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Review on Non-Governmental Organizations, Peace Building, and Relevant Theories

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Abstract

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play an important role in promoting peace, resolving conflicts, and supporting sustainable development in conflict-affected communities. This study reviews the role of NGOs in peacebuilding, with particular emphasis on Jos Metropolis, Nigeria, where recurrent ethno-religious conflicts have contributed to violence, displacement, and social fragmentation. The study examines the major peacebuilding initiatives implemented by NGOs, their effectiveness, the challenges limiting their interventions, and strategies for improving their contribution to sustainable peace. The reviewed literature indicates that NGOs employ diverse approaches, including dialogue and mediation, conflict prevention, reconciliation, community engagement, advocacy, capacity building, trauma healing, youth empowerment, women's participation, and early-

warning mechanisms. Organizations such as Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), Search for Common Ground, the Jos Stakeholders Centre for Peace, and other civil society organizations have contributed to strengthening community relationships and promoting peaceful coexistence. However, their effectiveness is constrained by inadequate funding, limited coordination, political influences, short-term interventions, and insufficient local ownership. The study highlights the importance of inclusive participation, community ownership, context-sensitive programming, stronger collaboration among stakeholders, and long-term interventions. It concludes that NGOs remain critical actors in transforming conflict and promoting sustainable peace in Jos Metropolis.

Keywords: Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Peacebuilding, Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), Conflict Transformation, Peaceful Coexistence, Jos Metropolis, Conflict Resolution

Introduction

A Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), an aspect of civil society, is a legally constituted non-state organization created by natural or legal persons. It has no participation or representation of any government. Even in cases where NGOs are funded totally or partially by governments, they still maintain their non-governmental status by excluding government representatives from their membership. Though, NGO is legally constituted and is in general use, no legal definition is assigned to it. In many jurisdictions, NGO is defined as a civil society organization or as any other names like independent sector, social movement organization, private voluntary organization, volunteer sector, self-help organization and non-state actors ^[1].

Historically, the beginning of national NGOs started from antiquity. The international non-governmental organizations have a history dating back to at least 1839. For instance, Rotary international was founded in 1905. It has been estimated that in 1914 there were 1083 NGOs. These international NGOs were quite helpful in the antislavery moment and at the movement for women's suffrage, which reached its peak at the time of the world disarmament conference. However, the phrase "non-governmental organization" only came into popular use with the establishment of the United Nations Organization in 1945 with the Article 71 of chapter 10 provision made by the United Nations chapter. This is where the cumulative status of non-

governmental organization was derived. The definition of “International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO)” was first issued in resolution 288 (x) of ECOSOC on February 27, 1950. Any international organization not founded by an international treaty was then referred to as an international non-governmental organization. The vital role of NGOs and other “major groups” in sustainable development was recognized in chapter 27 of Agenda 21 that led to intense arrangements for a consultative relationship between the United Nations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), [2].

Again, globalization of the 20th century strengthened the importance of NGOs as many problems could not be solved within nations [3]. The reason being that the international treaties and international organizations like World Trade Organization were understood as being too centered on the interests of capitalist enterprises. So in an attempt to balance this trend, NGOs developed to emphasize humanitarian issues, developmental aid and sustainable development. An outstanding example of this is the World Social Forum as a rival of World Economic Forum held annually in January at Davos, Switzerland. The 5th World Social Forum held in Porto Alegre, Brazil in January, 2005 was attended by more than 1000 NGOs representative [4]. The arguments were that NGOs came as a result of welfare state restructurization in western countries. NGOs take the place of what belong to popular movements of the poor, NGOs are often imperialist, sometimes operate in a radicalized manner in dominant countries and that they perform similar functions to that of the clergy and so on. Whatever, the case may be, NGOs transnational networking is currently extensive in many nations of the world. Consequently, Nigeria operates many (Estimate of 2000 in number) NGOs based on the different problems in the society, either as chapters of international NGOs or as local NGOs [5]. Examples include Women in Nigeria (WIN), Women’s Health Issues in Nigeria, (WHERIN) Women Aid Collective (WACOL).

According to data from the European Union, there has been a steady increase in the number of NGOs operating in Europe over the past few decades. For instance, between 2008 and 2018, the number of registered NGOs in the European Union grew by over 30%, reaching more than 2 million organizations [6]. In the United States, the growth of NGOs has been particularly notable. The National Center for Charitable Statistics reported that there were over 1.5 million registered nonprofit organizations in the US in 2020, marking a significant increase from previous years [7]. Asia has also witnessed a surge in the number of NGOs, driven by factors such as economic development, social change, and increasing awareness of human rights and environmental issues. According to a study by the Asia Foundation, the number of NGOs in Asia has more than doubled since the 1990s, with particularly rapid growth in countries like India, China, and Bangladesh [8].

Furthermore, the growth of NGOs in Africa has been fueled by various factors, including democratization, urbanization, and the increasing demand for social services. According to data from the African Union, there were over 2 million registered NGOs operating in Africa as of 2019, with the sector continuing to expand rapidly [9]. Nigeria has seen a significant rise in the number of NGOs in recent years, with the sector playing an increasingly important role in addressing various social, economic, and political challenges. According to the Corporate Affairs Commission of Nigeria,

there were over 100,000 registered NGOs in the country as of 2021, covering a wide range of issues such as health, education, poverty alleviation, and human rights [10].

Classifications of NGOs

Types of NGOs are discernible on the basis of their orientation and co-operation. NGO type by the level of orientation can be charitable orientation, service orientation, participation orientation and empowering orientation. NGO type by the level of co-operation is seen to be community-based, city wide based, national based and international based. Based on the above understanding, the World Bank typologies NGOs into operational and advocacy. While the operational NGOs concentrate on the design and implementation of development related projects, the advocacy NGOs focuses on defense and promotion of specific courses. Operational NGOs in Nigeria are either relief oriented or development oriented, service delivery or participatory, religious or secular, public or private oriented and community-based, national or international. Advocacy NGOs in Nigeria attempt as much as possible to raise awareness, acceptance and knowledge through lobbying, activist events and presswork [3].

Methods of operation of NGOs differ from organization to organization. For instance, those concerned with poverty alleviation may provide needy people with the equipment and skills to find food and clean drinking water and those concerned with human rights abuse may work through investigation and documentation of human rights violation by providing legal assistance to victims of human rights abuse. In all their endeavours, NGOs adopt public relations attitude, consulting power and project management entrepreneurship and techniques for viability and effectiveness [11].

Staffing of NGOs is not always issued on altruism. A few are volunteers while a good many find themselves in NGOs so as to have immediate benefits for themselves and for the people they serve especially in acquiring skills, experience finances and contacts. However, the expertise of employees or volunteers may be influenced by a number of factors namely the cost of expatriate in the organization, grassroots connections, local expertise etc. The NGO sector all over the world, is an important employer in terms of numbers. For instance, the world organizations on poverty alleviation, elimination and treatment of communicable diseases, women affairs engage in employing people across the world estimating the number to the tune of 1,000,000 as at 2007 [3]. Sources of fund for NGOs include membership dues, the sales of goods and services, grants from international and national governments, private donations etc.

The NGOs to be studied in this thesis are only those who carry out activities explicitly aimed at peacebuilding and/or conflict resolution and not, for example, general humanitarian aid agencies who might consider peacebuilding an (un) intended side-effect of their efforts. However, the organization need not have peacebuilding or conflict resolution as its only purpose, it is sufficient that it conducts activities with such objectives. For example, there are several IDP (internally displaced person) organizations in Georgia that are addressing various IDP issues, among which peacebuilding is one. Obviously, it is only the possible ripple effects of activities aimed at peacebuilding or conflict resolution that will be studied [12].

Many of the concepts employed in the peacebuilding and conflict resolution literature are used interchangeably,

wherefore the terms peacebuilding and conflict resolution need to be further elaborated. Conflict resolution, conflict transformation and conflict management are often used without distinction referring to the same approaches to conflicts. Similarly, moving beyond its original definition as 'post-conflict reconstruction', peacebuilding as a concept has developed into encompassing a broad spectrum of activities that promote peace and support conflict prevention and management and is often used broadly referring to 'any activity undertaken with the purpose of preventing, alleviating or resolving violent, or potentially violent, conflict' [13, 3].

For the sake of simplicity and comprehension, the terminology adopted in this thesis will be confined to the two concepts conflict resolution and peacebuilding, which will be used without distinction. The reason for using two concepts instead of one is that these two concepts are used interchangeably by the NGOs themselves when referring to their activities. In this study, Goodhand's, (1999) definition of peacebuilding, quoted above, will be used to define both concepts [13]. Thus, the concepts conflict resolution and peacebuilding are defined as 'any activity undertaken with the purpose of preventing, alleviating or resolving violent, or potentially violent, conflict.'

Moreover, only practices targeting non-official, grassroots actors will be studied, i.e. what is often referred to as track-three diplomacy [13]. Hence, track-two diplomacy, i.e. NGO peacebuilding initiatives targeting non-official but influential individuals, such as NGO-leaders and track-one-and-a-half diplomacy aimed at providing an unofficial conflict resolution forum for official actors [14], will not be included.

Concept of peace building

Peace building is the identification and support of measures needed for transformation toward more sustainable, peaceful relationship and structures of governance, so as to avoid a relapse into conflict [16]. Peace building is also perceived as attempts to conquer the structural, relational and cultural contradictions hastily causing conflict, especially in strong support of peace making and peacekeeping. Inspirations of peace building are drawn from developmental imperatives facing mankind and conflict resolution initiatives [17]. Again efforts of peace building may be imported from outside the system thereby overlooking the structures and cultures of the parties concerned. The approach to the efforts of peace building could be bottom-top and or top-bottom. Which-ever base the efforts are directed to, the end results must be in respect, promotion and use of local human and socio-cultural resources. Peace building has assumed such a prominent position in the minds of the international community members and all peace lovers in the world. Hence the call for everyone to contribute in making peace a reality. Thus, the United Nations (UN) Security Council installed peace building as its number 2 point agreement under the provision of chapter VI of the UN charter [18].

Peacebuilding is defined as the process intended to address the root causes of conflict, to reconcile differences, to normalize relations, and to build institutions that can manage conflicts without resorting to violence. The process involves a diverse set of actors in government and civil society and can involve short-term actions to prevent violence or can take place over many years. Peacebuilding can encompass a range of tasks that include identifying and addressing the underlying political, economic, social and structural

imbalances that have contributed to a conflict, reconciling the competing objectives/interests of opponents, preventing the re-emergence of past conflicts and ensuring broad citizen participation in the peace process and transitions to peace, and building the capacity of those institutions that support a secure civil society (USIP).

Angel (2025), sees peacebuilding from the perspective of engaging grassroots [19], local, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international and other actors to create sustainable peace process [20, 21]. Kilmurray (2006) defines peacebuilding as the opening of opportunities and spaces, which support all members of society to: discuss and address the causes of conflict, contribute to influence and benefit from social, political, economic and cultural life, develop a sense of self-worth and common belonging based on shared values of justice, equity and interdependence, develop a positive and creative respect for diversity through mutual trust, tolerance and acceptance [22].

According to John Paul Lederach "peace-building is a process that is made up of a multiplicity of interdependent roles, functions, and activities, with the goal to create and sustain transformation and the movement toward restructured relationships" [23]. For him, peace-building implies both a "descriptive" and a "prescriptive" understanding of change. Descriptively, peace-building refers to the various dynamics that characterise conflicts. These dynamics may include the patterns, relationships, communication, issues and perceptions that impact or arise from conflicts exacerbated by interfaith differences. Prescriptively, peace-building emphasizes a comprehensive or holistic approach to dealing with conflict. Considerations must also be given to addressing the underlying causes of violence and the goals and motivations of those interested in getting involved in the conflict [23].

Peace-building includes a wide range of activities that contribute towards the transformation of society into a just and harmonious order and the development of an infrastructure capable of maintaining this arrangement. This process begins with pre-war conflict prevention and ends with post-war reconstruction. In all the stages of conflict, interested actors, both institutions and individuals can perform a variety of constructive functions. These intervention roles include observer, educator, advocate and intermediary [24].

Today, peacebuilding can be defined as "the community of practice that includes actions and principles that seek to address the root causes of conflict in order to build social relationships and state structures capable of sustaining peace" [25]. From whatever perspective, peacebuilding is essential after a conflict has taken place as in the case of Boko Haram in North Eastern Nigeria.

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The Peacebuilding Process

The sheer complexity of state security stabilization and rebuilding requires a high level of coherency. In practice, peacebuilding is a synergy of social and economic development through multiple organizations. Its aim is to transform conflicts in a constructive way to create an environment conducive to sustainable peace ^[28]. Peacebuilding is not just about solving a single situation or managing a conflict – rather it is concerned with changing the way parties interact and ultimately solving the deeper problems at the core of the conflicts.

Peacebuilding process often begins at the post-war stage when parties begin to pick the bits and pieces of their post-war realities. Efforts at bringing a nation back to stability are deployed by government and international communities to restore relationships and rebuild structures. However, peacebuilding can be built in two stages: the pre-conflict stage and the post-conflict stage. The pre-conflict stage aims at preventing the outbreak of conflict in a country through several mediating forces and actors. At this stage, preventive peacebuilding mechanisms are put in place to halt the occurrence of conflict and address the potential sources of conflicts. Although, peacebuilding actions involve the pre-conflict arrangements but in the actual practice, most of the peacebuilding operations are done after the conflict period. Several scholars have raised the notion for an increased attention to be given to pre-conflict peacebuilding especially to new nations which are yet to develop a strong state institution that could manage the escalation of conflict.

The post-conflict takes place at the aftermath of a conflict situation where an end has been put to hostilities and the conflict has left series of political, socio-economic problems to be dealt with. Post-conflict peacebuilding process has been divided into three:

1. Stabilizing the conflict zone which deals with the implementation of the disarmament process, demobilization, and reintegration ^[29]. The aim of this effort is at discouraging the ex-militants from returning to war. For example, this was the first stage in restoring peace to the Niger-Delta region in Nigeria when the Nigerian Government under Former President late Musa Yar'adua came up with an amnesty programme which was intended to make the militant surrender their ammunitions and reintegrate them into the civil society. The aim is to reintegrate the combatants into the civil society and make them embrace the peace process;
2. Restoring state institutions to deal with building of state capacity and strengthening the basic state and governmental institution which includes building of educational and health infrastructure, establishing the rule of law and strengthening the judicial system;
3. Dealing with social and economic issues, helping the post-conflict state build a society that would be able to

manage conflict situation peacefully, and promoting socio-economic development with the help of international organization such as UN, IMF, World Bank, etc. ^[29].

Peacebuilding Approaches

Peacebuilding approaches are diverse and multifaceted, encompassing various strategies and methods aimed at resolving and preventing violent conflicts. These approaches can be categorized into three main strategies: peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding ^[3].

1. **Peacekeeping:** This strategy focuses on immediate crisis management and intervention to stop violence. It involves the use of military or police forces to separate warring parties, establish a secure environment, and protect civilians. Peacekeeping efforts often aim to create a buffer zone between conflicting parties, ensuring that violence does not escalate further.
2. **Peacemaking:** This approach is concerned with negotiating a settlement between the parties involved in a conflict. Peacemaking activities include mediation, conflict resolution workshops, and dialog meetings at various levels. The goal is to find a mutually acceptable solution that addresses the interests and positions of the parties involved.
3. **Peacebuilding:** This strategy focuses on addressing the root causes of conflict and building sustainable peace. Peacebuilding involves long-term efforts to change the underlying conditions that led to the conflict. It includes activities such as reducing prejudice and mistrust, humanizing former opponents, and building positive relationships. Peacebuilding aims to develop a culture of nonviolence and peaceful conflict resolution.

In addition to these three main strategies, there are other approaches to peacebuilding, such as strategic peacebuilding, which emphasizes a holistic approach that connects people and groups at all levels of society. This approach involves recognizing the burden of long-term violence, eliciting plans from local actors, and building connections between insiders and outsiders ^[3]. Another approach is adaptive peacebuilding, which is a pragmatic and complexity-informed approach that encourages external peacebuilders to act as process facilitators rather than fully-fledged interveners. This approach recognizes the importance of local agencies for peacebuilding to become more sustainable within the context of the conflict. These diverse approaches to peacebuilding highlight the complexity and multifaceted nature of conflict resolution and the need for a comprehensive and context-specific approach to achieve lasting peace ^[26].

NGOs and peace building

The main purpose of peace building is creation and prevention in a conflict prone society. Peace two different concepts; negative peace and positive peace. Negative peace refers to mere absence of violence, but positive peace is said to be a stable social equilibrium in which the surfacing of new disputes cannot escalate into violence and war ^[40]. The emphasis on finding and resolving the root causes of conflict is criticized on the grounds that it is an overtly negative view of social conflict. Conflict may contribute to a dynamic and innovative society once it is not violence. Since it is increasingly acknowledged that social conflict is inevitable, some approaches to peace building have shifted the emphasis from the root causes of social conflict to good governance and

peaceful settlement of dispute mechanisms.

In conflict resolution, NGOs embark on problem solving workshops and seminars aimed at internal conflicts like the religious crises in Kano and Kaduna states, Bauchi and Plateau States, Enugu-Ezike crises in Enugu State where especially the women groups had series of meetings resulting in the following:

1. Deciding to engage in dialogue to resolve mutually intolerable problems;
2. Coming together to map the elements of the problems and the relationship that perpetuate the problems;
3. Uncovering the underlying dynamic of the relationships and beginning to see ways to change them;
4. Planning steps together to change the relationships and;
5. Devising ways to implement their plan.

Indeed what conflict resolution offers is more than enough theoretical and practical ways of developing peace in conflict environments. These can be exploited at several levels so as to channel global, regional and national norms of interdependence, human security and democratization into unstable local environments.

It is therefore in, this situation that NGOs contribution to the process of conflict resolution is very critical. NGOs play the role of facilitating a linkage between global, regional and organization, thereby resolving one of the most serious problems of the conflict resolution genre related to the trickle-up and down effect of conflict ^[30]. This is because NGOs conduct humanitarian, developmental, human rights, and conflict resolution activities that enhance the process of peace making.

NGOs place in peace-building in society cannot be over emphasized. The inadequacies of first-generation approaches to conflict resolution both nationally and globally has called for settlements to be based upon just political orders that promote democracy and human rights, new norms, participatory governance structures, civil society, international tribunals and truth commissions. Thus, under the auspices of the United Nation (UN), disarming, repatriating refugees, building a consensus for peace and moderate local political leadership appear to be important issues in building peace. Since this is based on conflict resolution and perspectives of conflict, it requires deep access into local environments and grassroots processes rather than top-down approaches. Thus, NGOs can always provide these conditions as a result of their official and human security-oriented base ^[31].

The role of NGOs in peace building

NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) play a crucial role in peacebuilding efforts worldwide, often complementing the work of governments and international organizations. In Europe, NGOs have been active in peacebuilding initiatives, particularly in post-conflict regions such as the Balkans. For instance, the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) has worked to promote inter-ethnic dialogue and reconciliation among communities affected by the Balkan wars of the 1990s also the European Union has established the European Peacebuilding Initiative, which aims to promote peace and stability in conflict-affected regions through the involvement of NGOs ^[32].

In Asia, NGOs have played significant roles in peacebuilding efforts, particularly in conflict-affected areas such as Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. The Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPCS) in Sri Lanka has been instrumental in

facilitating dialogue and peacebuilding initiatives between the government and Tamil separatist groups. More so, countries like Japan and China have developed their own approaches to peacebuilding, focusing on diplomatic channels and monetary assistance to support state institutions key to the peace process ^[33].

Furthermore, in the Americas, NGOs have been active in peacebuilding efforts in countries such as Colombia and Guatemala. The Peace Brigades International (PBI) has been involved in providing protective accompaniment to human rights defenders and communities at risk in Colombia, contributing to the peace process in the country. Again, NGOs like the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Red Cross are actively involved in humanitarian efforts and peacebuilding initiatives ^[34]. In America, NGOs like Oxfam and the Human Rights & Empowerment Project work to promote human security by advocating for policy changes and providing humanitarian assistance ^[11].

Coming down to Africa, NGOs have played critical roles in peacebuilding initiatives in conflict-affected regions such as the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) has been involved in mediation and conflict resolution efforts in countries like South Sudan and Somalia, contributing to peacebuilding efforts in the region ^[35]. Also, NGOs like the African Union and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) work together to promote peace and stability on the continent ^[11].

In Nigeria specifically, NGOs have been actively engaged in peacebuilding efforts, particularly in regions affected by intercommunal violence and insurgency, such as the Niger Delta and the Northeast. Search for Common Ground (SFCG) Nigeria has been involved in community-based peacebuilding initiatives, including interfaith dialogues and youth empowerment programs, aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting social cohesion. NGOs such as the Centre for Peacebuilding and Socio-Economic Resources Development and the Global Network for Peace and Anticorruption Initiative are actively involved in peacebuilding initiatives ^[36]. This suffices that NGOs play a vital role in peacebuilding across the globe, with diverse approaches and strategies tailored to specific contexts. Their involvement in humanitarian efforts, conflict resolution, and community development is essential for promoting peace and stability in conflict-affected regions.

NGOs and peacebuilding in Jos, Nigeria

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play a crucial role in peacebuilding efforts in Jos, Nigeria. The city has a history of communal conflicts, particularly along religious lines, which have led to violence and displacement. In response to these challenges, various NGOs have established themselves in the area to promote peace, reconciliation, and social justice. One notable example is the International Organization for Peace Building and Social Justice (PSJ), which is dedicated to transforming deep-rooted narratives that undermine peaceful coexistence through evidence-based research and information. PSJ aims to promote peacebuilding legislation and policies, build coalitions of like-minded groups, and advocate for the rights of the poor and voiceless ^[37].

Another prominent example is the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), which has been actively engaged in peace mediation and dialogue initiatives in Jos. HD works with various stakeholders, including government officials,

community leaders, and civil society organizations, to facilitate peace processes and build consensus on key issues. Also, one significant organization is Search for Common Ground (SFCG), which implements programs aimed at promoting interfaith dialogue, conflict resolution, and youth empowerment in Jos and the broader Plateau State. SFCG often employs innovative approaches, such as media campaigns and community-based activities, to foster understanding and cooperation among diverse groups^[38].

According to Sukanya, (2023), a significant organization in Jos for peacebuilding is the Jos Stakeholders Centre for Peace (JSCP), which is a multistakeholder network comprising 39 representatives of communities and organizations in Jos North^[38]. JSCP has developed a collective impact model that focuses on building the capacity of local people and those in positions of power to prevent conflict escalation and violence directed at civilians. NGOs like these contribute to peacebuilding efforts in several ways. They provide humanitarian aid, mediation, and empowerment to local communities. They also engage in dialogue and conflict resolution activities, which help to address the root causes of violence and promote understanding among different groups. Additionally, NGOs often work closely with local authorities and other stakeholders to develop and implement peacebuilding initiatives that are tailored to the specific needs of the community.

The Plateau State Peace Building Agency (PPBA) is another key player in the peacebuilding efforts in Jos. Established by law, PPBA operates through strategic partnerships with state and non-state actors to promote the culture of peace and harmonious coexistence among the various ethno-religious divides on the Plateau. They focus on youth and gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding efforts and assist vulnerable groups to be useful to themselves and their societies,^[39]. Local grassroots organizations, such as the Jos-based Centre for Peace Advancement in Nigeria (CEPAN), play a vital role in peacebuilding efforts at the community level. These organizations work closely with affected communities to address grievances, promote social cohesion, and prevent the recurrence of violence^[40].

The Role of Justice, Development and Peace Caritas (JDPC) in Peace Building in Jos

Justice, Development and Peace Caritas (JDPC) successfully completed the Jos North building (JNP) project with financial support of Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Nigeria Program. The aim of this one year pilot project was to promote inter-group and inter-personal dialogue among people of diverse ethnic and religious groups whose relationship was soured as a result of repeated cases of sectarian conflict especially between November 2008 and January 2010 in order to ensure durable peace and stability in the target communities. The project therefore incorporated JDPC's experiences in peace building work with communities that have been divided as a result of incessant violent conflict. Building on the experiences and lesson learned in implementing an *Inter-Communcil Harmony* (Peace Dialogue) project for the Pan and Goemai people in Shendam and Qaanan pan Local government areas of Plateau state between 2006 and 2008, JDPC designed and implemented the JNP project as part of the scaling up efforts to sustain peace in Plateau state. Dialogue, conflict transformation and reintegration have remained the key

ingredients in the ongoing search for a sustainable, peaceful and secured Plateau state. The project designed a model that incorporated these three ingredients. In addition, the project piloted integration of water and sanitation into peace building utilizing it as a platform to demonstrate how people can develop peace building themes around issues that connect them. According to the Final Report of the project, Peacebuilding and Rehabilitation, Nigeria (2012, 5):

In each of the workshops 30 participants from two communities comprising of Muslims, Christians, different ethnic groups, women and youth attended and thereafter developed action plans Jos implementation in and across their communities Math, inputs from key stakeholders in their communities. The workshops created platforms for the participants across conflict divides to interact, share ideas and reflect on common visions that could. Strengthen relationships among the various ethnic and religious groups in their communities. It also created space for the participants to dialogue and learn basic facts about their religions especially the areas that the religions share in common such as peace, love and reconciliation.

In addition to learning new skills, the participants discussed issues such as terrorism, Jihad, Holy ghost fire, crusade, "allege plan by the 'indigenes' who are mostly Christians to send the 'non-indigenes' who are mostly Hausa Fulani Muslims out of Jos" and also allege plan by the Muslims to Islamise Jos were raised and discussed freely among the participants creating enlightenment and clarifications. On completion of the trainings, 180 trainees developed the capacity to carry out advocacies through techniques such as community mobilization, sensitization, awareness raising and pair group mentoring.

The workshops were guided by the following objectives: Provide opportunity for participants to share experiences and learning about their journeys through conflict and community recovery. Develop peace building skills among participants for improve coexistence and collaboration. Identify, transform and advocate specific issues or concerns. Reduce the likelihood of future conflicts occurrences in the society. In essence, NGOs like CEPAN, PSJ, JSCP, PPBA and JDPC are crucial components of the peacebuilding efforts in Jos. They work to address the root causes of violence, promote dialogue and understanding, and empower local communities to build lasting peace.

The Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) in Plateau State is a pivotal organization dedicated to peacebuilding, social justice, and sustainable development. It has undertaken numerous projects to address human rights violations, foster reconciliation, and empower communities economically and socially. In Jos North and Riyom Local Government Areas, JDPC implemented trauma healing and psychosocial support programs, including counseling and trauma awareness workshops, to help victims of ethno-religious crises. These initiatives have played a significant role in community-wide reconciliation by addressing the deep psychological impacts of conflict^[41, 42].

JDPC has also been active in early warning and conflict prevention systems, collaborating with local stakeholders such as religious and traditional leaders to identify and

mitigate potential conflicts. For instance, in Shendam, Barkin Ladi, and Langtang North LGAs, the organization partnered with Mission 21 and UNDP to deliver emergency preparedness and conflict resolution training, equipping communities with skills to handle disputes peacefully [43, 44]. Women's empowerment has been another core focus, with JDPC providing leadership and advocacy training, along with income-generating programs like tailoring and soap-making in Pankshin and Bokkos LGAs. These programs enhanced women's roles in peace processes and local economic development [45].

In addressing structural challenges, JDPC has implemented rural development projects, including borehole construction in Qua'an Pan LGA, to alleviate water scarcity and reduce resource-related conflicts. Additionally, the commission conducted human rights advocacy campaigns in Jos East and Kanke LGAs, educating communities on peaceful dispute resolution methods, particularly concerning land disputes and election tensions [45].

Youth engagement has also been prioritized. JDPC established peace clubs in schools in Bukuru and Rukuba communities to promote tolerance and counter youth radicalization. These clubs have proven effective in fostering understanding and preventing violence among young people. Through these initiatives, which combine immediate conflict resolution with long-term community development, JDPC has solidified its role as a cornerstone of peacebuilding in Plateau State [42, 45].

Empirical Review

This part delves into the review of relevant literatures or scholarly findings in relation to the specific objectives of the study. This is done in the following sub-headings:

Peacebuilding Initiatives Implemented by NGOs

Aggestam's research in 2003 highlighted that NGOs are increasingly relevant in conflict prevention, as contemporary conflicts often concern state-society relations, with civilians as the primary victims [46]. Aggestam found that NGO activities are believed to be more participatory, flexible, and innovative than governmental agencies. Aggestam noted that NGOs are often the first actors to become aware of the risk of conflict escalation and tend to remain in conflict areas the longest [46].

Chigas' in 2007 study examined how NGOs can play "track 1.5", "track 2", and "track 3" roles in peacebuilding, working with official government representatives, unofficial intermediaries, and grassroots actors respectively [47]. Chigas found that NGO peacebuilding is constrained by short-term funding, and they can sometimes be undermined by the political forces they are trying to influence [47]. Chigas also noted that NGOs have been accused of being too preoccupied with their own agendas and neglecting the impact of their programs on local conditions or broader peacebuilding efforts [47].

Smith (2011) carried out a study on United States Institute of Peace's (USIP) peacebuilding initiatives [48]. According to the study, USIP's initiatives often include training programs for local mediators, peacebuilders, and community leaders in conflict-affected areas. These programs aim to build the capacity of individuals and organizations to effectively prevent and resolve conflicts through dialogue, negotiation, and mediation skills. One of the key components of USIP's peacebuilding efforts is facilitating dialogue among

conflicting parties. These dialogues create spaces for constructive communication, trust-building, and the exploration of common ground, thereby reducing tensions and promoting understanding between adversaries. USIP's interventions focus on preventing conflicts from escalating into violence through early warning systems, conflict analysis, and targeted interventions. These preventive measures contribute to averting crises, reducing the likelihood of violence, and creating opportunities for peaceful resolution. USIP supports reconciliation processes aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict, promoting healing, and fostering social cohesion among divided communities. Smith (2011) highlighted the role of reconciliation initiatives in addressing grievances, restoring trust, and laying the foundation for sustainable peace [48]. USIP conducts research and evaluations to assess the effectiveness of peace processes and interventions in various conflict contexts. Empirical findings from these evaluations inform evidence-based policymaking, enhance learning, and guide the design of future peacebuilding initiatives. Furthermore, USIP adopts a multisectoral approach that integrates peacebuilding with other development and governance priorities, such as rule of law, democracy, and economic development. The empirical review underscored the importance of addressing interconnected drivers of conflict and promoting holistic, integrated responses to peacebuilding challenges. Again, USIP collaborates with local, national, and international partners to leverage resources, expertise, and networks for more effective peacebuilding interventions. The study uncovered the value of partnerships in amplifying impact, enhancing local ownership, and fostering sustainability. overall, the study concludes that USIP peace building initiatives are important to the sustenance of peace in USA. Ndu and Lum (2025) carried out a study on Peace Direct's support for local peacebuilders in Somalia. The study discovered that Peace Direct's approach emphasizes empowering local actors, including grassroots organizations, community leaders, and activists, to take ownership of peacebuilding efforts [49]. The study showed how this strategy enabled communities in Somalia to address conflict dynamics in ways that are culturally sensitive, contextually relevant, and sustainable in the long term. According to Ndu and Lum (2025), by supporting grassroots peacebuilders, Peace Direct facilitated initiatives that directly engage with conflict-affected communities at the local level. The study found that these initiatives often focus on mediation, dialogue facilitation, trauma healing, and reconciliation processes tailored to the specific needs and dynamics of communities, contributing to trust-building and social cohesion. Ndu and Lum stressed that Peace Direct's support for local peacebuilders has had tangible impacts on conflict dynamics in Somalia. This includes reductions in violence, mitigating the risk of escalation, and fostering resilience within communities to withstand and prevent future conflicts. More so, Peace Direct's emphasis on inclusivity and representation was another key aspect indicated in the empirical review. By amplifying the voices of marginalized groups, including women, youth, and minority communities, their initiatives promoted more inclusive and participatory peacebuilding processes, ensuring that diverse perspectives and needs are taken into account. By fostering collaboration among local peacebuilders, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders, they facilitated knowledge-sharing, resource mobilization, and collective action, enhancing the

effectiveness and sustainability of peacebuilding efforts. The study also uncovered some challenges in Peace Direct's approach, such as security risks, limited resources, and political instability in Somalia. However, it pointed the organization's adaptive capacity in responding to these challenges by adjusting strategies, building local capacities, and leveraging innovative solutions ^[49].

Muyingi (2013) reviewed the role of International Alert's conflict-sensitive development projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) ^[50]. Muyingi observed that the DRC has experienced protracted conflict, fueled by competition over land, natural resources, and ethnic tensions and International Alert's initiatives aimed to address the root causes of conflict and promote sustainable development in this complex context ^[50]. The International Alert adopted a conflict-sensitive approach to development, which involves understanding and mitigating the potential impacts of development interventions on conflict dynamics ^[51]. The empirical review revealed how this approach helped to prevent exacerbating existing tensions and instead contributed to peacebuilding efforts. Central to International Alert's projects was meaningful engagement with local communities. The study found that involving community members in decision-making processes regarding development initiatives increased ownership and legitimacy, reducing the risk of resistance or conflict escalation. According to Muyingi (2013), given that conflicts in the DRC are often linked to competition over natural resources, International Alert's interventions focused on promoting sustainable resource management practices ^[50]. These efforts contributed to reducing resource-related tensions and promoting equitable access to resources, thus addressing one of the root causes of conflict. The study stressed the impact of International Alert's conflict-sensitive development projects through various indicators, such as changes in conflict dynamics, community resilience, and socio-economic well-being. Positive outcomes, such as reduced violence, improved community relations, and increased livelihood opportunities, were identified as indicators of success. There are challenges faced by International Alert, such as navigating complex political environments, ensuring inclusivity in decision-making processes, and sustaining impacts in the long term ^[51].

A study conducted in 2025 by Bentu *et al.* on evaluating SFCG's efforts to promote peace and reconciliation in Nigeria, a country marked by ethno-religious tensions, communal conflicts, and violence, particularly in regions like the Middle Belt and the Niger Delta ^[52]. SFCG's programs emphasized interfaith dialogue as a means to bridge divides between Muslim and Christian communities. These dialogues created spaces for mutual understanding, tolerance, and cooperation, thereby reducing the likelihood of interreligious violence and promoting social cohesion. Another key aspect of SFCG's initiatives was community reconciliation, where they facilitated dialogue and mediation processes among conflicting groups. The interventions led to the resolution of local disputes, the restoration of trust, and the prevention of further violence within communities. SFCG also invested in capacity building for local leaders, activists, and youth to enhance their skills in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and advocacy. There is a positive impact of capacity-building approach in empowering communities to address grievances peacefully and advocate for their interests through nonviolent means. However, while immediate results such as reduced

tensions and improved community relations were observed, sustaining these gains required continued support, engagement, and investment in local peacebuilding capacities over time ^[52].

Effectiveness of the Peacebuilding Initiatives

Paffenholz research focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions, including those implemented by NGOs in 2021. She employs rigorous methodologies and empirical analysis to assess the impacts of various peacebuilding initiatives on conflict dynamics, peace processes, and societal outcomes. Paffenholz emphasizes the importance of evidence-based approaches to peacebuilding, revealing the need for systematic impact assessments and evaluation frameworks that capture both intended and unintended effects. Through comparative studies and meta-analyses, she identifies factors contributing to the success or failure of peacebuilding interventions, such as context sensitivity, local ownership, and adaptive programming. Paffenholz's research contributes to advancing knowledge on best practices and lessons learned in the field of peacebuilding, informing policy and practice for more effective conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts ^[53].

A study on the Role of Civil Society in Peacebuilding: Lessons from Local and International NGOs was carried out by Paffenholz in 2009. Paffenholz's research delves into the multifaceted role of civil society, particularly local and international NGOs, in peacebuilding processes. She emphasizes the significance of grassroots initiatives and community-based approaches in fostering sustainable peace. Through case studies and empirical analysis, Paffenholz points the diverse contributions of NGOs in conflict prevention, mediation, reconciliation, and post-conflict reconstruction efforts. She underscores the importance of building trust, promoting inclusivity, and addressing root causes of conflict to achieve lasting peace. Additionally, Paffenholz explores the challenges and ethical considerations inherent in NGO engagement in peacebuilding, advocating for approaches that prioritize local ownership, cultural sensitivity, and long-term sustainability ^[54].

Oliver P. Richmond's research critically examines the effectiveness of international interventions, including NGOs, in peacebuilding processes. He emphasizes the complexities of external involvement in conflict-affected contexts and interrogates the assumptions underlying mainstream approaches to peacebuilding. Richmond argues that while NGOs play vital roles in providing humanitarian assistance and promoting human rights, their interventions can sometimes perpetuate dynamics of dependency and undermine local agency. Through theoretical frameworks and empirical case studies, Richmond calls for a reevaluation of power dynamics, ethics, and effectiveness in NGO-led peacebuilding efforts. He advocates for greater emphasis on empowering local actors, fostering self-sustaining peacebuilding capacities, and promoting transformative change from within conflict-affected communities ^[55, 56].

Overall, the available evidence suggests that the effectiveness of NGO and civil society peacebuilding initiatives depends on several interconnected factors. These include context-sensitive programming, meaningful local ownership, inclusive participation, effective relationships among stakeholders, and the ability of interventions to respond to changing conflict dynamics. Peacebuilding initiatives are therefore more likely to produce sustainable outcomes when

they move beyond short-term interventions and support long-term processes that strengthen the capacities of individuals, communities, and institutions to manage conflict constructively [53, 54, 55].

Factors Hindering the Effectiveness of Peacebuilding

Irrera (2010), conducted a study on Evaluating NGO-led Peacebuilding Interventions: Challenges and Opportunities and discovered that NGOs play an important role in promoting peace and security by providing humanitarian support, empowering local communities, and influencing policy decisions. NGOs' neutrality and ability to access conflict zones are key factors enabling their peacebuilding efforts. However, challenges and risks for NGOs in peacebuilding, such as the potential loss of neutrality, increased conflict risk, and the need to ensure a "win-win" situation for all stakeholders [57].

According to the study of Magara, (2025) on Conflict Sensitivity in Peacebuilding: Principles and Practices, the role of NGOs in peacebuilding is significantly influenced by donor funding and regulations. Donor agencies often provide substantial financial support to NGOs involved in peacebuilding efforts. However, this funding can come with specific requirements and expectations that may impact the priorities and agendas of local NGOs. In some cases, NGOs may adjust their focus to align with the donors' interests rather than local needs, which can undermine the effectiveness of their peacebuilding efforts [58]. Also, study of Schlom in 2003 on "Humanitarian NGOs in Peace Process" shows how donor funding can influence the priorities of NGOs. The study noted that NGOs often prioritize projects that are more easily fundable and measurable, rather than those that are more critical to the peacebuilding process [59]. This can lead to a focus on short-term, tangible outcomes rather than long-term, sustainable peacebuilding efforts.

PolSci Institute (2025) on Advocating for Peace states that the role of policy in supporting ngo efforts indicates that, a significant factor affecting the role of NGOs in peacebuilding is the lack of coordination and communication between NGOs and governments. Effective peacebuilding requires a collaborative effort between various stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and local communities. However, the absence of coordination and communication can hinder the common peacebuilding efforts of these stakeholders [60].

The inclusion and involvement of local civil society actors is crucial for sustainable and legitimate peacebuilding. Local civil society groups, including those that may reinforce exclusive identities, should be involved in the peacebuilding process to ensure that their needs and concerns are addressed. Scholars such as Saaida (2023), Ljungkvist and Jarstad (2021), and Bojicic-Dzelilovic (2016) emphasize the importance of local ownership and participation in peacebuilding [61, 62, 63]. They argue that local civil society groups should be involved in the design, implementation, and monitoring of peacebuilding initiatives to ensure that they are responsive to local needs and priorities.

International peacebuilding programs have been criticized for using a Western agenda, lacking inclusion of local context, and taking a top-down, short-term approach. These programs often prioritize quick fixes and short-term gains over long-term, sustainable peacebuilding efforts. Scholars like Volkdal (2026) and Saaida (2023), argue that international peacebuilding programs should adopt a more nuanced and context-specific approach. They emphasize the need for local

ownership, participation, and inclusion in the peacebuilding process to ensure that initiatives are responsive to local needs and priorities [61, 64].

In a nutshell, the role of NGOs in peacebuilding is influenced by various factors, including donor funding and regulations, lack of coordination and communication, inclusion of local civil society, international peacebuilding programs, and the ambiguity of local civil society. Understanding these factors is crucial for developing effective peacebuilding strategies that prioritize local ownership, participation, and inclusion.

Steps to Taken to Increase the Effectiveness of Peacebuilding Initiatives

According to the study of Wami *et al*, (2023), community engagement is a vital strategy for NGOs to improve their role in peacebuilding in Nigeria. By actively involving local communities in peacebuilding processes, NGOs can ensure that their initiatives are tailored to the specific needs and concerns of the affected populations. This engagement fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among community members, encouraging them to take an active role in resolving conflicts and promoting peace. Community engagement also helps NGOs to better understand the root causes of conflicts, identify local solutions, and develop context-specific interventions that address the needs of the community. By empowering local communities to take ownership of peacebuilding initiatives, NGOs can promote sustainable peace and conflict resolution, as well as build trust and credibility among the communities they serve [65].

According to the study of Uzuegbunam (2013), advocacy and awareness are essential strategies for NGOs to improve their role in peacebuilding in Nigeria [3]. By advocating for policy changes, promoting peace education, and raising awareness about peacebuilding efforts, NGOs can mobilize support, foster dialogue, and create a culture of peace within Nigerian society. Advocacy efforts can focus on promoting policies that support peacebuilding, such as conflict resolution mechanisms, community engagement initiatives, and economic development programs. Peace education initiatives can help to promote values of tolerance, empathy, and non-violence among young people, while awareness campaigns can raise public awareness about the importance of peacebuilding and the role that individuals can play in promoting peace. By advocating for policy changes and promoting peace education and awareness, NGOs can contribute to a broader cultural shift towards peace and reconciliation in Nigeria [3].

To Okyere (2024), a study on Empowering Communities for Peace: Lessons from Field Experiences, capacity building is a crucial strategy to improve the role of NGOs in peacebuilding in Nigeria. By investing in training programs, workshops, and skill development initiatives, NGOs can enhance their staff's expertise in conflict resolution, mediation, negotiation, and peacebuilding techniques. This capacity building can empower NGOs to effectively engage with local communities, understand the complexities of conflicts, and implement targeted interventions that address root causes of violence. Additionally, knowledge sharing among NGOs can foster a culture of learning and collaboration, enabling them to leverage each other's strengths and experiences for more impactful peacebuilding efforts. Overall, capacity building equips NGOs with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the challenges of peacebuilding in Nigeria and contribute meaningfully to

conflict transformation and sustainable peace ^[66].

Furthermore, peacebuilding literature identifies several important strategies for improving the effectiveness of peacebuilding initiatives implemented by non-governmental organizations. These strategies include adopting preventive approaches to conflict, promoting inclusive participation, strengthening conflict-resolution capacities, improving coordination among stakeholders, clarifying organizational roles, adopting long-term perspectives, empowering local communities, and adapting interventions to changing conflict dynamics ^[67].

Reflective peacebuilding and reflective peace practice

Peacebuilding has been viewed by notable scholars as an umbrella that covers activities that underpinned every stages of conflict and the numerous dimensions of intervention deployed to transform the negative impact of conflict. This research views the theories of change in peacebuilding at the personal level; relational level; cultural level and at the structural level. Two facts cannot be disputed about peacebuilding: Peacebuilding is a process; also it is definitely about change- positive and durable change. Theories of change in peacebuilding should involve putting structures that will discourage the reoccurrence of violence means and also getting the best positive benefits of the conflict in terms of the fact that conflict creates opportunity. It is will be inconvenient for this research to articulate theories of change in peacebuilding without an indepth consultation of conflict transformation dynamics. Fundamental change in the thinking and systems of the society is crucial for durable peace. Paul Lederach (2003) posits that conflict transformation is a comprehensive orientation or framework that ultimately may require a fundamental change in our way of thinking ^[68].

The goal of this Toolkit (Reflective Peacebuilding) is to improve peacebuilders' ability to be reflective practitioners; this involves enhancing peacebuilders' capacity to design and impact transformative change, and track and improves upon those changes over time, in unpredictable conflict contexts. The overarching theme of the *Toolkit* is *learning before, during and after* implementation of peacebuilding programs. It explores the connections between learning and effective peacebuilding practice, and suggest practices for reflection and learning as individuals and communities. Reflective Peacebuilding is a tool that seeks beyond conflict management, conflict resolution- towards conflict transformation. Change is key to reflective peacebuilding. This tool is creating for peace practitioners and NGOs. in the past decade', 'the world of NGOs has programmatically engaged the call to respond more proactively and creatively to settings of deep social conflict, and build initiatives that promote peace and conflict transformation. At the same time the mainstay of NGO work community development and/or relief work has increased the explicit focus on evaluation, encouraged by the goal of using donor funding more effectively and efficiently ^[69].

The researcher has chosen to quote Lederach verbatim due to the intensity of his assertions to this research. Lederach *et al.* (2007) ^[69] has the following to say about the efficacy of reflective peacebuilding as a toolkit:

This Toolkit proposes a variety of ideas for evaluating and learning from peacebuilding projects, even in the face of these questions and challenges. It begins from

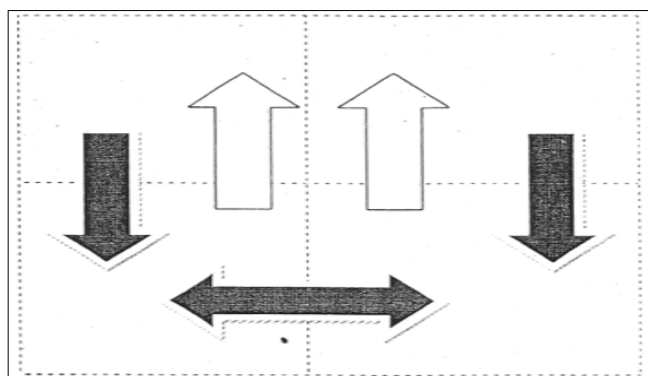
the basic premises listed below'. First, we propose that peacebuilding is a complex, multifaceted process of change. Understanding and evaluating peacebuilding work requires a variety of tools and avenues of inquiry into how change processes operate; peacebuilding evaluation, therefore, cannot be a simple matter of measuring a final result. Second and closely related, our approach places special emphasis on monitoring-and evaluation-as-learning, rather than evaluation-as-measuring results, encouraging peacebuilders to build their capacity to learn about the change processes they promote. We support the development of reflective practice—building knowledge, understanding and improvement of practice through explicit and disciplined, reflection. Third, we suggest that learning is constant. In other words, it happens before, during and after projects, creating a clear link between monitoring, evaluation and learning. We do not, understand evaluation as merely a form of assessment at the end of projects, but part of a learning process that requires continuous reflection. Finally, given this focus on the reflective practitioner, we propose tools that we feel are accessible, "doable," and can easily be incorporated into the intense, often hectic daily work patterns of peace practitioners. We have assumed that the biggest challenge for practitioners concerns building disciplines that foster reflection, the explicit building of knowledge, and the development of theory—three arenas of emphasis too often placed at the margin of the busy practitioner's life. We now turn our attention to the challenge of becoming a reflective practitioner. As conflict continue to take complex and multi-diversified trend, the need for practitioners to become reflective is increasing. Building peace (lasting peace) is hard work. Peacebuilders are hardworking specifically, reflective peacebuilding suggest that beyond hard work and solid planning, peacebuilders reflect explicitly on "how things work," on what they have learned from experience, and on developing experience-based theory. This is what I call "a localized culture of reflection" driven from best practices and lesson learnt.

Reflective Peace Practice (RPP) is about reflection on practice. It answers the questions such as: What are we learning from our experience? How does our experience compare with that of other practitioners? What are the general lessons we can develop and disseminate? The RPP tools and concepts can be applied in initial program planning, in mid-course reviews or assessment, and in final evaluations. It deals with findings as:

What should we work on? - What are the priority issues and conflict factors? Whom should we work with? Why should we work on those issue with the people? And is it the right time for the initiatives? The RPP does not favour any one approach to peacebuilding and conflict intervention. RPP does not offer assistance at the detailed level of program implementation such as allocation to resources, deployment of personnel, work plans, schedules and so forth. For the purposes of this research, a determination of what counts" as Reflective Peace Practice (RPP) had to be made to identify where it appears or not in evaluations. As a result, the following were deemed to be representative of RPP ^[70]: the matrix: in full form or broken out by concepts: key and more

people; individual and socio-political level change, criteria of effectiveness (COE), key driving factors in conflict, determination of „adding-up“, linkages systems approach to conflict analysis. The RPP matrix provides a framework for understanding strategies of peace in line with effectiveness and contributing to peace write large (the bigger peace). According to Daina and Peter (2008), there are many ways to present the RPP matrix and Jo weave the presentation with exercise that help participants understand it and apply it to their programming ^[71]. Participants under training should understand the matrix itself, the approaches and levels represented by the columns and rows below and the findings about effectiveness as presented by Diana and Peter (2008) ^[71].

More People Key People



Source: Daina and Peter (2008).

Individual/ personal Level Socio-political Level

The arrows reflect the findings about the transfer of impact among the boxes. There is great importance of transforming changes at the individual/personal level into socio-political level actions as shown by the heavy downward arrow. The importance of connected the more people and key people is displayed in the horizontal arrow ^[72]. The more people approaches basically aim to engage increasing numbers of people in actions to promote peace. Practitioners who utilize this approach believe that peace can only be built if many people become active in the process. The key people approaches basically focus on involving particular groups, or groups of people critical to the continuation or resolution of the conflict, due to their power and influence. It is assumption that if this people are not involved progress cannot be made. Who is key depends on the context. The analysis in chapter four will prove if the participants involved in the inter-communal peace dialogue training are key people or more people. The Individual personal change level-is about the change in attitude, values, perceptions and circumstances of the individual.

This relates the Schirch (2013) Sociological and Psychological dimension of theory of change as stated before ^[21]. It is an underlying assumption that peace is possible only if the hearts, minds and behaviour of individuals are changed. Most dialogue and training programs such as the case study of this research operate at this level- working with groups of individual to affect their skills, attitudes, perceptions, ideas and relationship with other individual. Socio-political level is of the assumption that peace requires change at the socio-political structures and processes- reforming institutions that fuel conflict. It involves alteration in government policies,

economic structures, ceasefire agreements and matters of the constitution. The “indigene-settlers” conflict affected Plateau state falls under this dimension. Reflective Peacebuilding involves the key people and more people analysis but not involves a broader dimension as the table shows below ^[68]:

Four Dimensions of Conflict

Personal	Structural
Conflict changes individuals personally, emotionally, spiritually	Conflict impacts systems and structures— how relationships are organized, and who has access to power—from family and organizations to communities and whole societies
Relational	Cultural
Refers to people who have direct, face to face contact. When conflict escalates, communication patterns change, stereotypes are created, polarization increases, trust decreases	Violent conflict causes deep seated cultural changes, for example, the norms that guide patterns of behavior between elders and youth, or women and men

Source: ^[68].

This dimension of Reflective as it relates to the theory of change is broader than RPP as indicated in the table. It is more encompassing compared to RPP provisions. These four dimensions can help peacebuilders to articulate the changes they seek in conflict transformation and peacebuilding work. They can be used in evaluation, learning, theory and-indicator development. The four dimensions are linked, and equally important, but different projects may emphasize one or another of these dimensions. A planning and monitoring system incorporating all four aspects is useful for directing where that focus should be. Personal change and relational is the closest link to this depth of this research. All this should contribute to the bigger peace. Reflective peacebuilding and RPP are tools for monitoring and Evaluation. It also bridges the gap between learning and practice. A peace practitioner building the culture of reflection is very crucial.

Summary of Literature and Gap

The reviewed literature in this study reveals that the complexity of state security stabilization and rebuilding requires a high level of coherency. Peacebuilding, in practice, is a synergy of social and economic development through multiple organizations, with NGOs playing an irreplaceable role. As noted by Lederach (1997), peacebuilding must transcend mere conflict resolution to embrace long-term structural and relational changes, which directly aligns with the concept of *Conflict Transformation Theory* ^[23]. This theory asserts that peacebuilding should go beyond resolving immediate conflict and should aim to transform the underlying systems that sustain violence, injustice, and inequality. The role of NGOs in this transformation is pivotal, as they contribute to fostering justice, human rights, and social cohesion, which are essential for sustainable peace. Moreover, the inadequacies of first-generation conflict resolution methods both nationally and globally emphasizing the need for settlements that not only address political orders but also promote democracy, human rights, new norms, and participatory governance structures, as well as civil society involvement. *Conflict Transformation Theory* addresses these concerns by focusing on addressing deep-rooted causes

of conflict and promoting societal changes that prevent future violence ^[23]. This theory is crucial in understanding why peacebuilding's effectiveness and sustainability are directly linked to whether the underlying assumptions informing the design of peacebuilding efforts are accurate. Often, planners move too quickly from conflict assessments to planning without fully understanding how their actions will address these root causes, leading to incomplete or unsustainable solutions.

This study further identified key gaps in the existing literature. Many empirical studies have not clearly outlined the specific initiatives or programs created by NGOs in peacebuilding, nor have they assessed the effectiveness of these programs in addressing the underlying drivers of conflict. This gap is significant because, according to *Conflict Transformation Theory*, peacebuilding must involve the transformation of systems that perpetuate conflict, which includes not only political systems but also societal norms, economic structures, and social relationships ^[24]. The failure to evaluate how NGO programs effectively engage with these drivers can undermine the long-term impact of peacebuilding initiatives.

Additionally, there is a gap in exploring the extent to which NGOs effectively engage and empower marginalized groups such as women, youth, and minorities in peacebuilding processes. *Conflict Transformation Theory* emphasizes inclusivity and the need for marginalized voices to be part of peacebuilding efforts to achieve lasting change. The theory posits that involving these groups can help transform societal relationships and bring about a more inclusive and just peace ^[23]. This study will address this gap by examining how NGOs, particularly JDPC, empower these groups through programs designed to foster social, economic, and political empowerment.

Furthermore, there is a notable absence of scholarly work focusing on the role of NGOs in peacebuilding specifically in Jos Metropolis. This indicates a clear need for further research in this area to understand how NGOs are shaping peace processes in this region. The realities of internal displacement and the emerging trends in Jos Metropolis are key areas that need deeper exploration. In line with *Conflict Transformation Theory*, the researcher will investigate how internal displacement contributes to conflict dynamics and how NGOs can facilitate the transformation of displaced communities through sustainable development and reconciliation efforts ^[24]. Thus, by incorporating *Conflict Transformation Theory* into the analysis of NGO-led peacebuilding efforts, this study will bridge significant gaps in the literature, offering a deeper understanding of how NGOs can contribute to long-term peace and stability in Jos Metropolis.

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