



Report of Workshop on
Peace and Conflict in Africa

Maputo, Mozambique
June 23–27, 2002

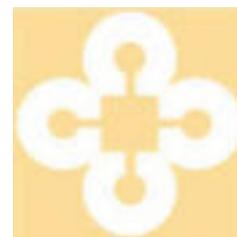


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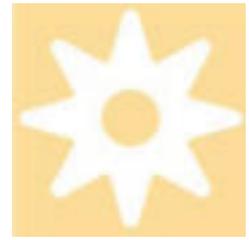
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Note: At the time of this meeting, and the initial publication of this report, TrustAfrica was known as the Special Initiative for Africa.

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I. Workshop Overview

From June 23 to 27, 2002, the Ford Foundation’s Special Initiative for Africa (SIA) brought together a group of experts from 24 countries, representing the five sub-regions of Africa, for a workshop on Peace and Conflict in Africa. Participants, working primarily in small groups, discussed the problem of conflict in Africa and explored innovative regional solutions to foster peace. This was a pivotal convening in terms of its focus on initiating inter-African partnerships for peace. Most participants agreed that it was a rare opportunity to dialogue and exchange information and approaches with counterparts from all regions of Africa.

Workshop discussions focused on three objectives:

- To identify priority areas and strategies for collaboration;
- To exchange ideas and lessons about innovative programs; and
- To discuss and identify critical funding and organizational challenges.

In addition to the small group discussions, the plenary was addressed by a representative of the African Development Bank who spoke on SIA goals as “public goods,” panelists from North Africa who spoke on the conflicts in Western Sahara and Algeria, a representative of the International Peace Academy who presented a report on “The Infrastructure of Peace in Africa,” and a Mozambican traditional healer who spoke about the role of traditional healing in promoting peace and reconciliation.

The workshop enabled participants to look beyond their individual organizations to address the critical regional and continental issues, opportunities, and challenges faced in peace and conflict work on the African continent. The issues included: how to better take advantage of best practices in order to avoid “re-inventing the wheel,” how to network and communicate more efficiently and broadly, how to effectively engage other actors outside civil society, how to empower women and youth to take a central role in this field, how to ensure the security of peace activists, and how to strengthen and consolidate the capacities of organizations.

Participants had lively debates and greatly benefited from sharing experiences with one another. Key areas participants identified as important for building sustainable peace in Africa included good governance, resource exploitation, security sector reform, women and youth, and arts and culture, and they made practical recommendations for each. They concluded that more work was needed in three main areas:

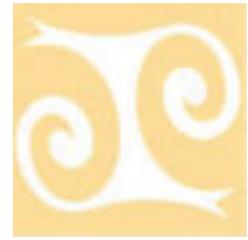


1. the establishment of a means of sharing information and knowledge about regional peace initiatives;
2. the undertaking of joint advocacy and action; and
3. the creation of venues for continuous dialogue, reflection, and scholarship.

Specific recommendations included:

- Research and “audits” that provide knowledge and understanding on effective approaches at the local, national, and regional levels across Africa. Specifically highlighted was the need to better understand and utilize distinctly African solutions that have worked in achieving reconciliation and forgiveness in post-conflict societies across the continent. Participants also highlighted the need for research and analysis to achieve a paradigm shift from the preoccupation with conflict resolution to building and promoting peace in Africa.
- Informed and collaborative advocacy to make the peace and security initiatives of regional and sub-regional organizations more effective and democratic.
- Communication and networking activities including an electronic interactive site; a newsletter; and audio-visual products to advance advocacy, learning, and capacity-building.
- Technical assistance and exchanges for organizations to strengthen their staffing, management systems, organizational governance, and accountability.
- Forums to provide opportunities for reflection, dialogue, and learning. These could also serve as avenues for strategic planning and networking and even as places of refuge for peace activists whose security is threatened. Some participants envisioned an “African Peace Academy.”
- Activities to ensure that the voices of other less formal or structured actors in this field are also heard, and that their work is legitimated and facilitated.
- Linkages with cultural workers such as performing and visual artists and creative writers to forge more popular and creative African responses to the challenges and opportunities for peace in Africa.

The workshop took place at a special moment in Africa’s history. There are more democratic and civilian governments in Africa today than at any time in the last century. Governments and civil society



organizations alike are increasingly networking and pursuing joint strategies across national borders. Three major developments are illustrative of a new willingness to address conflict and foster peace at the regional and national levels:

- The African Union (AU, which replaced the Organization of African Unity, first established in 1963) has pledged not to admit any government that comes to power through unconstitutional means.
- African governments have embraced the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to build a global partnership for promoting democratic development in Africa and to create an inter-governmental peer-review commission that seeks to enforce common standards for democratic governance.
- The annual African Development Forum (ADF, established in 1999) provides the first-ever opportunity for governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector to jointly formulate strategies for addressing critical issues such as HIV/AIDS, debt, poverty, conflict, human rights, refugee protection, and information technology.

African institutions and activists are also emphasizing the importance of African leadership in designing solutions to cross-country problems and issues. Increasingly, new information, communication technologies, and the rise of cross-country civil society organizations (CSOs) provide opportunities for collective action.

To work well and avoid the failures of the past, however, these multi-country approaches need to be buttressed by institutions that are effective in what they do, are accessible and accountable, collaborate more effectively, and are sustained by resources controlled by Africans. Processes to increase the participation of CSOs, the private sector, and social groups (such as women and youth) that are often marginalized in decision making are also required.

SIA is a response to these opportunities and trends in Africa. Its overarching goal is to help strengthen key institutions so that they can more effectively and collaboratively address three closely interrelated challenges that Africa faces: peace and conflict, regional integration, and citizenship and identity. To this end, SIA seeks to support efforts to address three main strategic questions:

- How can African institutions and organizations collaborate more effectively, and learn from and support each other?
- How can regional decision-making processes become more inclusive of critical sectors of society, such as the private sector and marginalized groups like women and youth?

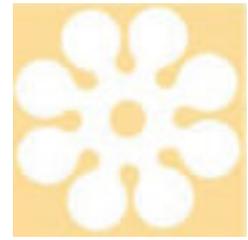


- How can a sustainable Africa-led fund be built to support this work? How might such a fund be organized, managed and utilized?

The goal and strategies of SIA involve a commitment to promote:

- African ownership and leadership in solving African problems,
- New approaches to funding in Africa,
- Gender and age diversity,
- Institutional accountability and the highest of organizational standards, and
- Communication and outreach about exemplary African institutions and solutions.

*‘Peace starts at home, but must not end at home.’
In other words, we must first know how to make peace
in our own families, communities, and countries
before we can tell others how to do it.*



II. Background: Peace and Conflict in Africa

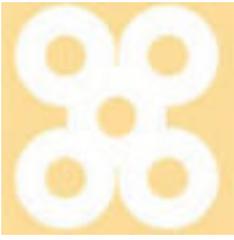
What are the challenges presented by peace and conflict in Africa? Historically, violent conflicts in Africa date back to pre-colonial times marked by internecine inter-ethnic conflicts, wars of conquest, and slave raids. The colonial period saw intensified wars of European conquest throughout the continent and national wars of liberation starting with the Algerian war of independence in the 1950s and ending in the 1980s in Southern Africa. It is noteworthy that these wars were often prolonged and complicated as a result of the involvement of the Cold War superpowers. The post-colonial period, on the other hand, is marked by civil wars — such as the long-standing wars in Sudan, Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Algeria and Uganda — that started within nation-states and spilled beyond national borders to engulf neighboring countries.

Currently, more than 20 African countries are mired in violent conflicts, with attendant gross human rights abuses, horrific levels of human suffering, and collapsed economies. The statistics are astounding:

- Seven wars have each taken between 500,000 and 1,000,000 lives in Angola, Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia and Uganda.
- In the Great Lakes region alone, 5 million lives have been lost in the past ten years.
- With approximately 10 percent of the world's population, Africa has nearly a quarter of the world's refugee population (second only to the Middle East).
- Thirty of Africa's 53 countries have experienced significant economic decline (as measured by Gross National Product) as a result of armed conflicts.
- Nearly 25 percent of African children have been negatively affected by war (killed, orphaned, permanently maimed, forced to serve as child soldiers, displaced, or suffered serious psychological trauma).

Local and regional efforts to analyze and manage violent conflicts unfortunately remain inadequately supported. African institutions that can effectively and democratically address the challenges of conflicts and peace are few, leaving the continent largely reliant on international organizations and foreign powers for leadership in resolving conflicts — with all the dangers and inadequacies such reliance implies.

There are, however, some significant African responses to this challenge. Inter-governmental mechanisms such as the defense and security organs of the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in East Africa, and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) show some promise. There are also a large number of non-governmental organizations that conduct advocacy around local conflicts and offer some important lessons.



SIA seeks to enhance the capacity of African experts and institutions to address the challenges and opportunities posed by peace and conflict in Africa. The workshop served as a forum for such groups and actors to brainstorm to develop the most effective strategies to do so.



A Mozambican traditional healer shared her experiences regarding traditional healing and reconciliation with the group. Following her presentation, small groups held lively discussions on the role of traditional healers in peace and security. Many agreed that traditional practices are very useful in treating victims of war, in particular addressing issues of trauma and helping rape victims. The groups cited successful initiatives in northern Uganda, in Liberia, and in Sierra Leone. Some deplored the tendency to rely on “imported expertise” from the West, often using treatment methods that are culturally inappropriate. They also expressed interest in exploring the role that other traditional societal mechanisms could play in peace and conflict, such as the role of elders in the AU peace and security review and in performing preventive diplomacy. Discussion of traditional healing also brought into sharp and clear relief the special challenges that elite organizations and activists sometimes face in communicating and forging vertical linkages with those at the grassroots.



III. Priority Areas

Participants, working in small groups, elaborated on priority areas to further the direction they believe peace groups in Africa should take. One group created a slogan: “Peace starts at home, but must not end at home.” In other words, we must first know how to make peace in our own families, communities, and countries before we can tell others how to do it. Thus, they addressed issues at both local and regional levels. The discussions were free flowing and issues often overlapped from group to group, but clear trends of focus and interest could be extracted across the groups. Participants identified the following as priority areas:

Governance

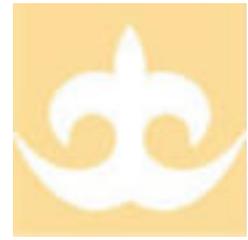
Participants agreed on the need to promote good governance in Africa as a prerequisite for sustainable peace. Much debate centered on the distinction between making peace and building democracy. While appreciating that the two go hand-in-hand, participants concluded that further study on these issues and what they mean for Africans would be helpful. Participants welcomed an emerging set of norms and values centered on notions of peace and governance in Africa. However, they also recognized that there is often a significant gap between the identification of norms and values and implementing them.

Synergy of traditional and modern structures

Participants cautioned that the process of democratization in Africa is necessarily contentious because, as different groups in society claim certain rights that might be incompatible with traditional norms and customs (women’s inheritance rights, right to divorce, ethnic minorities claiming land rights, etc.), tensions can escalate. They recognized a need to reconcile tradition and cultural norms with individual civil rights and responsibilities in a way that would not result in conflict.

Resource control

There was broad agreement on the need to address how resources are controlled if there is ever to be true peace in Africa. The underlying assumption in this regard was that there are profits to be made from war (looting, illegal weapons trade, natural resource exploitation, etc.). Participants recognized that illegal resource exploitation is at the heart of many of Africa’s conflicts including Angola, eastern Congo, and the Mano River region. This was also referred to as the “economics of peace.”



Security sector reform

Many suggested that security sector reform at national and regional levels should be a priority. In this regard, they cited work done to combat the trafficking of small arms as a best practice, and one that requires further support.

Enhance role for marginalized groups

There was broad agreement that peace activists should do more to mobilize women and youth in their efforts, and to ensure that the interests of women and youth are represented in peace and conflict work. Participants discussed several relevant successful initiatives that they felt were noteworthy including research and training programs for women in eastern Congo and programs using theater and the arts to target youth. However, participants also agreed that youth and gender programming should be integrated into all peace and conflict programming rather than be considered as a separate category. Participants devoted significant discussion to the potential for using arts and culture as a tool of conflict resolution and cited the importance of supporting culture-based mechanisms for conflict management

Grassroots peace accord

Finally, participants repeatedly came back to the idea of establishing an African Peace Academy to bring together all of their capacities as civil society groupings, based on a sort of CSO Charter. They envisioned this as an organization similar to the AU but on a grassroots level — an organization with the moral authority and ability to speak with a strong voice for peace and development. One participant said that, while African activists may feel powerless, they only feel this way when they look at things from a Western perspective. He added that Africans hold the key to what is going on in Africa, and it is their responsibility to harness the energy behind regional and sub-regional structures (such as the nascent NEPAD) to build sustainable peace.

In light of the above priorities, participants identified a number of innovative projects to address them including:

- Prioritize work on questions of democratization and traditional norms and practices, with a view to promoting the rights of women.
- Research the complementary roles of the state and traditional structures in Africa, as well as the conflicts that exist between civic laws and traditional and customary systems, laws and practices.
- Promote creation of an African judicial system to help ensure democratic rule that excludes warlords and dictators.



- Reinforce successful regional efforts such as collaborative work to mitigate the proliferation of small arms, making sure to identify and document sub-regional and continental best practices.
- Integrate gender and youth programming in all peace and conflict programming.

A pan-African approach to information is necessary, especially given the devastating impact of small arms trafficking and other problems that don't respect borders . . . Africa needs a new approach to information-sharing, one that is better able to tap into local knowledge and experience and also has a regional purview.



IV. Strategies for Collaboration

With these priority areas in mind — good governance, economic resources, security sector reform, culture, and women and youth — participants had extensive discussions to elaborate strategies for collaboration. Their proposals fell into five broad categories: information, research, building linkages among peace activists, regional participation of civil society, and reinforcing institutional capacity.

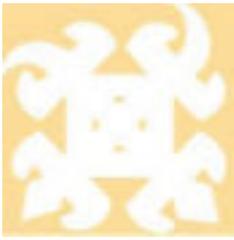
A. Information

Participants lamented the dearth of information available on African peace efforts, both historic and current. Several participants pointed out that no one is consistently reporting on peace-building initiatives in Africa, resulting in limited access to information for individuals and agencies working in peace and conflict resolution. Lessons that could be learned from the strengths and weaknesses of past experiences or experiences elsewhere on the continent are often lost. The occasional successful mechanism that is publicized thus becomes exceptional. Participants recognized the report prepared by the International Peace Academy for the meeting as a good first step in this direction, which could be a

Network members should demand that their networks stay on the continent to address the issues affecting Africa, rather than always traveling overseas to meet each other. They should also make more of an effort to address the language difficulties that hamper networking among Africans.

starting point for future audits (see more on audits below). They said that an audit would be one way to support good work that is being done, and it would also help restore Africans' trust and confidence in their own abilities as peace-makers. There was also significant discussion around the need for enhanced and increased media coverage of peace initiatives in Africa.

It was agreed that information-sharing is important at both local and regional levels. On the regional level, participants noted that Africans generally lack access to things that are African and that



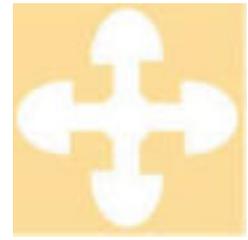
information flows between African countries are clearly lacking. As a result, children often learn European history before they learn African history and, due to the lack of African libraries, it can be virtually impossible to even find the proceedings of African conferences in Africa! Participants also proffered that a pan-African approach to information is necessary, especially given the devastating impact of small arms trafficking and other problems that don't respect borders. Thus they recommended efforts to tap into and disseminate African knowledge and technology through the creation of an archive of African history and knowledge. Participants envisioned a new approach to information-sharing, one that is better able to tap into local knowledge and experience and also has a regional purview.

Participants discussed the difficulty of capturing the richness of local oral traditions. They shared experiences of local initiatives to rectify this and further the cause of peace, such as exchanges between villages via tele-centers and community radio during the Mozambican war. They noted that an inventory of peace initiatives would also facilitate evaluation by peace activists of whether local approaches to peace-building could be replicated elsewhere and of the feasibility of applying them regionally.

Ultimately, the group recommended the formation of an African peace information center that could help facilitate the development of this inventory and serve as a clearinghouse for information. They expressed hope that, in addition to documenting innovative peace initiatives, such a center might begin to codify norms and values that are emerging in this sector and also disseminate information about NEPAD and other international institutions and instruments.

Practical Recommendations:

- Perform audits of successes and lessons learned in conflict resolution and peace on the African continent to develop an inventory of past experience, current initiatives, and available resources as a starting point for effective regional peace work.
 - a) Begin with a general audit and make it widely accessible on the Internet.
 - b) Conduct more specific thematic surveys to follow.
 - c) Prioritize a media audit to map out what is already being done in African media and identify ways in which to support and improve coverage of relevant issues.
- Create an Internet peace information center to serve as a communication portal and clearinghouse for information on African history and knowledge.
- Establish an inventory of peace initiatives that would also facilitate peace activists to explore whether and under what circumstances local solutions in conflict could be replicated elsewhere or on a larger scale.
- Convene local and regional information sharing seminars.



B. Research

Workshop participants devoted significant attention to the question of research. They stressed that research done by NGOs should be more action-oriented, and less academic. One urged a paradigm shift in how NGOs collect and use information, and urged others not to be afraid to “chart new courses.” A need was also recognized to validate the importance of research (especially early warning) with prompt and effective organizational reactions and responses. Participants concluded that they must strive to link creative thinking with action, research, knowledge, and dissemination.

Participants pointed to the domination of intellectual production in Africa by foreign scholars and consultants as a major problem. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, for example, rarely calls Africans to serve as expert witnesses, but participants vowed to ensure that the Special Court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone will not have the same problem. It was also pointed out that the process of post-conflict reconstruction in Somalia was hindered because the donors failed to take the Somali way of life into account, while the Mozambican process was more successful because nationals were much more involved in peace-building.

Exacerbating the problem of foreign domination, participants noted, was a tendency among donors to give funds to foreign universities instead of African universities. They did recognize that African universities have significant shortcomings; African universities have little or no experience in peace and security work, which has traditionally fallen largely under the purview of governments and, to a lesser extent, NGOs. Participants also remarked that there are so few African libraries and urged donors to support repositories of African knowledge and scholarship on the continent. But, it was agreed that African universities need support to overcome these difficulties and that it would not be acceptable to marginalize their role in the field of peace and conflict.

Participants also lamented the deterioration of African based research capacity. They attributed this, in part, to a recent trend among donors to fund short-term consultants rather than scholarly research. Donor emphasis on foreign researchers and short term consultants, as well as a tendency among donors to change priorities frequently (referred to by some as “the flavor of the month”), has the negative effect of denying practitioners who depend on donor funding the space necessary for long-term research and reflection on issues of peace and conflict.

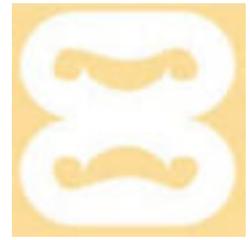
Practical recommendations:

- Enhance the role of universities, strengthening capacity for Africans to conduct effective research and overcome the challenges African universities have historically faced.

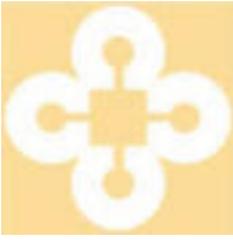


- Develop more libraries in Africa and other repositories of African knowledge on the continent.
- Research and document traditional strategies of conflict resolution as a basis for reform and development of current interventions.
- Convene “action reflection seminars” as a way for practitioners to reflect on past experience and to plan and partner before embarking on ambitious, innovative programs.

There are too few African libraries. Donors should support repositories of African knowledge and scholarship on the continent. And African universities need support to overcome the shortcomings they face. We must be careful not to marginalize their role in the field of peace and conflict.



At the workshop, participants found sharing experiences with each other to be valuable. For example, participants from other countries were very interested in the Rwandan gacaca justice process, and expressed a desire to learn more about it with a view towards adapting traditional dispute resolution mechanisms to help deal with transitional justice elsewhere. They also thought it would be fruitful for activists from Burundi and the Mano River region to exchange experiences regarding their peace-building efforts. A participant from the Congo expressed an interest in learning from a successful initiative that used theater to sensitize youth in Burkina Faso, since she had had trouble raising funds for a similar project. Women's activists from the Great Lakes and West Africa shared experiences of how their work had contributed to their local peace processes.



C. Building Linkages

Participants agreed that collaborative approaches and exchanges are necessary to address conflicts in Africa. Work on issues such as trafficking of small arms and preventing dictators or war criminals from seeking refuge in other countries, participants noted, could have little impact unless done regionally. Likewise, those working on these issues must be linked to those working on related regional issues, and the successes of one project or organization must be tapped to further the effectiveness of other related efforts.

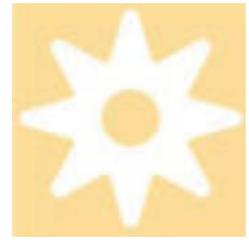
The groups identified several fundamental elements necessary to form an effective regional effort to promote peace and security. As a first step, they agreed on the need for peace groups to have information about what others are doing. In order to foster regional cooperation effectively, they also prioritized support for information-sharing and the use of information-technology, human resources, technical resources, cooperation, and targeting youth and women.

One participant clarified that, in addition to parallel linkages, it is essential to link organizations whose work has ramifications for other sectors and at different levels. With respect to small arms, for example, one participant suggested that trade unions of civil aviation employees could be an important partner, yet they have been left out of the process to date. They acknowledged the obvious importance of division of labor among NGOs, grass roots organizations, the media, national governments, regional and sub-regional organizations, but also emphasized the need for better horizontal and vertical communication and collaboration processes.

Participants also agreed that virtual networks for information-sharing may be more useful under some circumstances, and often provide the added bonus of not competing with member organizations for resources. However, they noted that, while electronic networks are valuable, it is important to have resources for gatherings as well. In general, participants agreed that networks were most successful when created for a specific purpose. Among the issues they identified as ripe for networking are refugees, NEPAD, small arms, and education.

It was agreed that successful collaboration among peace activists would depend on the development of “networks that work.” In creating or developing such networks, participants highlighted the importance of the following factors:

- Ensuring participation from the local to regional levels
- Avoiding individualistic approaches,
- Making better use of information technology,



- Involving the Diaspora,
- Examining resources available within the network,
- Finding effective ways to share knowledge, and
- Devoting sufficient resources to ensure efficient functioning.

Finally, participants urged network members to ensure that their networks stay on the continent to address the issues affecting Africa, rather than always traveling overseas to meet each other. They also expressed a desire to address language difficulties that hamper networking among Africans, as valuable documentation is often available only in English. It is important to produce more communication in French and perhaps also in Portuguese, and to strive to do more in African languages.

Practical recommendations:

- Research and document strengths and weaknesses of existing and previous networks.
- Develop/fund new networks organized around specific mandates such as refugees, NEPAD, small arms, and education.
- Increase utilization of virtual networks that do not compete with member organizations for resources.

Africans face a major challenge in trying to involve ordinary African citizens in the state-driven processes such as NEPAD and other regional initiatives that have the potential to help build peace in Africa.



D. Regional Participation of Civil Society

Participants agreed on the fundamental need to improve participation of civil society at regional levels in order to successfully build peace on the continent. Members of the group recognized that they faced a major challenge in trying to involve ordinary African citizens in the state-driven processes such as NEPAD and other regional initiatives that have the potential to help build peace in Africa. In this regard, some proposed convening pre-summit civil society conferences connected to peace and security initiatives of sub-regional and regional organizations including ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC, and the AU. It was also noted that, at times, members of civil society have been more successful than governments in bringing key players together to resolve conflicts in South Africa, Liberia, Nigeria, and elsewhere.

Participants stressed the need to include different sectors of society in peace efforts, noting that the potential of African women, youth, artists, traditional leaders, trade unions, business, and the Diaspora have not always been fully exploited. With respect to the African business community, they discussed ways in which businesses could facilitate the dissemination of knowledge and information on peace and conflicts, which is also in their interests.

Much discussion centered on the importance of strengthening the role of women in peace-building activities. In order to take full advantage of the role of women as guarantors of change, participants stressed that peace groups could learn important lessons from women's peace-building efforts. They must also address the question of changing the gender relations of power.

Similarly, participants felt that the peace movement in Africa had not fully tapped the potential of youth as allies in their struggle. As an example of the potential impact of youth, one participant cited the role of young activists in initiating the investigation into the killing of Albert Zongo. The group also recognized the danger of the failure to work effectively with young people; adolescents and young people lacking access to education or means to earn a livelihood are proven more likely to be recruited as fighters, which ultimately perpetuates the cycle of conflict.

Specific attention was paid to the issue of how best to support community-based organizations. A survey in South Africa identified as many as 55,000 such organizations that receive no outside funding. Yet others have undergone a process of "NGO-ization" by which they altered themselves to raise funds and break into the elite. Participants agreed that it is important to support these institutions and remain in contact with them without disconnecting them from the grass roots. One way to go about this is to channel micro-funds to them as necessary. But participants agreed that the needs of grassroots NGOs are broader than money; it is also important to support them to work more effectively. All agreed that it is also essential for larger NGOs to listen to and learn from small, community-based initiatives.



Participants highlighted the need to address the at-times negative impact of tensions between the state and civil society. The group felt strongly that civil society organizations (including organizations such as labor unions) have a fundamental right to opinions and that they must be able to collaborate more effectively with governments as they work in many of the same areas such as social services.

Practical Recommendations:

- Support the capacity of civil society to impact regional peace and security initiatives, for example through funding for pre-summit civil society conferences.
- Examine ways to harness and channel the potential of women and youth to have a stronger role as guarantors of change.
- Develop channels of communication between organizations of all sizes and funding patterns working in peace and security. It is essential for larger NGOs to listen to and work hand in hand with smaller and community-based initiatives.
- Explore the potential for linkages with traditional and cultural structures providing conflict resolution services.

Peace activists must strive to include different sectors of society in peace efforts — and to utilize the potential of African women, youth, artists, traditional leaders, trade unions, business, and Africans in the Diaspora to the fullest.



E. Challenges to Reinforcing Institutional Capacity

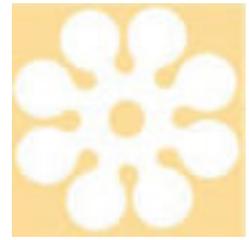
A number of key issues were considered under this heading, focusing on how to sustain the capacity of organizations to do peace work. Many cited the need for a long-term commitment to organizations working in the area of peace and conflict. They also urged donors to support capacity-building as well as discreet initiatives. In addition, participants encouraged peace groups to experiment with innovative projects. They offered a note of caution as well: in the effort to build institutional capacity, there is a need for mutual accountability between donors and grantees.

Much discussion centered on difficulties relating to fundraising, an essential component of sustaining NGOs and independent civil society groups working in this crucial area. One participant offered the sobering statistic that 75 percent of NGOs that existed before 1992 do not exist anymore. Others noted that it is especially challenging to ensure funding for community-based associations and they cautioned against funneling money through states, as this can be particularly difficult for human rights organizations and also can create tension and competition between states and civil society organizations.

Participants also proposed coalition-building as an under-utilized tool for channeling funding to smaller groups. One suggested that Africans should be given greater responsibility for channeling funds for their common projects. Another suggested following the example of NEPAD, which allows donors to give larger sums of money to one institution and monitor its usage, thereby simplifying the grant-making procedure. Another challenge identified is the need to ensure that intermediaries do not take advantage of the organizations to which they are supposed to channel funds. One participant cited the example that intermediaries who re-grant to community groups in Central Africa sometimes charge administrative fees of up to 48 percent. Ultimately, participants stressed the need for greater mutual accountability between donors, intermediaries, and the intended grantees.

Participants urged donors to utilize a regional approach in funding peace work. For example, one noted that there is a concern elsewhere on the continent that South African organizations are better resourced than organizations in other parts of the continent. It was also noted that much of the funding being provided for South Africa is going largely to white-led institutions. Thus, participants urged funders to pay more attention to diversity and to ensure that the grants they make are more representative.

Participants also recognized that they could perhaps mobilize the African Diaspora more effectively, and that they had yet to fully tap potential African sources of funding. The potential for some peace projects to be self-financing was also discussed.

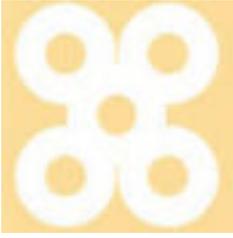


In addition, participants exchanged ideas of how to ensure that more sustainable funding is available for peace work. They noted a need to demystify proposal-writing by simplifying the process and providing local groups with fuller information about eligibility and training on grant-writing skills. They also urged donors to provide more multi-year grants and to provide organizations with core funding rather than funds for short-term projects. In addition, participants discussed ways in which to pool resources and to coordinate activities to bring together other organizations and NGOs. One group also had an in-depth discussion about prospects for ensuring that NGOs to secure endowments, and for this to be approached from a sub-regional perspective. It was stressed that endowing organizations helps promote continuity and attract the most qualified staff.

Participants also recognized that money is not the only issue, but that technical and human resources are also crucial. One participant urged participants to think about what more they can do within already existing networks by sharing information, doing joint projects, and focusing more on efficiency within organizations. Another underscored the importance of NGOs remaining accountable to their communities.

Participants also expressed caution against embarking upon major new initiatives without proper reflection. There is no need to “reinvent the wheel,” participants agreed, and it is important to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of previous initiatives on the continent when designing new programs, taking the strengths and weaknesses of previous initiatives into account. It was also noted that innovative projects may be risky, but they can also often be inexpensive. Finally, participants raised the issue of evaluations and concluded that it would be helpful for NGOs to systematize how they measure performance.

In the effort to build institutional capacity, there is a need for mutual accountability between donors and grantees.



Practical recommendations:

Donors:

- Provide more multi-year grants and core funding rather than funds for short-term projects, and explore prospects for establishing endowments for African NGOs.
- Apply a regional approach to grant making, ensuring diversity and regional balance.

NGOs:

- Develop centers of excellence where key actors can take time off to reflect and conduct research, similar to “action reflection seminars.”
- Systematize how performance is evaluated and measured.



V. Conclusion: The Way Forward

Through the workshop, participants began to envision new ways in which African peace activists, SIA, and other donors can facilitate collaboration across borders to achieve their common goals of strengthening the capacity of African actors and, ultimately, building sustainable peace in Africa. Many of the recommendations they made fall into four broad categories:

- Documentation and dissemination of information on **examples of successful** peace initiatives at local, national, and regional levels across the continent.
- Increasing the effective enforcement of existing **regional treaties** on peace and security.
- Improving the participation of **women, youth, and traditional community structures** in peace negotiations and implementation.
- Creation of physical and virtual **linkages** to provide opportunities for organizations in this field to learn from each other, communicate their successes, and access resources for capacity-strengthening.

Africans hold the key to what is going on in Africa, and it is their responsibility to harness the energy behind regional and sub-regional structures (such as the nascent NEPAD) to build sustainable peace.

Participants resolved to maintain contact with each other, to strive to work together more closely, and to organize another convening for African peace activists after one year to set their agenda for activism and discuss progress and follow-up. By then, they hoped:

- An African Peace Academy would be on its way to being established;
- There would be a virtual website to provide information and communication among them;



- They would have made progress on bridging the gap between theory and practice of governance and peace; and
- They would have seized the opportunities presented by the increasing trend towards regional integration in Africa including establishment of the AU and NEPAD.

In short, they resolved to harness the power of African organizations to build sustainable peace in Africa.



List of Participants

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- promoting inclusive policies on citizenship and identity,
- and advancing economic integration.



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