the ECPF, which will lead to a marked improvement in mediation processes within West Africa. In doing this, there will be the need for a shift in thinking within the policy-making field and recognition of the need for a comparable

amount of investment in the training of mediators as has been devoted to the training of the military for peacekeeping. It is hoped that if the set of recommendations proposed in this article is implemented, ECOWAS will be in a good position to contribute more effectively to peace and security in West Africa.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ The 29th Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, held in Niamey, Niger, in January 2006, approved the transformation of the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat into the ECOWAS Commission. The purpose of the transformation was to enhance the power of the Commission and strengthen its influence and its degree of supranationality.
- ² Foday Sankoh was arrested by UN forces in 2000 and imprisoned. He died in 2003 while still facing charges of war crimes at the UN Tribunal on Sierra Leone.
- ³ At full strength, the UN peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone numbered about 19,000.

A Gendered Examination of Education in the Reintegration Strategies of Liberia and Sierra Leone

by Sarah Doerrer, Laura Kavazanjian, Christin McConnell, and Sara Van Wie

Sarah Doerrer holds a B.A. from American University and is currently pursuing a dual master's degree from the Fletcher School at Tufts University and the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where her focus is split between human security and international education. Before pursuing her master's, Doerrer served as Senior Program Administrator for Scholarships and Training Programs at the Institute for International Education in New York.

Laura Kavazanjian holds an M.Ed. in international education policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where she focused on access to education for marginalized girls. Kavazanjian has research experience in Malawi working for Save the Children and previously worked with CARE on research for the Power to Lead Alliance, a program intended to develop leadership capacities among adolescent girls in six different countries. She also worked as a Program Officer for the Clinton Foundation HIV/AIDS Initiative in India and

at the Beijing Center for Policy Research, an affiliate of the Carter Center.

Christin McConnell is currently based in Lilongwe, Malawi, as a World Bank consultant on an education impact evaluation. Prior to working for the World Bank, McConnell served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Bulgaria and taught at an international school in Norway. She holds a B.A. from Harvard University and an M.A. in law and diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University.

Sara Van Wie holds a B.A. from Cornell University and is currently pursuing an M.A. in law and diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University. Her main academic interests focus on the inclusion of children into transitional justice mechanisms. She recently completed research examining the inclusion of youth in Sierra Leone's reparations program.

ABSTRACT:

Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) efforts have received heightened attention from the international community due to the increase in intrastate violence and wars. Successful reintegration of child combatants promises to form the building blocks for enduring peace in post-conflict societies, and education, both formal and nonformal, is one of the foundational components of the reintegration process. Because such programs have differing impacts on males and females, it is important to understand the gendered implications. This article provides an overview of the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia, the role of youth and child soldiers in those conflicts, and the national DDR processes. It then takes a gendered approach in examining how youth are involved specifically in reintegration. Finally, it considers the role of education in the reintegration process

and how it differs by gender. The ultimate aim of the discussion that follows is to assist practitioners, as well as policy makers, in applying a gendered lens as they design and implement education interventions within ongoing and future reintegration processes.

TEXT:

Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) efforts have received heightened attention from the international community with the increase of intrastate violence and wars. The successful reintegration of both those who directly participated in and those who were indirectly affected by war promises to form the building blocks for enduring peace in post-conflict societies, and education, both formal and nonformal, is one of the foundational components of such reintegration. The design and implementation of education programs within the reintegration process have strong gender implications, specifically because experiences during war are gendered and because reintegration is influenced by gender norms within society. Various perspectives regarding who actually fought in the war, who remains a threat, and who ought to be involved in creating lasting peace shape the way policies are constructed and carried out and generate effects that vary widely between males and females. Such effects are discussed at length in this article.

From the early 1990s to the 2000s, both Liberia and Sierra Leone were engulfed in conflicts that resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives, massive displacement, and the destruction of the foundations of society. These two conflicts were intricately interwoven with each other as well as with actors from

neighboring countries (Jorgel 2007). Sierra Leone and Liberia are among the world's poorest countries,¹ have among the world's youngest populations,² and suffer from extremely high rates of youth unemployment³ (Sommers 2007). Additionally, actors in both conflicts recruited, or in many cases abducted, significant numbers of children to engage in and support the war as combatants, porters, cooks, sex slaves, and "bush wives." A migrant population of thousands of young fighters saw the conflicts as mainly an economic opportunity and crossed between Liberia and Sierra Leone to engage with various fighting forces. Many combatants were forcibly recruited as children in one conflict and then willingly crossed borders and took up arms in another conflict, often with a different armed group, as a livelihood strategy (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers 2008). Given the large numbers of children involved in these interconnected conflicts, along with the huge population of young people and enormous youth unemployment rates in these countries, it is imperative to examine how education programs have been used to reintegrate children into these two post-conflict societies. It is crucial to understand the successes and failures of these programs and to discern their gendered implications.

This article gives a brief overview of the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia and the role of youth in those conflicts. It then examines the DDR process and the reintegration of youth before considering in detail how education was used within the reintegration strategies of both nations, the types of programs provided, and the impact of those programs. Finally, this article provides recommendations in order to encourage practitioners,

❖ *Various perspectives regarding who actually fought in the war, who remains a threat, and who ought to be involved in creating lasting peace...generate effects that vary widely between males and females.*

as well as policy makers, to apply a gendered lens as they design and implement education interventions within ongoing and future reintegration processes. A gendered lens is applied throughout this article as we compare and contrast the impact of education programs within the reintegration strategies of Sierra Leone and Liberia.

OVERVIEW OF THE CONFLICTS

Liberia's civil war began in 1989 when Charles Taylor and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) launched a rebellion against Samuel Doe's regime. It wasn't until fourteen years later, in August 2003, that a peace agreement ended the war and Taylor resigned. Damage from the conflict included estimated casualties of between 150,000 and 250,000 (CIA n.d.a; Bernard et al. 2003), externally displaced refugees totaling more than 850,000, and a huge proportion of the remaining citizens displaced within Liberia's borders (Kane et al. 2007). Taylor, originally offered asylum in Nigeria, now faces war crime charges in The Hague for his role in the conflict in Sierra Leone (CIA n.d.a).

The war in Liberia spilled over into Sierra Leone in 1991, when the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), supported and backed by Taylor, attempted to replicate Taylor's success by toppling the Sierra Leonean government (Jorgel 2007). RUF rebels successfully recruited disenfranchised youth and secured the eastern

regions of the country. With a level of destruction similar to that of Liberia, conflict-related deaths in Sierra Leone totaled in the tens of thousands, and an estimated two million people, nearly one-third of the population, were internally or internationally displaced (CIA n.d.b). While a large majority of human rights abuses in the conflict were attributed to the RUF forces, the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) and local militias known as Civil Defense Forces (CDF) also committed acts of mass violence (United States Institute of Peace n.d.). The joint Declaration of the End of War, signed by all parties in 2002, officially ended the conflict in Sierra Leone.

ROLE OF YOUTH AND CHILD SOLDIERS

The United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child forbids the conscription of children below the age of fifteen, yet at least 200,000 youths have fought in wars in twenty-five countries since 1988 (Shiner 1996). In Liberia, an estimated 15,000 child soldiers⁴ took part in the war, making up 30 percent of fighting forces (Shiner 1996; Galvanek 2009); likewise, in Sierra Leone, an estimated 35 percent of the fighting forces were children, but estimates for total child participation in armed groups in Sierra Leone range widely from 2,500 (Shiner 1996) to as high as 70,000 (Coulter 2008; Singer 2005).

A variety of recruiting techniques were used in both Sierra Leone and Liberia to

entice children to join the fighting forces. Abduction of children, which took place when schools or villages came under attack or when children strayed from their villages or refugee camps, was the most common method of child recruitment in both conflicts (Galvanek 2009; Coulter 2008). A large number of children also “volunteered” for reasons including security, protection, hunger, survival, and revenge (Galvanek 2009).

In Liberia, girls were often abducted to become the “wives” of fighters, essentially being forced into sexual slavery, but many girls also fought in the conflict and were known for their ferocity (Galvanek 2009). Similarly, Chris Coulter’s research reveals that many women and girls in Sierra Leone had been trained as fighters during the war, while also sometimes serving as spies, laborers, sex slaves, or “bush wives” (2008). In some instances, female fighters in Sierra Leone were known for being braver and more brutal than their male counterparts. By becoming fighters, females often felt that they had more control over their own lives, with the alternatives being sexual abuse, domestic slavery, or getting killed (Coulter 2008). While there are estimates on the number of children involved in the two wars, the precise number of girls involved in each of these two conflicts is not known.

ACCESS TO DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION, AND REINTEGRATION PROCESSES

The United Nations defines DDR as “a process that contributes to security and stability in a post-conflict recovery context by removing weapons from the hands of combatants, taking the combatants out of military structures, and helping them to integrate socially and economically into society by finding

civilian livelihoods” (Jennings 2008, 329). Since disarmament is the entry point into DDR processes, it is necessary for all combatants to be recognized as such and to be included in this phase of DDR. However, limited definitions of the word “combatant” or overly restrictive requirements for participation exclude entire groups from the DDR process, thereby limiting access to reintegration programs. Liberia and Sierra Leone’s DDR processes demonstrate some of these participation problems but to varying degrees.

The UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), working in conjunction with UNICEF, was responsible for the Liberian DDR program, which operated between December 2003 and November 2004 (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers 2008). UNMIL’s primary concern was disarmament, allowing those presenting a weapon or ammunition⁵ to qualify as ex-combatants, formally enter the DDR process, and receive a \$300 registration bonus (Africa Yearbook 2004).⁶ Of the more than 103,000 people demobilized in Liberia, 69,281 were adult males, 22,456 were adult females, 8,771 were boys under eighteen years of age, and 2,511 were girls younger than eighteen (Williamson and Carter 2005). It is unknown exactly how many former child soldiers either did not choose to or were not able to access the formal DDR process; however, if 15,000 child combatants were estimated in 2003 and only approximately 11,300 went through the official DDR process, it is possible that thousands of children were excluded (Galvanek 2009).

In Sierra Leone, the DDR process was conducted by the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in three phases, the first of which began in 1998 (Mazurana and Carlson 2004). During the first two

phases, from September 1998 to May 2001, individuals were required to present a weapon at a reception center and were asked to disassemble and reassemble a gun to prove their combatant status. The third phase, which lasted from May 2001 to January 2002, altered the requirements by allowing for groups to collectively turn in a weapon, permitting weaponless soldiers—including some women and children—to participate in DDR. Once the program was already well underway, it was decided that wives of ex-combatants could apply for micro-loans to help sustain their families, but were restricted from obtaining loans unless their husbands accompanied them (Mazurana and Carlson 2004).

In Sierra Leone, a total of 48,228 combatants were demobilized, including 40,765 adult males, 2,920 adult females, 4,269 boys under eighteen years of age, and 274 girls younger than eighteen (Williamson and Carter 2005). While it is unclear how many children participated in the conflict in Sierra Leone, both Chris Coulter (2008) and P.W. Singer (2005) estimate that the number is close to 70,000. If the numbers are accurate, this means more than 65,000 children were excluded from official DDR processes in Sierra Leone.

Liberia and Sierra Leone's DDR processes both suggest that overall participation of children in DDR was lower than the estimated number of combatants, particularly for girls. This happened for numerous reasons, including the fact that girls often served in indirect, supporting roles and did not have access to weapons or ammunition, thus they could not formally enter the DDR process (Verhey 2001). Furthermore, fighting groups are less likely to release women and girls, so the number of demobilized female soldiers and women associated with

fighting forces is not a true indication of how many women and girls are held by, or otherwise associated with, armed groups (Bernard et al. 2003). In both countries, women and girls relied on men to confirm their grade or status, and even females who did have access to weapons or ammunition were often discouraged by male members of their armed groups from participating in the DDR process (Bernard et al. 2003).

As participation statistics indicate, exclusion was a much more severe problem in Sierra Leone, where women and girls made up only 7 percent and 0.7 percent, respectively, of the demobilized participants even after entry requirements were relaxed in the third phase; in the first two phases, women and girls made up 6 percent and 0.6 percent, respectively, of participants (Mazurana and Carlson 2004). A specific study on women and girls in Sierra Leone estimated that more than 12,000 girls participated in the war but less than 500 participated in the DDR process (Mazurana and Carlson 2004). This research uncovered that, in addition to gendered barriers to entry, the high disparity between the predicted number of girls in the fighting forces and the number of girl participants in Sierra Leone's DDR process could also be attributed to factors of self-exclusion whereby girls either did not know of the existence or benefits of DDR programs or feared violence within the gender-integrated demobilization camps (Mazurana and Carlson 2004).

In recognition of girls' limited access to DDR services in Sierra Leone, UNICEF implemented the Girls Left Behind Program in 2002 to meet the needs of girls who had taken part in the civil war. While this program successfully identified more than a thousand girls, reunited

more than 400 families, and provided skills training and other services for more than 400 female ex-combatants (Williamson 2005), these numbers are only a small fraction of the actual girl soldiers who never had access to DDR programs and services. In Liberia, 30 percent of the 11,000 children demobilized were girls, compared to Sierra Leone, where only 8 percent were girls, despite the large number of girls who had been abducted (Williamson and Carter 2005). The higher percentage of girls reached through the DDR program in Liberia may have been due to the structure of the DDR process there, which allowed combatants to qualify by handing in ammunition and not just arms. This structure increased levels of participation and may have captured harder-to-reach girls, but it also allowed for corruption and increased gaming by participants.

Because of the poor inclusion of female combatants in the disarmament processes of Liberia and Sierra Leone, women and girls were also underrepresented in the subsequent reintegration processes. There is an urgent need for the UN to redesign the eligibility criteria of DDR processes so that reintegration programming may be more inclusive of all former combatants in future peace-building contexts.

REINTEGRATION OF CHILD SOLDIERS IN LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE

Reintegration is a process by which former combatants are reunited with their communities, receive psychological support and acceptance via rituals and family or community mediation, and secure access to education, sustainable employment, and income (Jennings 2008; Awodola 2009). The reintegration of child soldiers reveals differing challenges when disaggregated by gender. While it is not

uncommon for a community to manifest considerable hostility and mistrust toward returning child soldiers in general, this phenomenon becomes increasingly problematic for returning girls, especially those who have served as sex slaves or bush wives during their time with armed groups (Menon and Arganese 2007). Girls face additional obstacles to reintegration for several reasons. While boy soldiers are also marginalized, the girls face a “double stigma” resulting from their association with armed forces and their likely loss of virginity during the war (Burman and McKay 2007). Additionally, girls often return as mothers with children of unknown or rebel paternity and are then highly susceptible to ostracism from their communities. Shifting gender norms, aggressiveness, and the use of offensive language acquired during the war may also hinder girls’ reintegration (McKay 2004). In order to mitigate the risks of social ostracism and economic destitution, girls may be pressured to stay with their captor-husbands (Mazurana and McKay 2003).

Challenges faced by girls reintegrating into their communities were largely universal across Liberia and Sierra Leone. The stigmatization of babies of unknown paternity, the difficulty of resuming lives away from “bush husbands,” and the adoption of secrecy⁷ about occurrences during the war were experiences shared by girls in Sierra Leone and Liberia. A review of the literature on Liberia strongly emphasizes the importance of and need for well-designed reintegration practices, as hundreds of Liberian children who had been reunited with their families were re-recruited later to fight in battles in neighboring countries (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers 2008).

As noted previously, only ex-combatants who successfully participated in disarmament and demobilization processes were eligible for formal reintegration programs, including education programs. The following section will provide a closer examination of the gendered outcomes of education programs for the reintegration of child soldiers who were able to gain access to formal programs, recognizing that many girls did not have access to such programs.

EDUCATION IN REINTEGRATION

Access to education is one of the most frequent requests of former child soldiers in most post-conflict contexts (Awodola 2009). Education programs within reintegration take on a variety of forms, including formal education and vocational education. For example, in Liberia, of the more than 11,000 children demobilized, 6,028 children took part in post-conflict education programs, of which 48 percent accessed formal education, 30 percent took part in agricultural vocational training, 29 percent enrolled in other vocational training, and 6 percent joined apprenticeship programs (Kane et al. 2007). In Sierra Leone, overall, 56 percent of those registered for reintegration partook of vocational and apprenticeship programs, 24 percent utilized formal education programs, and 18 percent made use of agriculture-related programs (UNICEF 2010).⁸ Interviews with former child soldiers in Sierra Leone revealed that 75 percent of the study population indicated a desire to attend school and improve their reading skills, while 49 percent agreed that skills training would be critical to their successful reintegration (Mazurana and Carlson 2004). Similarly, education, skills training, and livelihood opportunities were also identified consistently by youth

in Liberia as essential to building peace (Williamson and Carter 2005).

Education is widely perceived to yield both individual and societal benefits when used as part of reintegration programming. Individual benefits for participants include increased self-esteem, confidence, and hope (Lowicki 2000), the formation of a new identity (Awodola 2009; Betancourt et al. 2008), the acquisition of new skills (Awodola 2009), and the possibility for economic opportunities, sustainable livelihoods, and the ability to support a family (Kane et al. 2007). Societal benefits include a return to normalcy within the community (Lowicki 2000; Betancourt et al. 2008), a decrease in violence (Barakat et al. 2008; Richards 1999; Humphreys and Weinstein 2004), and increased skills and economic opportunities for the community (Barakat et al. 2008).

Benefits of educational programming also vary by gender. Marriage is an integral part of becoming an adult in Liberian society, yet the stigma attached to female ex-combatants and women associated with fighting forces often renders them “unmarriageable” (Bernard et al. 2003). However, education and the subsequent opportunities for income-generating activity it can create are extremely critical because they “[not only] address economic concerns [but they also] provide the girls and women with advantages that could overcome or balance out their stigmatization and make them more marriageable” (Bernard et al. 2003, 73). For boys and young men, participating in education initiatives can help them overcome the stigma of being dangerous to the community (Betancourt et al. 2008).

Just as the benefits of educational programming differ by gender in Liberia and Sierra Leone, so do the opportunity costs of attending education or skills training, even when the programming is designed to be compressed or accelerated (Kane et al. 2007). In both Liberia and Sierra Leone, stigmatization of girls and young women who were former combatants and their children resulted in a lack of access to child care normally provided by community members. This necessity of providing their own child care created an insurmountable obstacle for girls and young women in accessing education programs (Mazurana and Carlson 2004). The following sections will explore how education programs are utilized within reintegration programming—specifically formal education and vocational training—and how the benefits and opportunity costs of these programs are gendered.

DIRECT INTEGRATION INTO FORMAL EDUCATION

Formal educational programming contributes to the goals of reintegration by satisfying the desire of child ex-combatants to return to school with their classmates and by significantly reducing the stigma attached to ex-combatants within their communities. Education programs within reintegration focus primarily on eliminating or lowering the cost of school attendance for children, thus making the opportunity cost of participation easier to bear. Teenage militia members in Liberia were offered education vouchers in exchange for guns (an interesting hybrid of disarmament and reintegration) by an organization called Susukuu, with the intent of giving children an additional impetus to disarm in favor of becoming responsible citizens (Harber 1996). As mentioned earlier, such benefits would most likely be more

available to boys and young men, who had greater access to weapons during the conflict.

In Liberia, the Ambassador's Girls' Scholarship Fund, run by the Africa Education Initiative, provided \$800,000 over three years for female ex-combatants, between the ages of eight and twenty-five, to return to school (Bernard et al. 2003). Each scholarship was modest, only \$135 for primary school students and \$150 for secondary school students, but this was often enough to overcome the financial hurdle of attendance and encourage former female combatants to participate in school and reintegrate into their communities.

A similar initiative took place in both Liberia and Sierra Leone via the Community Education Investment Program (CEIP), which enabled demobilized children to attend school without paying fees (Bannor-Addae 2007). UNICEF provided supplies in support of the program, but rather than handing them over to participants directly, the supplies were given to the schools themselves, allowing educational institutions and communities to directly benefit from the reintegration of ex-combatants. Providing rewards to the community instead of the individual children prevented further stigmatization of the children while still incentivizing and rewarding reintegration and education. Janel Galvanek argues that this program was widely considered a success in both national contexts because "all children in the community benefit[ed] from the materials," not just former soldiers (2009, 23).

Structure, content, and implementation of educational programming within reintegration can either promote inclu-

siveness or worsen existing inequities and prejudices (Barakat et al. 2008). For example, the inclusion of ex-combatant boys in educational programming, especially when such boys are overage, can lead to disincentives for girls to attend—ex-combatant or not. Given the already unsafe school environment for girls that exists in Liberia and Sierra Leone due to a lack of female teachers, lack of sanitary supplies or facilities for menstruating girls, and tacit acceptance of harassment, rape, and sexual violence, the addition of older, ex-combatant males to the context may further jeopardize girls' safety and create more disincentive for female participation in education (Kirk 2006).

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs are holistically defined as “a learning system in which both ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ skills are developed within a ‘joined-up,’ integrated development and delivery framework that seeks to improve livelihoods, promote inclusion into the world of work and that supports community and individual agency” (UNESCO cited by Kane et al. 2007, 2). Many ex-combatants choose to enter TVET programs in order to learn skills that will prepare them for future livelihoods. After obtaining a level of self-sufficiency and income through participation in violent conflict, many child soldiers are hesitant to give up this sense of power and autonomy and choose to enroll in TVET instead of formal education.

Despite a surge of interest in TVET programming, it remains comparatively neglected in terms of both implementation and results-oriented research. The World Bank conducted a study in 2005 of

twelve TVET programs worldwide and concluded that very few are both creative and effective (Kane et al. 2007). Within Sierra Leone and Liberia, a main hurdle to the creation of effective TVET programming within reintegration remains the need for tying the content of training to market-demanded skills (Kane et al. 2007). Stories abound of well-attended training programs in a specialized skill, such as plumbing, only to result in dozens of trained plumbers returning to villages where only one plumber is in demand or where no plumbing even exists to maintain (Chaffin 2009). Similarly, few TVET programs have direct ties to apprenticeship programs or any strong connection to employment opportunities (Chaffin 2009). There is frequent disillusionment following TVET training because participants assume that attendance guarantees job security upon conclusion of the program. Designers of TVET training programs often see the training and reintegration as the end goal, while participants often see training as the means to the end goal of employment (Kane et al. 2007). Unable to employ newly gained technical skills, many who participated and were given start-up tools decided to sell them and return to the streets (Awodola 2009).⁹

The types of vocational training offered to former child soldiers in Sierra Leone and Liberia were gendered, as were the benefits of these training programs. Vocational programs implemented in both Sierra Leone and Liberia generally provided trade skills according to culturally acceptable gender roles. TVET programming in Liberia offered male participants access to training in construction, masonry, roof tiling, plumbing, agriculture, and business, while women were offered classes in cooking, domestic

skills, and small business management (Burman and McKay 2007). In Sierra Leone, “non-traditional skills, such as welding or construction that might be economically viable were not consistent with gender-appropriate behavior” (Burman and McKay 2007, 321). Because some skill-training programs violated accepted social norms identified as feminine, girls were discouraged from participating in these activities. In both Liberia and Sierra Leone, skill sets acquired by females in TVET programming produced less economic benefits than the equivalent skill sets gained by males. Girls in both countries were discouraged or prohibited from enrolling in programs with greater wage-earning potential due to culturally defined notions of masculinity and femininity. The consequences of exclusion and wage differentials were dire, as many girls could not turn their new skill sets into sustainable livelihood strategies and turned instead to transactional sex or prostitution to support themselves and their dependents (Burman and McKay 2007).

Pregnant women and girls were often excluded from TVET programming conducted under the official reintegration strategies, further limiting the education opportunities available for females. Of notable exception, national women’s groups, such as the Progressive Women’s Association and the Forum for African Women Educationalists in Sierra Leone, ran skills training centers that allowed pregnant girls to participate (Mazurana and McKay 2003).

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In delineating how policies affect men and women differently, an important consideration is their separate spheres of space and individual agency. In sub-Saha-

ran Africa, urban migration is overwhelmingly male-dominated because urban areas provide greater opportunity for men to attain both the material goods and social status necessary to achieve manhood and adulthood. Marc Sommers observes that “marginalized youth [including ex-combatants] see only a choice between rural dependency and exploitation of their labor, and the ‘freedom’ of life in urban areas” (Richards et al. ix, quoted in Sommers 2007, 142). However, there is a disconnect between this reality of male-driven urbanization and the fact that reintegration programs focus on returning ex-combatant participants to their rural homes.

In stark contrast, Marcia Greenberg argues that a “starting point for understanding the situation of women and girls is to anticipate their lives within families . . . for this is the social base from which most women live their lives” (2003, 1-2). Given the differing interests and norms that motivate men and women within Sierra Leone and Liberia, it is often a serious challenge for service-providing organizations to attend to the needs and interests of all parties—men, women, and children—within the existing frameworks of DDR programming and implementation (Bernard et al. 2003).

The disarmament process in Liberia provides a clear lesson learned with regard to the use and distribution of cash in DDR and educational programming. In Liberia, the distribution of money to ex-combatants who participated in the DDR process significantly shifted gender and power dynamics (Galvanek 2009). Cash incentives for disarmament, especially when distributed to children, often resulted in considerable tension within families and among peers. As Galvanek argues, “giving these children

such a large sum of money and sending them back into often very poor communities with broken family structures reverse[s] traditional roles in the family, by making parents dependent on the child” (2009, 24). Traditional male roles of breadwinner and provider were challenged when children and young adults suddenly received large amounts of cash. On a community level, cash incentives were often perceived as unfair “rewards” for ex-combatant participation in armed groups. Such perceptions led to further resentment, stigmatization, and ostracizing of ex-combatants, the very sentiments and attitudes that reintegration and educational programming attempt to overcome (Galvanek 2009).

Education-focused reintegration programming, like most DDR programming, tends to be slanted toward boys largely because of political perceptions. The often discussed “youth bulge,” especially in sub-Saharan Africa, strikes fear in the hearts of governments, for which “often, the most pressing imperative is to occupy boys and young men to keep them from trouble, involvement in gangs, violence and other anti-social behavior” (Kirk 2006, 6). Because this perceived threat does not exist for girls and young women, research has demonstrated that they are the most at-risk and overlooked population in war-affected countries (Sommers 2007).

Given that the education programs delineated in both Liberia and Sierra Leone in the post-conflict reintegration realm have had varying degrees of success and failure, five policy options emerge as strategies for making education an increasingly relevant, gender-sensitive tool within reintegration. These are discussed below.

Ensure Increased Female Participation in DDR

Policy makers, especially those in DDR design, would do well to consider design elements that better include female participants and minimize obstacles to their participation. First, there ought to be funding of rigorous scholarly research that can uncover the nature and composition of armed groups prior to DDR implementation. Without improved understanding of who is involved in armed groups, why these individuals are participating, and how they were recruited, it is impossible for DDR designers to effectively incentivize and facilitate successful disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration within a specific context.

Once the nature and composition of armed groups is better understood, it is imperative for DDR designers to adopt broad definitions of the term “combatant” to include both armed fighters and those fulfilling support roles within armed groups, with an intentionally articulated gendered lens. Broad definitions increase female access to DDR processes by identifying them as legitimate participants, regardless of their role within an armed group or their relationship to male combatants.

Additionally, nuanced understanding of the needs and motivations of DDR participants should lead to gender-sensitive programming—segregated demobilization centers, access to maternal health and child care, and viable livelihoods options—and should further support female participation in DDR. Finally, throughout the DDR process, significant care must be given to program outreach in order to ensure that both boys and girls clearly understand program options, the nature of the programs, and the benefits

and risks that might arise as a result of their participation (Mazurana and Carlson 2004). Broad understanding of women's roles within armed groups, gender-sensitive implementation strategies, and effective program outreach will hopefully serve to assuage girls' fears and increase their access and participation in DDR.

Dedicate Funding Exclusively for Reintegration

In both Sierra Leone and Liberia, huge sums of money spent on disarmament and demobilization left little funding for the third step in the DDR process: the implementation of strong reintegration programs (Williamson and Carter 2005). While disarmament and demobilization have specific and limited time frames, reintegration has a long-term horizon that seeks to establish a foundation for long-term peace. While all three aspects of DDR are important, given the unique and vital mandate of reintegration it is imperative that funds be available for this part of the process. Therefore, the dedication of specific and long-term funds exclusively for reintegration programming is crucial. This would ensure that the funds needed for reintegration are available and not exhausted by previous steps in the DDR process.

Gender Mainstream Educational Programming¹⁰

The findings stress the necessity of considering the consequences of educational programming through a gendered lens. Thorough gendered analysis uncovers priorities and perspectives that inform individuals' decisions to participate in education programs. In Sierra Leone and Liberia, failure to recognize the gendered implications of education programs significantly undermined their

success. Young men, having completed TVET training, found it nearly impossible to secure employment. Girls, even when they gained access to educational programming, faced unsafe, male-dominated teaching environments, did not receive child care support, and were limited to low-wage trades within TVET programs. In order to avoid these problems in future DDR implementation, all educational programming within reintegration must undergo careful gender analysis to identify the differing needs and priorities of male and female participants.

Prioritize Economic Goals of Beneficiaries in Education Program Design

Both young men and young women involved in educational programming within DDR desire to gain skills that will help them secure sustainable livelihoods. Students view both formal and nonformal education as keys to their future well-being and financial success (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers 2008). However, a significant critique of education programs within reintegration exposes the lack of coordination between program planning and the reality of market-based demand for skills (Kane et al. 2007). Failure to provide relevant skills could result in program graduates seeking maladaptive livelihood strategies, such as prostitution or the re-conscription into armed forces. Designers of education programs should prioritize the goals of DDR participants—autonomy and self-sufficiency—as they plan. In order to accomplish this goal, market-based research must be conducted in order to inform program design and ensure market relevance.

Make Curricula Publicly Available for Development of Best Practices

Information published about formal education and TVET programs is extremely limited. Detailed curricula related to formal education and TVET programs within reintegration are currently extremely difficult to find,¹¹ and in many cases are considered explicitly private. Existing reports speak very generally about program results, and none provides comprehensive data that is disaggregated by gender. In order to develop robust best practices for those designing and implementing education programs within reintegration, it is critical that detailed informational resources, including program curricula and data detailing gender-specific attendance and outcomes, be made publicly available to researchers and practitioners.

CONCLUSION

Education programs, both formal and informal, have tremendous potential to serve the needs and desires of both ex-combatants and their communities in post-conflict periods. By reducing the stigmatization of former soldiers, transferring positive skills sets, and providing a symbolic return to normalcy for all within a community, participation in education programs embodies the overall goals of reintegration in building lasting peace. Failure to understand gendered challenges facing men and women during transitional periods severely undermines the success of DDR programming. Drawing from the lessons of educational programming in Sierra Leone and Liberia, international organizations and implementing partners should recognize the importance of gendered analysis in a more effective

design and implementation of each stage of the process.

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ENDNOTES

¹ Sierra Leone is the second lowest on the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index (HDI) of 2006, and Liberia's data collection ability was in such shambles after the war that no data is even available for the HDI (Sommers 2007).

² Almost three-fourths of the population of both nations is under the age of thirty (Sommers 2007).

³ In Sierra Leone, 60 percent to 70 percent of youth are unemployed, and in Liberia, youth unemployment is around 88 percent (Sommers 2007).

⁴ For the purposes of this article, we use the terms "child soldier" and "child combatant" interchangeably to encompass all youth involved in war. We also use the term "ex-combatant" broadly to include anyone of either gender associated in any way with the fighting forces, whether as soldier or in another supporting role.

⁵ Producing 150 rounds of ammunition was sufficient in qualifying for disarmament (Africa Yearbook 2004).

⁶ The disarmament exercise in Liberia was very controversial due to the high number of people registering as ex-combatants and the comparatively small number of weapons or munitions surrendered. Gaming of the system resulted in the United Nations collecting only one weapon for every three to four people reporting themselves as ex-combatants and more than twice as many people reporting at disarmament centers than anticipated (Africa Yearbook 2004).

⁷ In her interviews with girls in Sierra Leone, Susan Shelper found that secrecy was often their best reintegration strategy. "They slink back home and don't want anyone to know what happened to them . . . they look at various strategies for reintegration, and the best strategy for them is just to go back to their village and downplay what happened to them. They initially go back to their own

family, and if that works out, they stay there. But often it doesn't work out, and they go someplace else" (Susan Shelper interview, April 5, 2002, cited in McKay 2004).

⁸ We must emphasize that these types of educational programs are by no means comprehensive, but instead are reflective of those that receive the largest portion of funding by international and government donors and are most often implemented in reintegration strategies. Other educational programs used in reintegration are not covered in this article, including accelerated learning, peace education, and community sensitization education.

⁹ Furthermore, participants often had to face "remnant discrimination" in the labor market because of their history of participation in violence (UNICEF 2010). Even among those earning income in Liberia, one can hardly say they have a "job" in the traditional sense; "they have four or five 'hustles' that they mix and match depending on which one's making the most money that day" (Chaffin 2009, 3).

¹⁰ In July 1997, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) defined the concept of gender mainstreaming as follows: "Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality" (International Labour Organization n.d.)

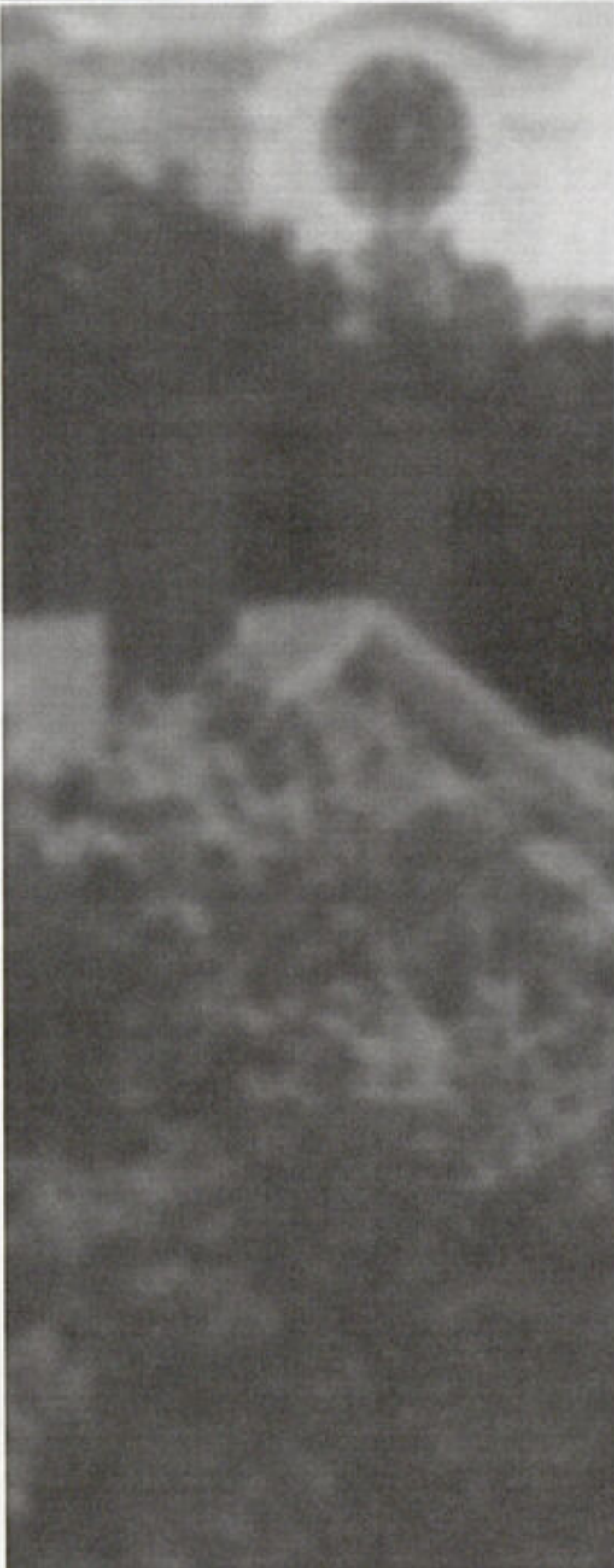
¹¹ Except in the case of peace education curricula available through the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies.



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Executive Education

Democracy in Africa — Tracking Success Stories from the Field:

An Interview with
Christopher Fomunyoh

*Interviewed by Zekebweliwai Geh
and Samantha Williams*

Christopher Fomunyoh, Senior Associate and Regional director for Central and West Africa at the National Democratic Institute, has organized and advised international election observations throughout the continent. He designed and help launched the African Statesman Initiative to facilitate political transitions in Africa. Fomunyoh is an adjunct faculty at the African Center for Strategic Studies and a former adjunct professor of African politics and government at Georgetown University.

Zekebweliwai Geh is a Senior Editor of the Africa Policy Journal. He is pursuing a master of public policy degree at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University with a concentration in political economy and development.

Samantha Williams is an Ed.M. candidate in the international education policy program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She has an M.A. in development studies from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and has studied abroad in Dakar, Senegal. Her interest in education focuses on girls' education, school leadership and reform, and support services for children from

underserved communities and backgrounds.

Zekebweliwai Geh and Samantha Williams interviewed Christopher Fomunyoh via e-mail while he was in Côte d'Ivoire on January 17, 2011.

APJ

In the past year, many African countries celebrated their fiftieth anniversary of independence. What is the most exciting thing you've noticed about this period? What is the most unsettling?

FOMUNYOH

In this period of celebrations around the fiftieth anniversary of many African countries, one of the many exciting things I have noticed is the pride that we Africans have in being able to run our own countries. [We are proud of] being able to have a voice on the world stage and to speak for ourselves whether through credible regional organizations such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), or the Southern African Development Community (SADC), or through the performance of well-managed democratic countries such as Botswana, Ghana, South Africa, Mauritius, and Cape Verde, to name a few.

On the other hand, it still is unsettling to watch the failure of leadership in some countries where the energy of citizens is being sapped and the vibrancy of civil society stifled, similarly to the way it was in the pre-independence period. One would have thought that the desire to liberate ourselves from the inquisitions of colonial rule would mean that all of our leaders treat their fellow citizens fairly and justly and that they pay greater attention to the public good and proper

management of the bountiful resources of our continent. Sadly, that is not yet the case in all countries.

APJ

You have played a vital role in supervising many elections across the continent. Unfortunately, there have been allegations of fraud throughout the election processes in several countries, leading to civil unrest and violence. What can be done to encourage African leaders to peacefully transfer power? What has worked in African countries where power has been transferred peacefully?

FOMUNYOH

In the past three decades, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) has played an important role in monitoring elections across Africa and other parts of the world. In fact, NDI has either monitored elections or conducted other democracy support programs in at least forty-five of the continent's fifty-three countries. We are pleased with the contribution our observer delegations have made in safeguarding elections by deterring fraud and by helping inform national and international opinion on the credibility of elections in the countries in which we have worked.

At the same time, we are most proud of the work that is now being done in this area by Africans themselves through various citizen-monitoring groups. Twenty-five ago, the participation of domestic observers in monitoring elections was not easily accepted in some countries; today it has become the norm. The active participation of nonpartisan domestic observers has become one of the barometers by which to judge the existence of political space and opportunities for citizen participation in every country. That explains why we increasingly see coalitions of civil

society organizations recruiting, training, and deploying citizens to monitor electoral processes across the continent.

Both international and domestic election-monitoring organizations are concerned about election-related crises and the fact that contestations in some countries have led to violence and the loss of life and destruction of property. This is one area in which considerable efforts must be made to consolidate some of the good practices that we see in a number of African countries. In the last two decades, though, we have seen conflict-ridden African countries such as Mozambique, Sierra Leone, and Liberia organize credible elections which have incrementally consolidated democratic governance by fostering national reconciliation and reconstruction. While Africans must avoid the kind of election violence we saw in Ethiopia in 2005, in Kenya in 2007, and in Zimbabwe in 2008, we must continue to encourage political leaders in these countries to emulate the good examples of other African countries such as Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Cape Verde, Malawi, Mauritius, South Africa, and Zambia, where political leadership has changed hands through the ballot process.

While some autocrats still manipulate the constitutions of their countries to cling to power, an increasing number of African presidents understand that there is life after state house, and that in many cases, one can continue to serve humanity and the African continent as a former president. Many Africans take pride in knowing that one of the most revered human beings in today's world is former South African President Nelson Mandela, who voluntarily relinquished power in 1999 after serving just one five-year term. A few other leaders left office after their terms ended or upon losing elections and accepting the outcome and have now

been involved in various goodwill missions such as conflict mediation, election monitoring, and humanitarian causes across the continent. The key to this good behavior on the part of these leaders lies in their personal commitment to the rule of law and the basic principles and practices of democracy.

APJ

What elections have you witnessed within the past three to five years that have truly surprised you—pleasantly or otherwise?

FOMUNYOH

The 2005 elections in Liberia surprised me very favorably, as it was very uplifting to be in-country and watch the high voter turnout as the country emerged from armed conflict and authoritarian rule under former warlord Charles Taylor to elect the first woman head of state in Africa. I was equally moved by the 2007 elections in Sierra Leone, coming on the heels of a brutal rebellion, or civil war, and culminating with credible elections in which there was a peaceful change of political leadership from the former ruling party to an opposition party. Of course, the 2010 constitutional referendum in Kenya was also a high-water mark for that country and the continent, as the robust but peaceful campaign period and citizen reaction to the referendum outcome underscored the attachment to peaceful coexistence among Africans and the resilience of a people and country that can bounce back even after extreme cases of violence in previous elections. I could also cite the 2008 elections in Ghana in which the vote difference between the two presidential candidates was around just 30,000 votes, and yet all parties and their supporters accepted the outcome without contestation, thanks in large part to the independence and impartiality of that

country's election commission and the election-monitoring efforts of credible civil society organizations and party poll watchers. One must also acknowledge the successful referendum in South Sudan, which has helped resolve one of the thorniest issues that has plagued the continent since the independence era.

As a downer, I have to cite the last presidential election in Ivory Coast that has been five years in coming and that took more than two months and a lot of regional and international pressure to get the declared winner of the election, as per the election commission of that country, to be sworn in as president. The long wait and the gross human rights violations that have occurred since election day have dashed the hopes of many Ivoirians about prospects for national reconciliation and respect for the will of the people.

APJ

Cameroon, Nigeria, and other nations will be holding presidential elections in 2011. What lessons can be drawn from the recent predicaments in Kenya, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire?

FOMUNYOH

Cameroon and Nigeria are among eighteen African countries that will organize national elections in 2011. In some ways, these two countries could epitomize the challenges and opportunities we have faced across Africa since the reintroduction of political pluralism and multiparty elections in the early 1990s. On the one hand, you have Nigeria that is overburdened by a huge population of approximately 140 million inhabitants, a legacy of military rule, and complex issues of regional, religious, and ethnic cleavages trying so hard to do the right things, such as appointing more credible election commissioners and raising

hopes, that it could have better elections in 2011 than has been the case in the past; on the other hand, to Nigeria's eastern border lies Cameroon with a smaller population of 20 million and yet no political will to open up the political process and conduct elections that its citizens could be proud of. There is an increasing wealth of best practices from other African countries to draw upon such as a legal framework that facilitates citizen participation in all facets of the electoral process and a credible independent election commission that can conduct its activities in the most nonpartisan manner.

APJ

What advice would you give the new government in Southern Sudan?

FOMUNYOH

The vote in Southern Sudan is truly historic. It is also highly significant because it goes against one of the long-held beliefs of African regional organizations—notably the African Union and its predecessor the Organization of African Unity—that boundaries inherited at independence were sacrosanct and could not be tempered with. The big lesson that I hope all African leaders draw from the Sudan experience is that national unity cannot be decreed or imposed on citizens through the use of force; it has to be negotiated and reinforced on a daily basis through actions that create space and opportunity for all citizens and reassures them that they all

belong. Only then would African countries succeed in managing the cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and/or religious diversity that is a blessing if properly managed and a curse of further polarization if negatively exploited by political elites and autocratic regimes.

I would therefore advise the new government of Southern Sudan to be most adroit in managing diplomatic relations with its neighbors to the north and, most importantly, to institute systems that can guarantee transparency and public accountability in the management of oil revenues so as achieve an improvement in service delivery and the well-being of its citizens. Only then would the people of Southern Sudan see meaning in their long-drawn-out battle for independence and greater freedoms.

APJ

What role can Africans in the diaspora play in the democratization processes in their home nations?

FOMUNYOH

Africans in the diaspora have an extremely important role to play. Let us not forget that in the last decades of colonial rule, many Africans returned from studies abroad to help create new political movements and institutions in their respective countries that worked towards independence. One could cite Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria, who returned from the United States to form the first political party in Nigeria in 1944;

❖ *The long wait, and the gross human rights violations that have occurred since Election Day, have dashed the hopes of many Ivoirians about prospects for national reconciliation.*

❖ *The vote in Southern Sudan is truly historic...it goes against one of the long held beliefs of African regional organizations...that boundaries inherited at independence were sacrosanct.*

the flag bearer of Pan-Africanism Kwame Nkrumah, who returned from the United States to galvanize and lead the quest for independence in Ghana and much of sub-Saharan Africa; and leaders like Jomo Kenyatta and Tom Mboya in Kenya. Even in Francophone Africa, leaders such as Sedar Senghor of Senegal, Houphouët-Boigny of Ivory Coast, and Ahmadou Ahidjo of Cameroon abandoned positions in French institutions in Paris to go serve their countries at independence, so there is precedence to the African diaspora rising to the occasion when called upon to do so.

Today's African diaspora has the added advantages of being in the twenty-first century, when democracy and freedom are universally recognized aspirations, and of living in environments that encourage social mobilization in favor of democratic governance. The diaspora can therefore make significant contributions through their innovative ideas and professional expertise, working in partnership with fellow compatriots for meaningful change, and using their networks and relationships to raise awareness across the globe on African issues. The diaspora can also provide financial assistance, where needed, to assist democracy advocates in-country, as is the case with other diaspora from countries such as Israel, Mexico, and Philippines whose actions contribute highly to both the political and economic development of their respective home countries.



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U.S. Foreign Policy in Africa:

A Public Address by
Condoleezza Rice

Compiled by Natasha Sunderji

From 2005 to 2009, Condoleezza Rice served as the sixty-sixth U.S. Secretary of State. Rice was former President George W. Bush's National Security Advisor from 2001 until 2005, making her the first woman to serve in that position. Before joining the Bush administration, she was a professor of political science at Stanford University where she served as provost from 1993 to 1999. In March 2009, Rice returned to Stanford University as a political science professor and the Thomas and Barbara Stephenson Senior Fellow on Public Policy at the Hoover Institution. In September 2010, Rice became a faculty member of the Stanford Graduate School of Business and a director of its Global Center for Business and the Economy.

Natasha Sunderji is a master in public policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Her interest in public policy focuses on health care delivery and management in the nonprofit sector, an interest she has pursued with consultancies in Canada, East Africa, and Geneva. She has a BAsC in biomedical engineering from the University of Toronto.

Condoleezza Rice spoke at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University on November 30, 2010.

AUDIENCE

What's the benefit to the United States of having responsible sovereign states in Africa?

RICE

The benefit of responsible sovereignty first and foremost is to Africans because those are countries that can deliver on food for their people, can deliver on education for their people, and can deliver on health for their people. So that's the first and most important goal. But the international system, not just the United States, is built on the expectation that you will be able to govern and you will be able to control your borders, for instance. Now we know that that's imperfect in many places. But some places are worse than others, such as Somalia. We almost had a war in December of 2007 because Somalia was unable to deal with its borders, and Ethiopia saw the threat from what was happening with the collapse of Somalia. So the international system is very much dependent on responsible sovereigns. That's in addition to it being good for the people.

AUDIENCE

Given that Somalia has been a failed state for more than twenty years, what is the future of the United States' relationship with this country, and what can Somalis do?

RICE

In order to have any chance to help a failed state heal, you have to have a plausible indigenous governing body. And it's why, whether it's Afghanistan or the Balkans or Liberia, people look first to

some sort of transitional government. The problem in Somalia is that it has been extremely difficult to get this done. I went to Addis Ababa to a summit to try and bring a Somali government in and give it regional support. One thing you can do to substitute for the strength of a government is to give it regional support. But of course then you get into problems with Ethiopia because the region is not very stable. I still think that the best bet for Somalia is to continue to try and work towards some kind of transitional government that can slowly build authority. There is some concern with such a weak government in, for instance, training security forces, but I see no other option than to train security forces for a government like that, or you will have mercenaries, or you will have regional powers constantly poking in. And finally as much as Ethiopia is a problematic state, you've got to work with Ethiopia to try

AUDIENCE

On January 9, 2011, Sudan will hold a referendum.¹ How do we know that we will not see an increase in the tension between northern and southern Sudan given the violence that has erupted in the region after similar political events?

RICE

It was certainly thought that the referendum of 2011 had the prospect of violence and for a rather chaotic outcome. Nonetheless it was believed, and I believe rightly, that without that prospect of a referendum and a decision on southern Sudan's future, it was not going to be possible to get a comprehensive peace agreement [CPA] that would allow the killing to stop and allow people to start to develop. Of course the mechanism that was put in place was to build a unified government for that intervening period, which was to try and deal with some of

❖ *The benefit of responsible sovereignty first and foremost is to Africans.*

and bring some stability in that region. It's really too early to even talk about economic development for Somalia because there's no government to work with so I think those efforts are probably the ones that are going to need to continue. And perhaps Somalis can come together around that.

There have been talks from time to time that perhaps Somali land should subside or whatever but I see that as more trouble. I think that you have to build a central government there.

the more difficult issues that were not frankly dealt with during the negotiations themselves. For example, the distribution of oil revenue, there was a basic formula, but precisely how it was going to be done was left to further negotiations, particularly in some of the most sensitive oil-rich areas. So there was a lot of work to do between 2005 and 2011. And I do have to say that I think that the problem in Darfur didn't set aside what was being done in the CPA, but it certainly turned the attention of the world and the governments away from moving that CPA forward. Now we have very little time to make those arrangements work. I know

❖❖❖ *...Anyone trying to address Africa in terms of policy needs to be very aware of the different histories, the different people, and the different circumstances.*

that the Obama administration and particularly Susan Rice at the UN is very much active in trying to move those issues forward, but there is no doubt that we lost a lot of time between 2005 and 2011 in trying to tie down all of those aspects that were left unresolved in the negotiations that ended in 2005. I have to say too that I think that the southern Sudanese leadership has recovered from the death of John Garang [leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement who died in a plane crash less than a month after becoming vice president of Sudan in 2005], but it took awhile. Now I think there's good leadership there that's doing its best, but time is running out.

AUDIENCE

How do we prevent Africa from being treated as a uniform continent?

RICE

One thing that we tried to do with, for instance the Millennium Challenge, was to differentiate in Africa by whether or not a country and its leadership was governing wisely and whether it was investing in its people. So Ghana got a \$450 million grant from the United States—not true of countries that did not have that profile. You're right that you have to deal with African countries on their own merits; you also have to deal with them on their own circumstances. But regionalization is happening all over the world, not just in Africa. It's true that the Organization of the American States is trying to have a more regional

approach in Latin America. The European Union has taken regionalization to its most highly articulated level. So I don't think there's anything wrong with Africa trying to act in unity through the African Union. But you're right that anyone trying to address Africa in terms of policy needs to be very aware of the different histories, the different people, and the different circumstances.

ENDNOTES

¹ Results since the time of this discussion show that southern Sudan voted overwhelmingly for independence in the January election.

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Life without Lights

Peter DiCampo



Children read the Koran by flashlight at a mosque in Wantugu, Northern Region, Ghana on May 13th, 2007. Wantugu had power lines installed in 2000, but government officials failed to connect them to a power source.

Year-round in Ghana, the sun sets at 6pm and rises at 6am — thus, the residents of communities lacking electricity live half of their lives in the dark. Over ten years ago, the government of Ghana began a massive campaign to provide the country's rural north with electricity, but the project ceased almost immediately after it began. The work sluggishly resumes during election years, as candidates attempt to garner popularity and votes. But at present, an estimated 73 percent of villages remain without electricity in the neglected north, an area comprising 40 percent of the country.

Living without lights is more than just a minor inconvenience. Electricity provides a paramount step on the ladder of economics, and northern villagers know what is being kept from them: lights to study and cook by, machinery and refrigeration, and a standard of living that would attract teachers, nurses, and other civil service workers from the city, not to mention foreign tourists. Potential economic growth is stifled and poverty's cyclical nature is perpetuated.



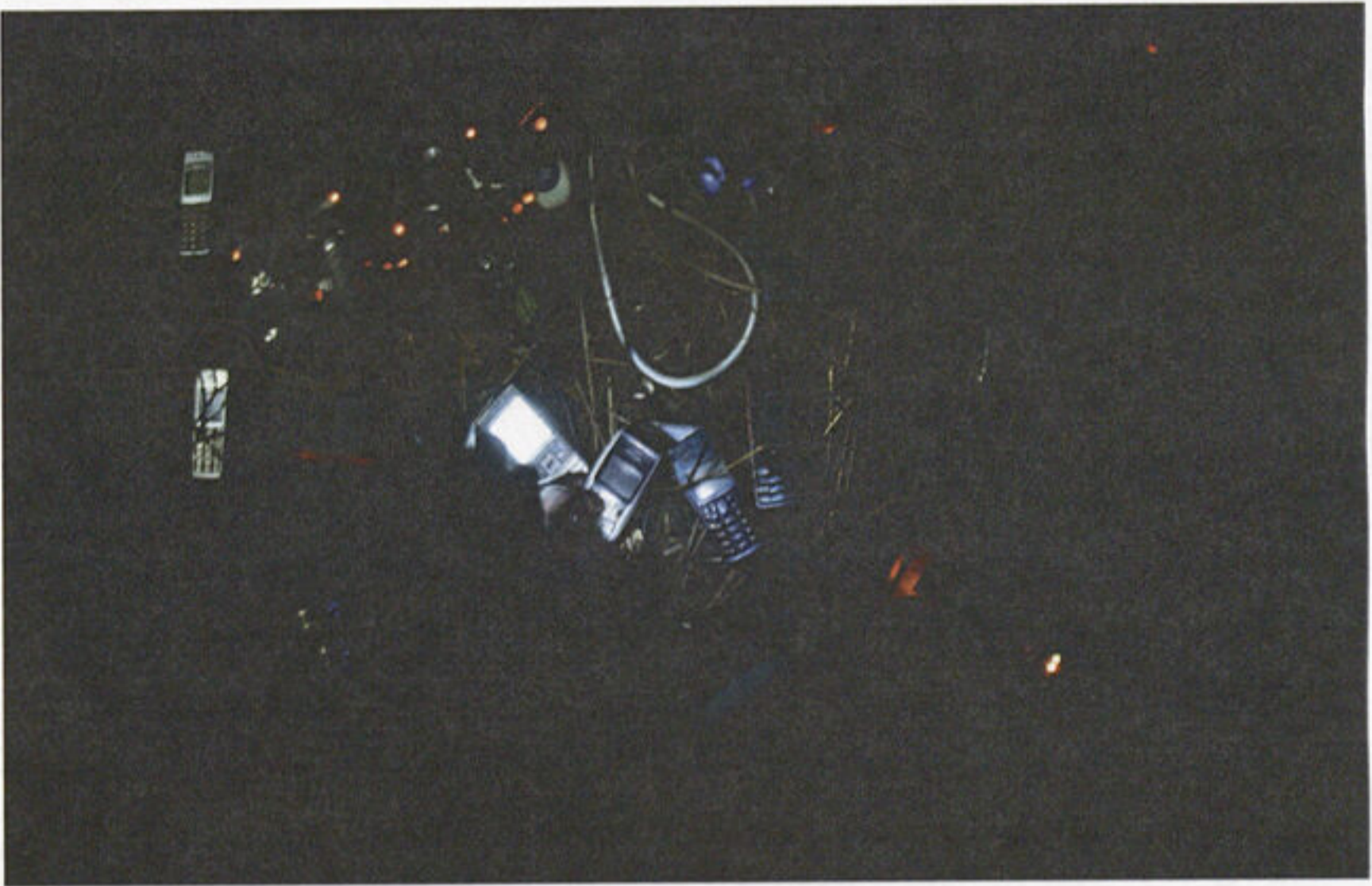
People board the last car of the night through Wantugu, Northern Region, Ghana on June 27th, 2007. Wantugu had power lines installed in 2000, but government officials failed to connect them to a power source.

That said, some forms of progress are inevitable, and a number of surprising modern amenities reveal themselves in the night. Mobile phones are widespread, and a growing local film industry allows northerners to see movies in a setting and language familiar to them for the first time in their history. All of this exists despite the absence of a convenient outlet in which to plug basic electronic appliances.

A close look at the lack of electricity in villages reveals much about their complex dependency on cities, and on the West. The 1.6 billion people living without electricity worldwide share a commonality in both the advantages they are denied and the technological advances that slowly pervade rural life.



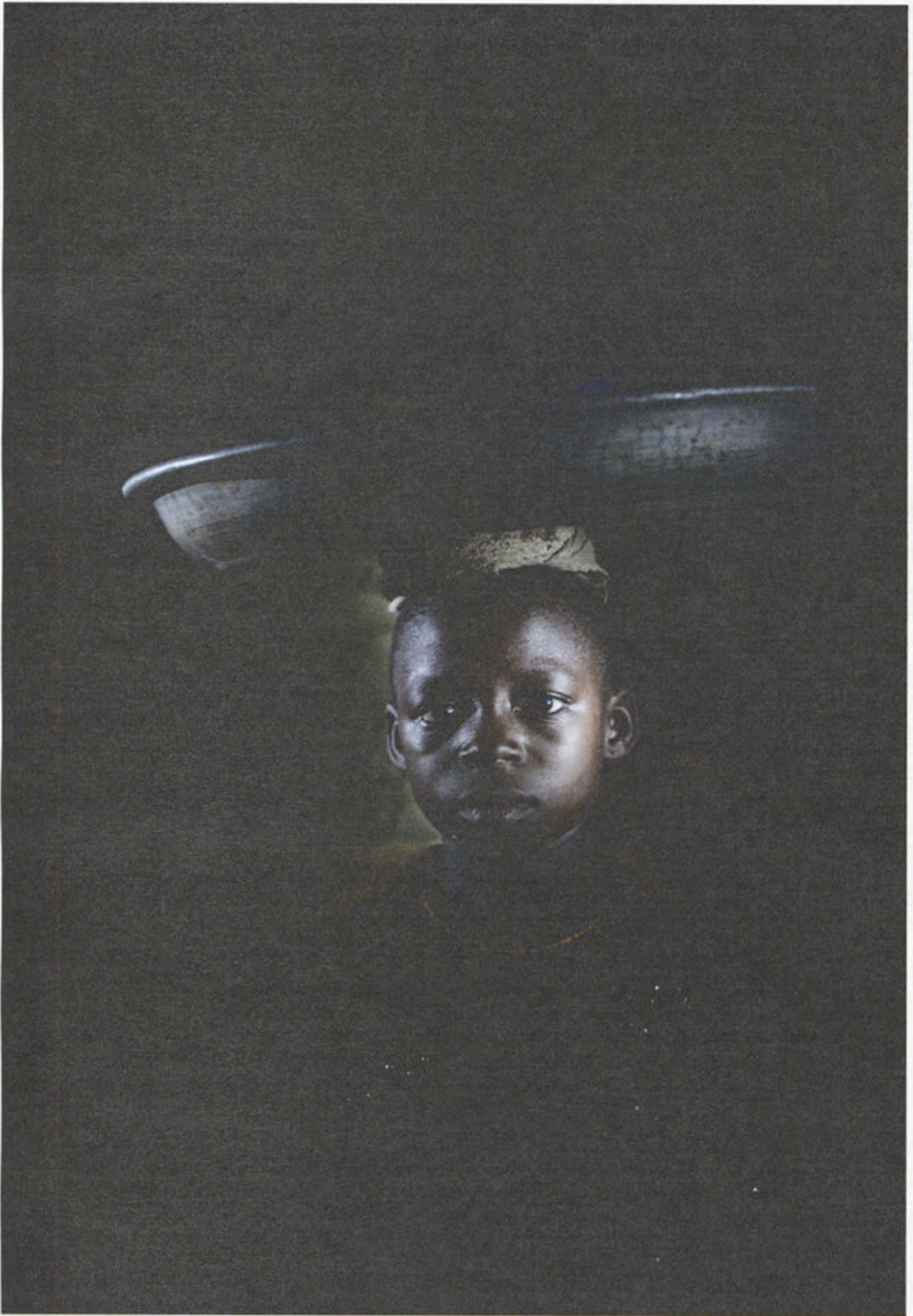
The women and children of the Abubakari household pose for a portrait lit with flash-lights in Voggu, Northern Region, Ghana on Feb. 20th, 2010. Women bear the heaviest burden of living without electricity, as they must walk for miles to fetch firewood and bring grains to nearby villages to be processed by electronic machinery.



Mobile phones charge off of a generator in Voggu, Northern Region, Ghana on Feb. 14th, 2010. The people of nearly every household in the village have at least one phone in their possession. The owner of the generator takes a small amount of money for each person to charge his or her phone, while simultaneously using the generator to show a film or power a stereo system.



The crew of Marvelous Films International, a local company from the nearby city, films a village scene for one of their films in Voggu, Northern Region, Ghana on Nov. 16th, 2009. Only in the past few years has a growing local film industry allowed northerners to see movies made by their own tribe, in a setting and language familiar to them.



Arishe Abukari, a young girl who is selling petty goods from house-to-house, poses for a portrait lit with flashlights in Voggu, Northern Region, Ghana on Feb. 19th, 2010. The villagers of Voggu are among the 1.6 billion people worldwide who live without electricity. There were powerlines in Voggu for years, but they were never connected to electricity. The material for the lines was eventually stolen, presumably to be sold as scrap metal.



A woman bends over to purchase fruit at the nighttime market in Gbulung, Northern Region, Ghana on Feb 13, 2010.

Peter DiCampo is an American photographer who divides his time between Africa and the Americas. He launched his freelance career in 2007 while also serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in rural Ghana. He holds a B.S. in Photojournalism from Boston University. Peter's photography and multimedia work has been published by Time, MSNBC, Vanity Fair, The Wall Street Journal, and many others. His recent awards include a screening of his work at Visa Pour l'Image, and first prize in the 'body of work' category in The British Journal of Photography's International Photography Awards. He is currently pursuing a long-term project on the lack of access to electricity.

Agricultural Improvement and Community Development:

An Interview with Darius Mans, President of Africare

Interviewed by Natasha Sunderji and Samantha Williams

Darius Mans, President of Africare, previously served as Acting Chief Executive Officer and Vice President of Implementation at Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). Before joining MCC, Mans held various positions at the World Bank including Director of the World Bank Institute (WBI) in Washington, DC. Mans was also the World Bank's Country Director in Mozambique and led the reengagement of the World Bank to Angola, which involved providing analytical and advisory services and \$125 million in lending to Angola following the end of the country's twenty-seven-year civil war. Mans holds a Ph.D. in economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a bachelor's degree in economics and mathematics from Wayne State University in Detroit, MI.

Natasha Sunderji is a master in public policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Her interest in public policy focuses on health care delivery and management in the nonprofit sector, an interest she has pursued with consultancies in Canada, East

Africa, and Geneva. She has a BAsC in biomedical engineering from the University of Toronto.

Samantha Williams is an Ed.M. candidate in the international education policy program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She has an M.A. in development studies from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and has studied abroad in Dakar, Senegal. Her interest in education focuses on girls' education, school leadership and reform, and support services for children from underserved communities and backgrounds.

Natasha Sunderji and Samantha Williams interviewed Darius Mans on October 7, 2010, at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

APJ

What are some of the underlying factors that are contributing to positive and negative growth in Africa and how is Africare working to ensure long-term solutions?

MANS

Many countries across Africa have had broad success with growth and poverty reduction from the mid-1990s because, as you know, from 1975 to 1995 there was virtually no growth in Africa across so many countries. But then came the global meltdown that began in the West with the financial-sector crisis in the United States—something that was completely outside of Africa's control. This set a number of countries back from 2008 to 2010, and approximately seven-to-ten million people were thrown back into poverty after a decade of progress. But the good news is that in 2009, Africa grew by 1 percent, and [for 2010], the expectations are that sub-Saharan Africa will grow by 4.5 percent. This is because

two very important things have happened. One is much better economic management in so many African countries than in the past. Back in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, when the U.S. caught a cold, many countries in Africa caught pneumonia, so you have a generation of technocrats who are managing through this crisis in a very responsible way, whether it's Nigeria or Tanzania or Ghana—the list goes on. The second big change, I think, is that many countries during the crisis have invested in growth. So you have countries coming out of the global meltdown and growing at 6 percent per year like Uganda or Mozambique. During the crisis, they invested heavily in infrastructure and improving agriculture productivity. And that's good business in Africare.

APJ

Can you describe the work that you do at Africare?

MANS

About 45 percent of what we do is in agriculture. Agriculture is a very good engine of growth in Africa, and it's where we can help countries achieve growth and poverty reduction in Africa.

The work that we do in agriculture is very important and very similar to the work that we do in health and in water—working directly with communities. And in the case of agriculture, we work directly with farmers. We help to mobilize farmers and farmer organizations, like cooperatives, so that they can improve their productivity, get better access to markets, and increase farmers' incomes. The work that we do involves improving yield at the farm level. Sometimes that is just plain, old-fashioned how to improve crop management, how to do intercropping, how to rotate crops, how to do spac-

ing in planting, etc. But sometimes this includes new technology with high-yielding feeds. So we work very closely with local and central government agricultural extension services to bring new technologies to farmers, for example.

In addition, we try and help improve access to modern inputs, whether that's seeds, fertilizer, or new production techniques. We do a lot of this with government, and we typically use a lead farmer model. This involves working with farmers who are prepared to take risk and adopt new technologies to demonstrate to others what can be done. Then the new production techniques and technologies start to take off and spawn continuity.

APJ

Are the crops sold for local markets or for export?

MANS

Typically for local markets, but also regional and international markets. We work in a variety of markets. Cassava, for example, is the main staple in so many countries in Africa. Nigeria, for example, is one of the largest producers and consumers of cassava on the continent. This is true of Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, DRC [Democratic Republic of Congo], and many other countries. In cassava, we have been working in a number of countries to improve the productivity of farmers and to increase output for domestic consumption. And cassava, as you know, is important not only for the local diet, but also as an input to animal feed and starch production, which has great potential in regional markets. Botswana is a great producer of animal feed; Nigeria is in the starch industry.

APJ

What are the challenges that African producers face in exporting to the international market?

MANS

One of the biggest challenges is reliable, consistent, quality delivery in quantities that the market demands, to the standards of the international market. We do a lot of work with farmers on standards, on product quality, on increasing volume, but also on increasing reliable delivery of quality products. That's the kind of work that we do with farmer organizations like cooperatives—working with groups of farmers in a number of countries in Africa to try and have them come up in the supply chain and have them become more reliable sources of supply.

APJ

What would the ideal public-private sector collaboration look like in development?

MANS

It's got to be win-win for everybody. International agribusiness firms, whether it's cargo and cotton or Starbucks and coffee, can bring products to the international market [as well as] new technology, and their great strength [is] in logistics. But what is difficult for them is to work directly with farmers. They are not farmer-facing organizations. That's where we come in.

We work directly with farmers and farmer organizations to help them be able to take advantage of the access to markets, new technologies, and logistics capacity of international firms. But again, we don't do this in isolation. Governments have a very important role to play in this by providing the infrastructure needed to get products to market, in addition to energy and water. If you can bring these elements together—international firms, government, and farmers—you have the components for agricultural development that will be a success for international firms who are looking to invest, as well as for farmers. But that's on the international side.

Also very important is supplying domestic markets. Regional markets are able to bring together local investors with farmers in the very same way where it's in the interest of both sides. We've been working in countries like Mozambique on contract farming. You have local or regional agrifarms that are looking to process agricultural commodities. But what they really need is reliable delivery of the commodities into their processing facilities. In a number of countries, like Mozambique, we have been working to organize farmers and their contracts to be able to provide consistent quality and reliable delivery of products.

••❖ *If you can bring these elements together—international firms, government, and farmers—you have the components for agricultural development that will be a success for international firms who are looking to invest, as well as for farmers.*

APJ

Many women across Africa work in subsistence farming or as small-scale vendors. What are your thoughts on this? If women are to move out of these low-return occupations, how would they do so? And to do what?

MANS

I'm sorry to keep going back to agriculture, but I just think it's such an extraordinary opportunity from several points of view. First of all, 70 percent of farming is done by women in Africa. We have been working in a number of countries to empower women in agriculture. For example, we've been working with Starbucks to grow organic coffee in Rwanda. Here we work with women to give them the types of business skills that they need to go from growing a little coffee on the side for some pocket money to becoming important parts of Starbucks' supply chain.

As the farmers' incomes grow, they invest in housing and other needs, all of which rural businesses can supply. Agriculture is the key to growing prosperity in Africa and I think huge opportunities for women in particular.

APJ

As the continent becomes increasingly urbanized, how will Africare's work change?

MANS

Our focus is rural Africa. Our saying has been "We go where the tarmac ends." And a thriving rural sector is fundamental to addressing the problem of rapid migration to cities. Having said that, we know today that half of the population of sub-Saharan Africa is now in cities. And that's not going to stop even though I think that it's very important to provide growth opportunities in rural Africa to

try and make this more manageable.

Frankly, much of this growth is stretching the capacity of cities to manage.

So again, you think about the challenge of poverty reduction or growth in a country like Nigeria. Agriculture has been neglected for decades there, and now the government is putting a billion dollars of its own money into agriculture because they recognize that agriculture is the key to their future—both to try to reduce poverty and to stem the growth in urban migration.

APJ

In addition to agriculture, where else should countries in Africa focus their attention in the next ten years?

MANS

Services are obviously going to be extraordinarily important. They are today, and they will continue to be. Whether that's financial services or telecommunications or construction, we see growth in these sectors in so many countries in Africa.

Also, let's not forget the importance of manufacturing. I think this is a big challenge in Africa. As you know, China is the factory of the world. And there is a raging debate globally about China's exchange rate. The currency is appreciating as we speak. There is enormous opportunity for countries that go into manufacturing, certainly in the low end. Why can't Africa, with its abundant cotton resource, become the world's factory for producing white socks and T-shirts?

The challenge is that the investment climate in many African countries creates real challenges to attracting private investors. In addition, it is difficult to provide the kind of skills necessary to have a productive workforce. This is an area that many countries are increasingly focusing on.

Exploring Options for Small Farmers in West Africa: An Interview with Ndiogou Fall

*Interviewed by Ghideon Ezaz and
Samantha Williams*

Ndiogou Fall is the Founding President of ROPPA, the Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations of West Africa. He began working in the farming industry through one of the largest agricultural marketing societies in Senegal. He is known as a leader and thinker in the development of agricultural strategy in Senegal and has participated in the formulation of the common agriculture policy of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). He is also a Southern Civil Society Organization representative on the steering committee of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP).

Ghideon Ezaz is a master in public policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He is pursuing a concurrent medical degree at Harvard Medical School. His interests include clinical medicine, health policy, and international development. He is originally from Eritrea.

Samantha Williams is an Ed.M. candidate in the international education policy program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She has an M.A. in development studies from the University of the

Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and has studied abroad in Dakar, Senegal. Her interest in education focuses on girls' education, school leadership and reform, and support services for children from underserved communities and backgrounds.

Ghideon Ezaz and Samantha Williams interviewed Ndiogou Fall on November 8, 2010, at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. The interview was translated from the French by Samantha Williams.

APJ

What are the most pressing challenges faced by small farmers, and how do small farmers fit into the context of greater food security in West Africa?

FALL

There are different kinds of constraints. As far as policies are concerned, for a long time the dominant idea has been that big industrial agriculture would solve the problems of food production and food for Africa, so all the policy tools were focused on this model of production: financial policy, credit marketing, research, etc. For a long time, small farmers were left completely to themselves without any support, and this obviously made them fragile.

The second policy problem is the fact that for many years, most African agriculture was focused on producing commodities to be exported for industrial use elsewhere. The production was concentrated on monoculture—on the export crop—and not on the variety of food crops that small producers produce for their own consumption. These agriculture and food policies have had an impact on trade policies, which opened markets to unfair competition between smallholder

❖❖❖ *Despite the dominant image of Africa, Africa has a long history of organization in rural areas—it goes back centuries.*

production and products coming in from the outside, largely subsidized and hence put on the market at prices that did not even cover costs. Small farmers were evicted from their own markets and therefore fell back on subsistence production, producing for themselves and not for the market, which they no longer had access to. In the end, these small producers became the buyers of food products coming from elsewhere.

As far as climatic concerns, most West African countries are in a dry area and are increasingly affected by climatic concerns such as droughts and floods. Some West African countries have had two years of drought out of five years, and the fact that there's been so little investment in water control and irrigation aggravates the situation.

As far as financing agriculture is concerned, the systems also target industrial production. The banks are physically very far from small farmers; the types of guarantees that they ask for are not the kind that small farmers can provide; and the interest rates are extremely high. These small farmers have enormous difficulties in [retrieving] capital to invest in their production and modernize it. So the small farmers who represent 70 percent of the population are in a very fragile condition.

APJ

West Africa has a long history of peasant organizations. How strong are these organizations in modern communities? What role do they play in alleviating some of the issues you raised related to markets, financing, and enhancing production capacity?

FALL

Despite the dominant image of Africa, Africa has a long history of organization in rural areas; it goes back centuries. At the community level, Africans have always organized to address situations that the individual can't handle on his or her own. This [peasant] movement is a continuation of this process. We didn't invent anything. We took from the principles of organization and solidarity that come up through tradition and took them to a higher level. This kind of movement got going in the mid-1970s, [during] the first big drought that affected all of West Africa. The drought and the famine that accompanied it stimulated the international community to intervene quite massively in West Africa with charities and foreign aid. After the emergency period, many of them at least stayed on with the idea that it would be better to prevent famine than to deal with it once it's there, so they began to reason with the local associations to decide what could be done to scale up their capacity. This is the period where you see the establishment of village development associations in which people came together to, for example, have collective fields and collective

purchase of inputs and markets, etc. This process led to the formal establishment of the Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations of West Africa (ROPPA) in 2000. The process was facilitated by two parallel processes: one was the arrival of a certain level of democracy in a number of countries in West Africa, and the other was the progress in the regional integration of the countries. It is also true that structural adjustment, despite all the problems that it created, opened up space for the farmers' organizations to step in and provide services to their members that the state was no longer providing.

However, some constraints are actually situated within the peasant movement itself. One of these is just the great difficulty of communication among the peasants of West Africa. The farmers are numerous and very scattered, so it takes a lot of patience and a lot of effort to organize them. There's such a broad range of needs from education of the kids to production. It's very difficult to have results

West Africa was negative—trying to stop the process instead of opening up and listening to the demands that were being put forward and trying to meet them. There was a lot of repression, with people going to prison or even worse.

The last constraint is economic. West Africa is in a situation where it's extremely difficult to carry forward with profitable economic activities because of the unfavorable policy environment and corruption and phenomena like that.

APJ

What types of policies, both national and international, would be most helpful for improving the circumstances of small farmers in West Africa?

FALL

The first policy change would be to reverse the policies that favor production by industrial farming and instead promote food production by small farmers. That would practically solve a good hunk of the food security problem

❖ *Inclusive policies are the future of Africa—not policies that lead to exclusion and concentration.*

that are really convincing when there's so much to be done. It's very difficult to establish priorities because everything is a priority.

Another constraint has to do with the other actors that the farmers' organizations have to interact with. You have the public authorities—the governments that woke up to see that a massive population was starting to organize and confront them with demands for meeting their basic needs. The immediate reaction of the governments in most countries in

because the small producers are 70 percent of the population. The second area of need is that of capacity building for small farmers' organizations, both to more effectively take on the kinds of functions that I mentioned earlier—like collective purchase of the imports, marketing, etc.—and to provide general education so that the small farmers can be aware citizens. They're citizens before being farmers, and they have the right to know about, participate in, and criticize the policies that concern them.

•❖ *Agriculture has to be the terrain where a good part of employment can be absorbed.*

Another important point is to ensure better coherence among different sectoral policies. Often, agricultural policies are handled in a corner and are not consistent with financial, trade, or environmental policies. For example, although everybody talks about agriculture being so important in our countries, when it's a question of deciding where to build roads, you'll find that roads end up being built from the capital cities to the tourist centers and not to the rural areas. The products end up rotting at the edge of the field, and the consumers in the city end up without food.

APJ

Looking to the future, where do you think the small-farming movement is headed? What would you say to critiques that the small-farmer lifestyle is no longer viable, particularly given the policy environment that you have described for us?

FALL

One thing you have to remember is that the population growth in Africa has not ended. Demographic growth opens a series of other questions, for example, what about employment possibilities? Every year in West Africa there are 200,000 new people on the market looking for employment.

This is why inclusive policies are the future of Africa, not policies that lead to exclusion and concentration. If you concentrate a good deal of the best agricultural land in the hands of a few large producers, you're not leaving space to accede to the demand for employment for

all these young people coming onto the market. Agriculture has to be the terrain where a good part of employment can be absorbed.

Adding Value to Raw Goods in Africa:

An Interview with Bingu wa Mutharika, African Union Chairperson and President of Malawi

Interviewed by Samantha Williams

His Excellency Bingu wa Mutharika was the secretary-general of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) from 1991 to 1997. His civil service credentials include working in the Malawi government from 1963 to 1964 and in the government of Zambia from 1965 to 1966. He also worked in the United Nations from 1978 to 1990, where he rose to the post of director for trade and development finance for the whole of Africa. In 2002 he was appointed Minister of Economic Planning and Development of Malawi. He became President of Malawi in May 2004 and Chairperson of the African Union in January 2010. He holds a bachelor of commerce degree and a master's degree in economics from the University of Delhi. He also holds a Ph.D. in development economics from the Pacific Western University, Los Angeles.

Samantha Williams is an Ed.M. candidate in the international education policy program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She has an M.A. in development studies from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and has studied abroad in Dakar, Senegal. Her interest in education focuses on girls'

education, school leadership and reform, and support services for children from underserved communities and backgrounds.

Samantha Williams interviewed President Bingu wa Mutharika as part of a press panel at Boston University on October 1, 2010, following his speech on food security in Africa.

APJ

In Malawi, particularly in the rural areas, there are many primary goods for sale, but small farmers have difficulty gaining a profit and getting those items to a wider market. How do you overcome reliance on raw goods as exports and add value to goods in Africa?

MUTHARIKA

First of all, I must say that adding value is actually the key to Africa's development. We were talking about jobs being exported elsewhere. The reason why that happens is because certain things that are taken from a particular country unprocessed are [being] processed somewhere else. So why are they processed somewhere else? This is very, very typical in sub-Saharan Africa, and we've got to change this. We've got to add value in the country. Even minerals, they must be processed here, in Africa. Timber has to be processed in Africa. Fish, tobacco, cotton, all those have to be processed in Africa. And by processing them, we are not only adding value but we are also creating employment. It is also augmenting exports because you export at higher prices. In Malawi, in some of the rural areas, they have something called one village, one product. The idea is actually [to have] people producing, let's say oranges or even mangoes. Ordinarily [they] just keep them on the side of the road and assume people will buy. If they

...❖ *Adding value is actually the key to Africa's development.* ”

don't, they often go bad. We are asked, why don't you buy machinery for the people so that instead of just selling raw mangoes, they make mango juice? This is happening in Malawi. We are doing a whole range of things including teaching our people how to pack [goods for market], which is also adding value.

So that, I think, is the way forward. We want to make sure that you don't get food rotting in one part [of the country] while there's not enough in another. We are very much aware of this, and we want [these methods] to be replicated throughout Africa. Some countries are already doing it, and there are others, like those that are exporting to USA, which can do it. But in Malawi it is a challenge adding value. Take cotton, for example. I have prohibited the export of raw cotton from Malawi. Ginning cotton can make it so much more valuable than the raw cotton by itself. The cotton seeds can be turned into cotton seed oil or animal feed. So you can actually do quite a lot just by that simple process of ginning. That's again adding value.

The same logic can be applied also to industrialization. The way to go is not a few big industries on the coast, but lots of small processing operations in the rural areas themselves, which can then offer employment to young people. Now, the only activity carried out in the rural areas is production itself. But if you multiply that by setting up small-scale industries for processing, you can diversify. This can also dynamize the rural economy and ensure that more of the value-added remains in the rural areas rather than being exported off to the big cities or abroad.

Ideas that Work:

A Review of *More Than Good Intentions: How a New Economics Is Helping to Solve Global Poverty*

by Dean Karlan and Jacob Appel
(Dutton, 2011)

Review by Rosie Osire

Rosie Osire is a master in public policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She was born and raised in Kenya and earned her international baccalaureate at the United World College in New Mexico and her bachelor's degree in economics and French at Wellesley College. She has interned with nonprofit organizations in South Africa, Togo, Ghana, and Kenya and is currently a short-term consultant for the World Bank. She also serves as a Senior Book Reviews Editor for the Harvard Africa Policy Journal.

Ideological debates on aid and other controversial topics permeate the current development discourse. Dean Karlan and Jacob Appel, authors of *More Than Good Intentions: How a New Economics Is Helping to Solve Global Poverty*, suggest that this needs to change. The authors write, “up in the realm of high-minded concepts and metaphors, the air is thin and there are no actual poor people to be found. This isn’t where development

needs to be. It needs to be on the ground.” Indeed, *More Than Good Intentions* offers a refreshing outlook on development that does not hinge upon ideologies, convictions, and simplistic analyses of good guys versus bad guys. Instead, the book is entirely focused on ideas that have been proven to work. In *More Than Good Intentions*, the authors summarize the findings of renowned economists who have conducted randomized control trials to measure the impact of various programs and interventions in developing countries. The purpose of *More Than Good Intentions* is to simplify the daunting task of figuring out which programs to support, which the authors accomplish by providing seven concrete ideas that work for the poor and using anecdotes and case studies to show the specific contexts in which these programs succeed.

For instance, they highlight research that shows how incentives can be used to achieve socially desirable goals. In Busia, Kenya, school attendance was improved by providing free uniforms and deworming services to children. Poor teacher attendance was ameliorated by using cheap disposable cameras and requiring teachers to take pictures with their class at the beginning and end of each class session. The cameras had date and time stamps that couldn’t be tampered with, resulting in a marked increase in teacher attendance. In Mexico, the government improved student attendance by conferring monetary rewards on parents whose children attended school regularly.

The book goes beyond simply presenting ideas that have had success and challenges us to find ways of improving programs that have already been shown to work. Karlan and Appel guide us through research that explores microcredit in great

depth and force us to think critically about its current design and coverage. Microcredit is lauded as a panacea to many development problems and boasts a client base of 155 million worldwide. However, the number of poor people living on less than \$2.50 per day is well over three billion (twenty times the number of microcredit clients). The authors reveal some findings that attempt to explain the underutilization of microcredit and offer evidence-based suggestions to help make microcredit more responsive to the needs of those at the bottom of the pyramid.

Additionally, the authors point out the different standards we employ when dealing with issues in developing countries. In the United States, we would never think of offering credit for entrepreneurial purposes to every poor person because we understand that not everyone is entrepreneurial. Yet in the developing world, microcredit and entrepreneurship is lauded as a one-size-fits-all solution to poverty, as if everyone can be an entrepreneur. In the developed world, we are keen on marketing good ideas. Yet in the developing world, we don't see a need to market good ideas because it is assumed that the people there are in such dire need that they will simply adopt the proposed solutions as a matter of course. As a result, good ideas end up having little or no impact on people's lives. As an example, people continue to suffer from diarrhea despite the fact that oral rehydration solution, a cheap and highly effective treatment for diarrhea, is readily available. Developing effective programs is a good first step. However, these programs need to be marketed. Just as we've convinced millions of people to buy a product like the Snuggie blanket, we should be just as keen to find ways to sell

proven solutions to the problems of poverty.

This is not to say that the authors advocate for a completely uniform approach to development. To the contrary, they constantly reiterate that no size fits all and implore us to "think of development initiatives as a transplant; sometimes the graft and host are compatible, sometimes not." However, they also suggest that we should not consider developing countries or their people as being so different from those in the developed world that nothing is transferable. People all over the world, encumbered by inertia and procrastination, respond to incentives when properly designed. We should consider ways in which we deal with problems in the developed world and try to apply those same stringent standards when tackling issues in the developing world.

Herein lies the challenge for readers of this book; it is often difficult to determine when it is appropriate to replicate best strategies and successful programs mentioned. The authors place so much emphasis on contextualization that one would be wary of replicating or supporting programs that work in places other than those in which the randomized control trials were performed. Their unit of analysis is the individual. For instance, they show how different interventions such as group lending in microcredit programs could work for one person but completely cripple another. Such caution in making recommendations, though laudable in academia, is not particularly helpful to a policy maker who is looking for generalizable ideas on which to build structures and systems that work for entire communities or nations. On the other hand, maybe it is time we stopped looking for magic-bullet solutions that

apply similar strategies to dissimilar individuals and circumstances. While policy makers brainstorm on the generalities, we certainly need economists such as those mentioned in the book to look at the specifics and to constantly highlight the negative and positive externalities accruing from blanket policies and interventions.

In terms of targeted audience, this book is especially suited to people who are unfamiliar with randomized control trials and to donors who don't have time to sift through jargon-laden academic articles on development yet seek to channel their funds to programs that will truly make a difference. Karlan and Appel make this daunting task easier by outlining ideas that work.

The book might appear redundant for the seasoned development practitioner or the well-read policy student who is looking for novelty. Ideas such as deworming, use of incentives, and the mixed evidence surrounding microcredit are all fairly widely known and documented. However, even these audiences would benefit from the summarized record of interventions that have been tried and tested while gaining insight on and inspiration to explore other topics that still need further research. It certainly helps to have all the disparate information on ideas that work compiled into one book and written in a manner that is accessible to diverse audiences. I believe that *More Than Good Intentions* is a must-read for anyone interested in improving the well-being of poor people.

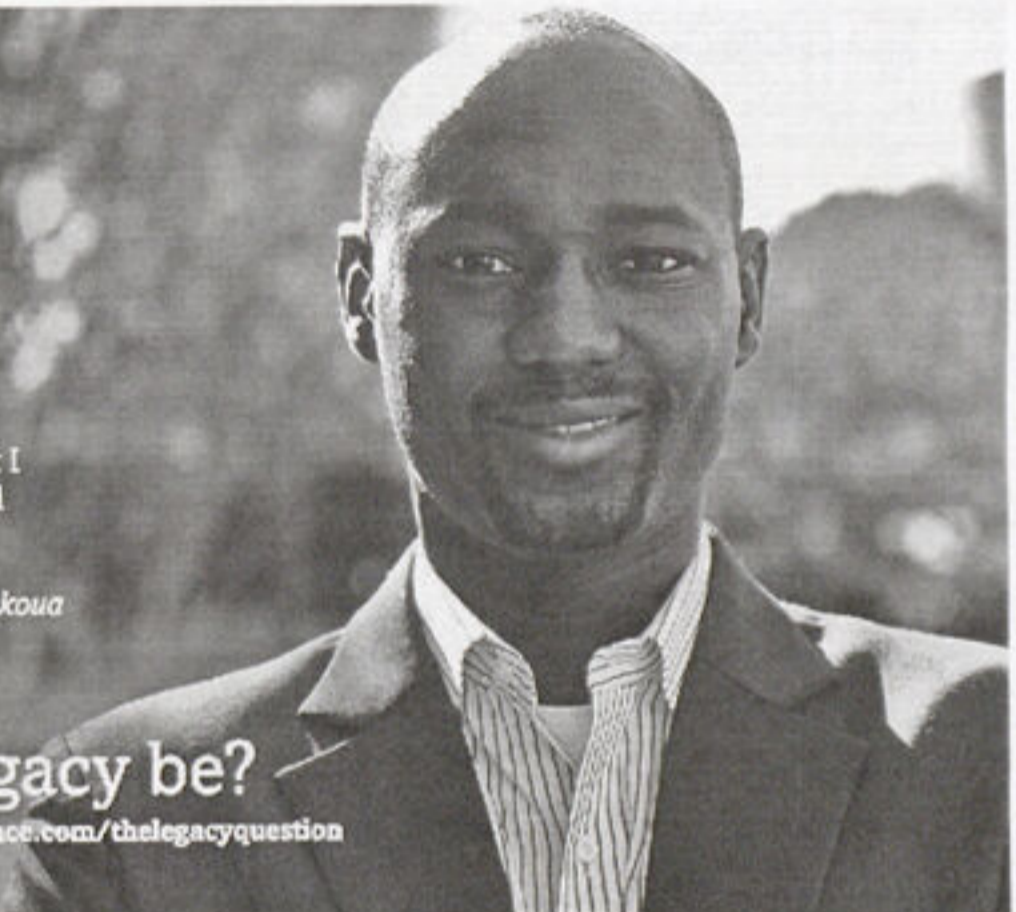


"The driving force behind much of what I do today can be found in my childhood growing up in West Africa."

Cheick Sanankoua

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Telling the Story of a Continent:

A Review of *Speaking Truth to Power: Selected Pan-African Postcards*

by *Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem*
(Pambazuka Press, 2010)

Reviewed by *Tolu Ogunlesi*

Tolu Ogunlesi is a journalist and columnist with NEXT, a daily newspaper based in Lagos, Nigeria. He has been a writing fellow at the Nordic Africa Institute in Sweden (2008) and a fellow at the Center of West African Studies, University of Birmingham, England (2009). He was awarded a CNN/Multichoice African Journalism Prize in Arts and Culture (2009) and is currently studying for a master's in creative writing at the University of East Anglia, England.

Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem's sudden death in a car crash in Nairobi in 2009 coincided with a day — May 25 — set aside to commemorate the founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU). It was an overwhelming irony: the untimely demise—he was forty-eight—of a leading pan-Africanist thinker and activist on a day appropriated for celebration and taking stock.

In the years before his death, Abdul-Raheem, who held Nigerian and Ugandan passports (by birth and residence, respectively) and was married to a Tunisian-born woman, wrote a weekly “postcard” that was syndicated in newspapers across the continent as well as published online in Pambazuka, the pan-African online network.

Now Pambazuka has published a selection of those articles as *Speaking Truth to Power: Selected Pan-African Postcards*. That the preface was written by Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, former Prime Minister of Tanzania and Secretary-General of the OAU, hints at the depth of the personal and professional connections that Abdul-Raheem built across Africa during his lifetime.

The “postcards” are arranged thematically, not chronologically. This has an obvious advantage; grouping similar pieces together reinforces the message and instantly throws Abdul-Raheem's most beloved concerns—and his passionate commitment to them—into sharp relief. However, there's also a drawback to this thematic delineation; by distorting the order in which they were written, the selection sacrifices the possibility of creating a real-time, moment-succeeding-moment profile of Africa and its major happenings as encountered and responded to by Abdul-Raheem during the years the selected postcards were written. The earliest is dated January 8, 2003, and the latest is May 25, 2009, the day Abdul-Raheem died. The themes center on gender equality, African unity, the fate of democracy and democratic institutions, imperialism and neocolonialism, globalization, and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

A sharply observant and strikingly knowledgeable mind is at work, offering perceptive commentary on why Africa is the way it is, who is responsible, and what it must do to chart a new course for itself.

The concern for Africa that emanates from these pieces is that of a frustrated father for a wayward child yet without condescension. The helplessness of the continent is a constant source of grief. "We're not even experts on our own poverty," Abdul-Raheem laments.

The candor is affecting; Abdul-Raheem confesses his admiration for Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi (like Gaddafi, Abdul-Raheem was a supporter of the push for a "United States of Africa") while simultaneously admitting that Gaddafi is "a very difficult friend to have" and "vulnerable to flatterers, charlatans and opportunists." The author also censures Gaddafi for refusing to let go of power and for creating a "highly personalised" political system in Libya.

Abdul-Raheem is an equal opportunity critic, apportioning blame wherever it is needed, whether at the feet of imperialists and neocolonialists, Africa's shame-inducing leadership elite, or Afro-pessimists. Former Liberian leader Charles Taylor is a "gangster of a President"; Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe is a "rigger and robber"; and former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell is President George W. Bush's "top guard-dog." Powell and British Cabinet Secretary for International Development Baroness Valerie Amos bask in the "house nigger status" conferred on them by their White bosses, while John Bolton is the "UN-hating" U.S. ambassador to the United Nations (Bolton was ambassador during the Bush administration).

But no one gets as much fury as former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, referred to as George Bush's "poodle dog." Elsewhere Blair is Queen Elizabeth's "arrogant but thankfully expiring PM" or a "compulsive serial liar." Tony Blair and Bob Geldof are "busybodies running around like headless chickens claiming they want to help Africa." Further, "Blair, Brown, Bob and Bono" are "B stars in poverty pornography."

It's hard to resist chuckling at much of the writing including this mischievously indirect question: "If George Bush can be trusted with nuclear weapons, why not anybody else?" Vivid metaphors reinforce the biting humor that shines through the articles: African leaders are invited to G8 summits as "side salads" and end up resembling "an NGO lobby group at the Summit of Rich White Men." Those "Rich White Men" show up in Gleneagles, Scotland, as "eight white men in dark suits meeting . . . to save Africa." The modern nongovernmental organization (NGO) industry doesn't escape satire; Abdul-Raheem classifies them as "MONGOs (My Own NGOs), GONGOs (Governmental NGOs), BONGOs (Business NGOs) and PONGOs (Private NGOs)."

No doubt, Abdul-Raheem, a doctor of philosophy graduate of Oxford University (where he was a Rhodes Scholar), did not think very highly of the West or of Africa's political elite.

Embedded in his intellect is a powerful hypocrisy detector. In his writings, he is perplexed by the deceptions, blind spots, and double standards of the West in its dealings with Africa: "What kind of success is debt relief that sees Nigeria paying back over three billion dollars to

Britain alone, a figure more than the total aid budget of Britain in the same year?”

Abdul-Raheem is generous with pointed questions such as the one he asks in a meditation on the politics of NGO funding and “donor-driven agendas”: “How come the nationalists freed [Africa] from the yoke of colonialism without writing proposals to any funder?”

A determined historicizing takes place in these pages to prove that the past is—to borrow William Faulkner’s words—never actually past. Slavery therefore has merely cunningly mutated into a “modern slave-reliant economic system forced on humanity by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization,” and globalization is no more than colonialism in rebranded garb.

The danger of writing from a perspective of absolute commitment to the ideals of pan-Africanism is that it becomes very easy to tar the continent—and foreigners often get accused of this—with a brush so thickly woven that it is helplessly indiscriminate, reducing a complex structure into a series of statistic-studded sketches of poverty, corruption, strife, and disease.

But Abdul-Raheem’s skillful touch resists this. The level of detail is that which you would expect from someone who has traveled the continent extensively and has met its leaders often enough for each one to stand out as a unique personality, not an indistinct version of a generic African strongman. Abdul-Raheem displays an encyclopedic yet intimate knowledge of the continent, its cities, its bloodsheds, and its illogi-

calities as well as its glimmers of hope. The Africa that therefore emerges in these postcards is a richly tapestried one.

Reading these articles one comes to realize how maddeningly ambiguous (in moral terms) the territory occupied by African politics is, dominated as it is by people like Robert Mugabe, who can manage to be all of these and more at once: freedom fighter, intellectual (holder of seven earned academic degrees), and tyrant. One of the postcards is titled “Brown Is Wrong on Zimbabwe — But that Does Not Make Mugabe Right.” Here is Abdul-Raheem at work actively resisting the kind of lazy binarism that manifests as “Britain is wrong/evil so Mugabe must be right/good!” or vice versa.

On the whole, wit and lively intelligence leaven these postcards and ensure they do not degenerate into that clichéd incoherence to which passionate rhetoric is always liable. The perpetually wagging finger indeed manages to point out not only problems but solutions as well.

Abdul-Raheem celebrates progress wherever he finds it: Nigeria’s debt reforms and its “reintroduction [of] compulsory Universal Basic Education”; Uganda’s success in fighting HIV/AIDS and its extension of “universal primary education to the secondary level”; Malawi’s reduction of maternal mortality rates; the East African Community’s trade and immigration policy reforms; and many others.

He also doesn’t shy away from making radical recommendations. In “The Demand for Common Citizenship,” he writes, “The first thing we need to do is to reconcile our states to the diversity of our peoples by giving African citizenship to all Africans wherever they may be.” He

also demands for an end to the criminalizing of cross-border African trade as “smuggling.”

Further evidence of the fact that he was much more than a fire-breathing activist or mayhem monitor is to be found in what occupied the author’s final years: from April 2006 until his death he served as the deputy director for Africa of the United Nations Millennium Campaign, which “supports and inspires people from around the world to take action in support of the Millennium Development Goals.”

He confesses that his career detour from civil society activist to United Nations bureaucrat surprised many of his friends and colleagues, and he tells of his struggle to convince them that he wasn’t “selling out.” At times like these, we glimpse the sensitive side of the radical: the personal shining forth amidst the policies and the politics. As such there is also a touching account of how an early morning rebuke from his ten-year-old daughter compelled him to instantly give up a twenty-year-old smoking habit.

Readers will no doubt find a lot of repetition of arguments and ideas in the pages of this book, but that is only to be expected considering its nature as a collection of pieces written at different times and in varying circumstances. And there will be those who will see excess in Abdul-Raheem’s unfailingly dim view of Western governments and leaders. In his defense it should be pointed out that a selection of five dozen pieces out of the hundreds he must have written should not be expected to provide the most balanced view of his oeuvre.

These immensely readable postcards (clearly written with an audience of non-specialists in mind) come together

to tell a story of a continent caught between the trauma of a painfully present past and a future that it seems to be making absolutely no plans for—or is abandoning to outsiders to fashion on its behalf.

Hopefully the writings will inspire a new generation of thinkers and activists who will carry on from where Abdul-Raheem stopped. It’s high time we realized that there can never be too many people sending echoes of the truth bouncing around the shadowy catacombs in which Africa’s complicated politics continues to play itself out.

A Fresh Voice for Africa: A Review of *Troubadour*

by K'naan

(A&M/Octone 2009)

Review by Ilana Kessler

Ilana Kessler is a Senior Book Reviews editor at the Harvard Africa Policy Journal. She is a master in public policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and holds an African studies certificate and B.S. degree from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. She has worked in the education sector in East Africa and the United States.

If you were anywhere in Africa during the summer of 2010, you could not help but hear Coca-Cola's World Cup soundtrack, "Wavin' Flag." Office workers and street vendors alike hummed snatches of the feel-good tribute to the unifying power of soccer by Somali-Canadian rapper K'naan.

All this exposure has given a second life to K'naan's 2008 debut album, *Troubadour*. The album's booklet foreshadows the subject matter of the songs in the acknowledgements section: "K'naan thanks WAR, Warlords, Immigration . . . Correctional Facilities, Financial Institutions, Public Schools . . . for making me fight harder. For giving me convictions." And yet, listeners leery of

the anger frequently found in underground hip-hop and postcolonial literature need not worry. Although K'naan's songs are infused with an awareness of injustice, they eschew a victimhood mentality in favor of a sense of optimism and personal responsibility. In "15 Minutes Away" K'naan says with pride, "Your boy has grown up decent/ Grandma can you believe it?" K'naan's lyrics reflect changing attitudes among young people across Africa and the diaspora, many of whom retain their parents' social consciousness but are tired of playing the blame game and are eager to be proactive in addressing Africa's problems.

From a musical standpoint, the album is spectacular. The music is catchy and the beats eclectic, running the gamut from rap, to mariachi-influenced, to traditional Somali. Ballads like "Fatima," a bitter-sweet tribute to a woman who was killed in Somalia, break up the hard-driving energy from pop anthems like "Dreamer" and "Bang-Bang," a duet with Maroon 5's Adam Levine. K'naan's lyrics bring a welcome, wry sense of humor to weighty subject matter. For instance, his song about remittances, "15 Minutes Away," opens, "I'm sending this one out to anyone that's had to wait on a money transfer. It's kinda wack when they charge you, like, 10 percent on the dollar."

Unfortunately, news about young Somalis living in the West has been dominated in recent years by Al Shabaab's recruitment of Somali teenagers in Minneapolis. When these teenagers have been found, they have spoken of a kind of hopelessness and purposelessness in the West as well as a search for their Somali identities. With *Troubadour*'s back-to-back juxtaposition of the songs "Somalia" and "America," K'naan seems to be speaking

to the uneasy experience of being torn between two worlds. One wonders whether K'naan's songs—outraged but resilient, defiant but forgiving, Westernized but insistently Somali—may be the voice for which these Somali-American teenagers have been searching.

The journey of the song “Wavin’ Flag” reflects these dual experiences as well. The peppy version of the song showcased by Coca-Cola in its World Cup ad campaign was not the original. The original version, which K'naan wrote about his experience leaving Somalia as a child, did not pass muster with Coca-Cola's marketing department (Prince 2010). Before “Wavin’ Flag: Celebration Mix” became Coca-Cola's soundtrack for its worldwide customer base, K'naan removed lines such as “We struggling, fighting to eat” and “A violence prone, poor people zone” in favor of feel-good lines like “Unify us/ Make us feel proud.”

Although I was initially disappointed that Coca-Cola and K'naan sanitized “Wavin’ Flag,” I have become convinced that Africa deserves celebratory anthems like this. In a recent online TED Talk, Melinda Gates pointed to the “Celebration Mix” as a model for social marketers in Africa: constantly deluging people with fearmongering about public health and hectoring messages about personal responsibility needs to change: Africans, like people everywhere, gravitate toward messages of hope and optimism (Gates 2010). As the World Cup showed, Africans are eager to take the world stage for reasons other than war, poverty, and disease. The Africa on display during the World Cup, as sanitized as it was, showed Africans and the world that there is a second, more hopeful story to be told about today's Africa. On *Troubadour*, with his forceful mix of conviction and optimism, K'naan

manages to tell both of these stories at once.

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