Chapter 16
Non-state Actors as the Strategic Realm in Africa's Development

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Introduction

A major problem confronting most countries in Africa is underdevelopment. Even though a little variation may exist among nations on the continent, the reality is that countries on the African continent are relatively underdeveloped (Akanle 2013). Regrettable still is the fact that most African countries continue to go deeper into underdevelopment while the hitherto promising ones are losing such promise due to terrorism, corruption, patrimonialism, weakened global demand for natural resources and generalized misgovernance. Included in this category, for example, are Egypt, Tunisia and, to some extent, South Africa. Underdevelopment on the African continent has worsened since the 1980s and even though most African nations are now democratic and consolidating their democracies, most have not been able to sustainably jumpstart development and many have over time fallen deeper into underdevelopment—Sudan and Somalia for instance to the point of near failed statehood. While there have been many explanations for continued and aggravated underdevelopment of African nations, old and recent events suggest the need for a fresh examination of the development realities of Africa. This is especially through accounting for hitherto unaccounted for key players in the development space of the continent—non-state actors (NSAs). Hence, the underdevelopment realities on the Africa continent call for the need for fresh narratives and accounting relative to key actors in the African development marketplace.

There is thus the need to rethink, redirect and better interconnect, normatively, theoretically and practically, Africa's underdevelopment through the windows of NSAs as the strategic realm in Africa's development. This is important because most narratives on development in Africa either do not account at all or mis-account for the roles of these actors. Most narratives are too state-centric to the extent that

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the roles of NSAs are taken for granted. Unfortunately, given what is now known about the roles of NSAs in developed countries and other developing continents like Latin America and the Middle East, there is a need to better examine the roles of NSAs in the development equations of African countries to make development feasible on the continent. It can therefore be hypothesized that a positive relationship may likely exist between NSAs' roles and development in developing countries, and until the trajectories of these roles are sufficiently appreciated and factored into development processes on the continent, development may remain elusive in Africa. NSAs are critical change and development agents and there is the need for better analysis and understanding of their contours on the African continents.

Even though NSAs are not new to Africa in terms of their contribution to development, many extant narratives have reduced their *interventions* to emergency/disaster management and there has been over-emphasis on their political economy (Steer et al. 2015; Weiss et al. 2013). It is therefore evident that there is need for a more recent and practical consideration of their development contributions in Africa, beyond existing political and international relations repertoires, which have remained fixated at the level of the state, as the suprarelational institution responsible for driving development, even when recent occurrences appear to be proving otherwise, as many NSAs are now setting nations' development agenda, driving such agenda and determining the outcomes of such agenda either equally with the state or even outside the state (Valensi 2015; Ewumbue-Monono 2006). Cases abound but examples include the armed non-state actors in the Middle East/North Africa (Islamic State), East Africa (Al-Shabab) and West Africa (Boko Haram) (Akanle and Omobowale 2015; Ewumbue-Monono 2006).

This chapter seeks to contribute to the understanding of development on the African continent with a focus on the roles of NSAs as critical and important actors in the development field. This is particularly important as the significance of NSAs has increased dramatically in the last 20 years even when the legitimacy and capabilities of states to drive development have continued to be challenged and undermined within the same period. Hence, while states have continued to witness resistance and lose popular support and legitimacy, NSAs have continued to proliferate and, sometimes, enjoy goodwill, and their structures often make them less amenable to the political and diplomatic problems states often confront. More players in the development sectors—including sovereign nations—now sometimes prefer to contribute to development in developing countries through NSAs to avoid diplomatic complications, political backlashes, prohibitive bureaucracies, ethnic sensationalism/sentimentalism and corruption. This has contributed to the significance and rise of the NSAs in the development space. According to Weiss et al. (2013), due to the realization of the importance of NSAs in the development of developing nations, the second half of the twentieth century saw an astronomical increase in the numbers of NSAs in the development space of many developing countries. There is thus the need to understand the dynamics, implications, drivers, trajectories and contours of these existentialities and increase of NSAs in Africa, particularly in relation to the development of countries on the continent.

Non-state Actors: Conceptualization and Characterization

Given the dynamism, multifariousness and multidimensional functions of NSAs, it is difficult to arrive at a universally acceptable definition. A common intersection in existing definitions and conceptualizations is however discernable. NSAs are commonly defined and conceptualized around what they do, how they do what they do and structures of their operations. NSAs can be broadly described as organized groups with a basic structure of command functioning and operating outside state control that often use force to achieve their political and allegedly political objectives (Valensi 2015; Maseng 2014; Hofmann and Schneckener 2011). In a related version, NSAs can be defined as organizations largely or entirely independent of the state/central government funding and control emanating from civil society or from the market economy or from political impulses beyond state control and direction (Malka 2015; Briscoe 2013; Bruderlein 2000). Hence, NSAs are summarily change agents and their processes and outcomes are usually direct and indirect, intended and unintended. Their objectives and processes affect socioeconomic and political arrangements and outcomes of societies and states, while international institutions and territories are not immune to the objectives and outcomes of NSA activities whether partly or wholesale.

It is common to identify two broad types of NSA and the major difference in the existence and characterization of these broad typologies is their mode of operation. Sometimes, even their objectives and outcomes overlap even though this is indirectly and unintentionally. The two broad types of NSAs are armed non-state actors (ANSAs) and unarmed non-state actors (UNSAs). It is noteworthy that these two broad categories are in themselves not entirely homogenous. They sometimes also still have variants but these broad categorizations suffice based on the primary strategies they commonly adopt as their flagships of existence. ANSAs describes a variety of bodies and entities that engage in armed conflicts for the main purpose of religious, political, social, economic and cultural goals/reasons (Briscoe 2013; Hofmann and Schneckener 2011). UNSAs on the other hand are entities that are motivated by social, cultural, religious, economic and political reasons but achieve or set to achieve goals without overt physical weapon wilding conflict of violence. Unlike ANSAs, UNSAs do not engage in armed conflict but often deploy lobbying and diplomacy. When conflict becomes imminently apparent, UNSAs suspend operations until the situation improves and peace is restored. The motivations of NSAs drive their philosophies and their philosophies drive their approaches, strategies and tactics.

While both ANSAs and UNSAs operate outside the state, at least largely overtly, they both also have something in common—they both have objectives which they strategize to achieve either through violence or otherwise. The ultimate focus of NSAs is their beneficiaries and they circumvent all other interests for the benefit of the 'focus' (beneficiaries). Examples of ANSAs are armed militias, terrorist organizations, armed bandits, rebel groups, armed freedom fighters and armed liberation movements. All these use force to propagate and achieve force and collateral

damage as objects of negotiation, voice gathering and attention drawing. The more violent, the more destructive and the more undermining the better it is for ANSAs. ANSAs are usually not recognized by states and are not widely recognized internationally. UNSAs, on the other hand, broadly include multinational corporations (MNCs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations (Valensi 2015) and extra-ordinarily influential individuals (E-OIIs[1]). These UNSA actors are both territorial and extra-territorial and their modus operandi is non-violence, at least in the overt sense, even though they use diplomatic, intellectual and relational pressures that many in international relations may consider as systematic violence which is commonly inevitable. This includes lobbying states and international organizations to impose sanctions, deploy overt force, freeze assets and impose travel bans on targeted individuals and organizations.

MNCs as NSAs are important because of their private identities and economic capabilities. Even though they are non-state, they often have state relationship capital that they often deploy for other private and non-private purposes because they are multinational, operating in at least two countries—the first country being their home country and other countries being destinations of their companies and operations. NGOs, like MNCs, are voluntary, private, but not profit making, unlike MNCs, and self-governing. Like MNCs, however, even though NGOs are autonomous of the state governments in which they operate, there are state instituted regulatory frameworks guiding their operations. Generally, therefore, while ANSAs are forcefully out of state control, NGOs and other UNSAs are not entirely out of states' control. While ANSAs overtly undermine the state and its interests, UNSAs are seen as complementing the development efforts of the state and are commonly seen as partners in progress with the state. Generally, by their objectives and strategies, they are overtly free from government and external control and influences.

E-OIIs are individuals with huge socioeconomic, political, cultural and religious capital. These capitals are very variable, enduring and massive yet very fragile, depending on the prevailing circumstances in the state and the world. Examples of E-OIIs are past political leaders like heads of state, successful industrialists, philanthropists and financiers, media personalities/celebrities and religious leaders. Popular examples may include Kofi Anan, Bill and Melinda Gates, Thabo Mbeki, Aliko Dangote, Bill Clinton, Tony Blair, Oprah Winfrey and Banki Moon. E-OIIs accumulate their capital over time through past successful public engagements and they remain largely independent of current overt political/state activities. Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) are interstate/across sovereignties. IGOs are established through national/international understandings and partnership agreements for common purposes, usually around peacebuilding and sustainable

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[1] E-OII is my original concept created to accommodate what the NCI described as the *super-empowered individuals*. I consider the concept of E-OIIs more appropriate because the nucleus of strength of such *larger than life individuals* in the NSA marketplace is the resource of influence which they deploy as an object of negotiation. This influence thus becomes very variable and dynamic to the extent that it translates to empowerment but the main essence, structure and element of the empowerment is the extraordinary influence that may have come from previous socioeconomic, political, religious, diplomatic and other powers.

development of nations and the world. The essence of IGOs is collective galvanization of resources for the achievement of common interests. Generally, IGOs include official arrangements and connections to states through interstate political agreements and interactions. A very popular example of IGOs is the United Nations which is an amalgamation of sovereign nations for the protection of common world interests.

Generally, NSAs contribute directly and indirectly to the development of nations, continents and the world. The impact NSAs' activities have on any space at any particular point in history is, however, noticeable through their implications for the institutions and people of that society. Broadly, NSAs serve positive and negative purposes depending on which side of the divide and observatory point the issues and outcomes of actions of NSAs are being described. That is, whose interest is at stake? Whose interest is being protected? Who are the gainers and who are the losers? Who is doing the observation and who is doing the analysis? What strategies are being deployed by the stakeholders? What is the long-term implication of the action or inaction? What strategy has been deployed and is being deployed? And what is the motive of engagement? These are critical key questions that can be used in characterizing the nature, existence, strategies, tactics, objectives and outcomes of NSAs, particularly in relation to development in developing countries.

Non-state Actors and Development in Africa

This section examines the role of NSAs in contributing, or otherwise, to the development of Africa. This is very important as a major problem that has an overarching effect on Africa today is underdevelopment. While many angles have been explored in scholarship and practice relative to issues of development in Africa, more is needed in accounting for development of Africa through the (in)activities of NSAs. As already demonstrated in the previous section, there are two broad categories of NSAs—Armed and Unarmed NSAs. These both play critical roles in affecting development in Africa. These two broad categories are therefore examined in this section. Although many existing works on NSAs often unbundle their analysis when addressing NSA issues, the two broad categories will be examined together for complete analysis in this chapter. The relationships of NSAs with development are explored through major clusters of development indicators of Africa to understand their significance and the dynamics of Africa's development. The four broad sectors/indicators adopted systematically for analysis in this chapter are health, human rights, poverty and humanitarian aid (general development/aggregate development). NSAs play diverse roles based on different interests which have the capabilities to affect development ultimately on the African continent. Often, these roles are driven and moderated within the world system to the extent that global interests, national interests, local interests, institutional interests and even personal interests may constellate to determine eventual continental development interests. The intensity and dynamics of these constellations of interests ultimately determine the development outcomes of nations and continents.

Globalization and the political economy of international development somewhat affect the (in)activities of NSAs and their development outcomes. The massive reduction in space of interactions among institutions, nations, groups, governments, cultures and individuals through technology (Akanle and Taiwo 2013) means NSAs can now share strategies and resources more easily to affect development especially in developing countries. Particularly, globalization has made it far easier, cheaper and faster for people, organization and NSAs to reach nations and communities even in previously unreached/unreachable places. It is now possible and easier for NSAs as key actors in the development marketplace to exchange ideas and other resources within themselves and across the broader spectrum of the relational and development interface. Globalization for NSAs means they can now leverage more resources, engage with more issues, relate with more stakeholders, cover more spaces and make a greater impact relative to development. Globalization enables NSAs to affect more norms, values, principles and practices and drive development ideals in Africa through global governance. This is why more NSAs are now engaging broader issues of development like climate change, HIV/AIDS, poverty, gender equality, peace building, maternal health, child rights protection and human rights in Africa.

NSAs participate in Africa's development and this is very important as Africa's development questions remain massive, multidimensional and essentially unanswered. There have been aggravated government failures in Africa to the extent that many Africans no longer trust their states and governments to drive development sustainably. Common reasons for this are corruption, nepotism, tribalism, favoritism, conflict, political instability, ethnic cleansing, terrorism, compromised military systems, crime and weak institutions among others. NSAs are noted to intervene in the cases of state deficits and social malaise driven by compromised systems in Africa, like many other developing countries, to make a difference and drive development. NSAs enjoy goodwill among many Africans given their independence from government, and their simplicity, transparency, non-involvement in local social problems and detachment from politics and the state. Whether ANSAs or UNSAs, depending on the context of actions and the social relations of engagements, NSAs tend to have local support and sympathy which often makes their development contributions noteworthy. While many African nations have become democratic and some have consolidated their democracies with evident increasingly transparent elections, for instance Nigeria and Ghana, and there has been reduction in coups d'état and flagrant human rights abuses, the roles of NSAs actors is significant in achieving these.

Many NSAs monitor elections and fund election observations just as many institute observatory for human rights watch and build local capacities to deploy monitoring technologies including very simple ones. Many NSAs also checkmate the state through effective subtle diplomacy, advocacy and lobbying (in the case of UNSAs) and/or through negotiations or violent coordinated resistance to get the attention of the state (in the case of ANSAs). For the ANSAs, violent resistance thus becomes the object of negotiations for the interests of regions or perceived marginalized groups. The perceived development contribution of NSAs and their impacts,

however, largely depend on the perspectives of the observers and the contexts of analysis. While there may be a difference in the strategies, tactics, motives and impacts of ANSAs and UNSAs, depending on the socioeconomic systems and the political economy of existence and objectives, all NSAs are now important forces in development decision-making in Africa. In addition, they are now recognized stake-holders in driving development on the continent, as can be seen in political consci-entization and participation and advocacy around human rights and sexuality, religious tolerance, campaigning for more inclusive ethno-religious and political space, public policy and education. For example, the role of NSAs in galvanizing human rights (Maseng 2014) of for instance the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) is particularly noteworthy, as can be seen in Uganda and South Africa. The role of NSAs in protecting the education rights of the girl child in Northern Nigeria and North Africa is also worthy of note. NSAs also play important roles in relief, aid and emergency management in Africa, especially in war zones and con-flict areas involving ethnic and religious militias—terrorist organizations—in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Nigeria, Somalia, Chad, Cameroun, Tunisia, Egypt among others.

Non-state Actors and Health

A sector that demonstrates the development roles of NSAs in Africa is health. The important roles of NSAs (UNSAs) in Africa can be seen and felt in the areas of access to health, preferences/choices, quality and affordability/economics of health care. World leaders have long recognized this even at the level of the United Nations to the extent that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) factored the NSAs in principle into the achievement of these two overarching development frameworks. Health as a complete positive state of wellbeing is central to the achievement of all other SDGs in Africa and the NSAs must play a central role in this regard in terms of managing, implementing, harness-ing and mobilizing critical health facilities and systems. NSAs are central to strengthening both state and non-state health structures and institutions to make them more amenable to the needs of Africans in terms of governance, regulation, funding and quality service delivery. NSAs often have critical networks, strategies, capacities, goodwill and frameworks to drive investments, performance and accountability in the health sector of Africa. This is critical given the governance and infrastructural gaps on the continent.

Like in many other developing countries, many NSAs in Africa were formed and now exist, at the turn of the millennium and earlier, to contribute to the health sector of Africa. Many NSAs directly fund the health systems of Africa through direct funding in critical sectors of the health systems while many inject resources to address specific health crises like malaria, Ebola, HIV/AIDS, and sickle cell anemia amongst others. Examples of NSAs in this health marketplace include the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Global Fund and the World Health Organization

(WHO). Broadly, the NSAs in the health sector fall into the categories of private institutions, NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs) and international/multinational organizations like the WHO. A significant proportion of Africans relies on the NSA actors to meet their unmet health needs. For example, according to the World Bank (2011), across Africa as many as 52% of low income people obtain health care services through the NSAs. This is, however, not limited to the poor African households, as a nearly equal proportion can be found even among Africans in the top income class. Locality in terms of rurality and urbanity is also not a major factor because as many people in both rural and urban centers rely on NSA services, structures, systems and networks for their health care needs (WHO 2008).

Particularly, data suggests that as much as 50–95% of children with respiratory tract infections in 42 countries (in the categories of low and middle income countries) look towards NSAs for their medical needs (World Bank 2011; WHO 2008). The number is far higher among populations with heart and renal/organ diseases. Examples of NSAs in these areas include, for example, the Kanu Heart Foundation in Nigeria, the Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders. Generally, common endemic and fatal diseases that confront Africans which have made NSAs critical to health care on the continent include HIV/AIDS. The Sub-Saharan African region is among the worst hit and about 68% of HIV-infected persons live on the African continent. According to data from UNAIDS this goes as far back as 2010, even though the region accounts for barely 12% of the world population. Other prevalent diseases in Africa include malaria, tuberculosis, sleeping sickness, Lassa fever, elephantiasis, leprosy (which causes disfiguring skin sores and nerve damage), helminthiasis and trachoma (a bacterial eye infection which can lead to blindness).

Even though Africa is commonly regarded as a continent given the geography and identical rate of underdevelopment, there are remarkable differences in the healthcare infrastructure, policies, funding and capabilities of African countries. Many African countries lack the capability to meet their health obligations making NSAs essential to health care on the continent. There are also rural–urban differentials in access to healthcare. Urbanites tend to have better access to health care and NSAs tend to concentrate more in the urban centers. Yet most Africans live in the rural areas; common diseases in Africa are found in rural areas and cultural infrastructure that rationalizes ill health is more profound in the rural areas and many rural dwellers lack access to clean water and sanitation (leading to poor hygiene) and making them more prone to diseases like cholera and diarrhea. These contradictions often limit the impact of NSAs in health interventions and result in many Africans suffering debilitating health consequences.

Budgetary allocation and spending on healthcare in Africa are comparatively low, necessitating NSAs as key players. Against the background of the African Union (AU) 2001 agreement that countries in Africa should allocate up to 15% of budgetary spending to healthcare, very few African countries—Botswana, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Niger, Rwanda and Zambia—have been able to deliver on this continental agreement regardless of the smallness of this percentage in meeting the healthcare needs of Africans. Reasons for this failure are myriad but lack of

resources, mismanagement, corruption and lack of political will to prioritize health-care finance from the state are key reasons. Although the training of health officials does occur in African countries, Africa is one of the most brain-drained continents with many of its health personnel seeking better paying healthcare jobs in Europe, America and the Middle East. This leaves most African countries understaffed with as few as 1.15 health workers to 1000 population (even though variation exists by country[2]) and leads to massive loss of life even from very curable and preventable diseases, as many Africans lack access to important lifesaving drugs.

NSAs broadly shape health agenda and programs through multiple stakeholder partnerships and mechanisms for better health in Africa. NSAs leverage on multi-sectoral and cross-industry partnerships and engagements to address Africa's new and old health gaps and wellness deficits, particularly with the increasingly popular challenge of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like the spread of polio to Central Africa. Unfortunately, against the gargantuan health deficits in Africa and the need for NSA optimization, NSAs still function at the margins of the healthcare market-place in Africa. NSAs' engagement with local populations, key national actors, the WHO and other key agencies is at suboptimal level. This limits the extent of func-tionality of NSAs and compromises the extent to which Africans can use the NSAs' advantages in the Africa's health sector. While NSAs have the capacity to be critical assets in the health care systems of Africa, if they are not decidedly appropriated and optimized by local, national and global stakeholders, the benefits will be under-mined. People across classes in Africa use the health systems of NSAs owing to their cost, availability, structure and organization. There is thus a need for better appreciation and inclusion of NSAs in the health arrangements of Africa. Global, continental and national agencies and institutions must begin to better acknowledge the gaps being filled by the NSAs in the health sector of Africa.

Unfortunately, in many instances, governments and political institutions in Africa view the operations of NSAs with skepticism and often even see them as rivals as NSAs' performances usually indict state lethargy. Major challenges of NSAs in the healthcare systems of Africa are excessive fragmentation, weak coor-dination of activities and poor regulation. There is also no sufficiently reliable data in most African countries to reliably manage, monitor and evaluate health interven-tions and diseases. There is also excessive overlap in the operations of NSAs and these often lead to a waste of time and resources. There is also internal competition among NSAs in the sector as NSAs work to appear to be more relevant than others. This is to get credibility from stakeholders and attract greater funding. The perfor-mance of NSAs in the African health sector is thus intrinsically very competitive in both positive and negative ways.

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[2] For example, according to data from the United States Center for Global Development, countries like Mozambique and Angola have more doctors abroad than are resident in the countries. The case is not entirely different in Nigeria and Zimbabwe, although South Africa and North Africa are to some extent exceptions.

Non-state Actors and Human Rights

Until the increasing democratization of African countries, human rights violations were prevalent on the continent. Even with increasing democratization, however, human rights violations have not totally disappeared. From Tunisia to Egypt to Somalia and Burundi to Nigeria, for example, human rights protection is not total with high levels of extrajudicial killings and incarceration and assassination of political opponents in many African countries. Human rights protection is therefore a major area of operation for NSAs in Africa. The roles of NSAs are particularly important in Africa because most human rights violations in the continent are perpetrated by governments through state security agencies and the political class, as well as significant others at the family and community level. NSAs, like NGOs, FBOs, IGOs and philanthropic individuals play an important moderating role. It is, however, noteworthy that the role of NSAs in human rights is not entirely positive, especially in relation to the environment and human rights at the grassroots. NSAs play both a positive and negative human rights role in Africa. Examples of the positive human rights role of NSAs include intervening in human rights violations through advocacy, litigation, lobbying and education. NSAs play a negative human rights role when they abuse human rights through their operations/activities and inactivity.

In fact, there have been attempts in the past to bring NSAs to account for violations of human rights. An example of this was the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Commission). In its 39th Ordinary Session in Banjul, The Gambia, a decision was made to conduct a study on human rights violations by NSAs in African countries. This was to document issues that could be used to jurisprudentially hold NSAs liable for human rights violations within a broader framework of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Charter). Human rights issues concerning NSAs range broadly from the political, the girl child, women, extractive industries and environmental issues, among others. In these sectors, the responsibilities and liabilities of NSAs are constantly brought to bear. Many NSAs are accused of cultural, traditional and physical environmental destruction of indigenous communities as they attempt to drive development which sometimes comes from above. Human rights violations in such instances intersect with the social, economic and environmental rights of locals and often indigenous marginalized groups. Resources extracted from local populations' communities are also often expropriated leaving indigenous people impoverished.

Apart from the exploitation of local environments and the expropriation of capital from local populations, some NSAs cause divisions and conflicts in host communities to perpetuate and service their interests. Interestingly, many African states have a head in the sand attitude to the human rights implications of NSA activities. In many instances, African governments are accomplices in this situation. NSAs also fuel corruption across spaces in African countries. Even when laws and regulatory frameworks exist to address human rights issues relating NSAs, such laws and regulations are never enforced sufficiently as the NSAs bring state officials on board

their operations and proceed directly or indirectly. Through their international networks, resources and political economic resources, some NSAs blackmail and threaten state governments in Africa with reports to home countries and legal action to sustain operations. These are effective strategies and tactics in Africa given legitimacy and capacity issues with many African governments and political elites who constantly look towards the West for assistance and legitimacy.

Hence, even some African elites may be either shareholders or stakeholders in the resources of many NSAs. These resources include economic and non-economic ones like being part of the same social and/or kinship networks. This is why even though many African countries have potent and world class environmental laws and policy frameworks, there is often a lack of political will and moral capability to activate and apply those laws. Many African political elites are themselves rent seekers either from the NSAs or their mother countries mostly in the West. Also, many governments in Africa consider NSAs as important development partners who they feel bring important investments and capital into the country. Therefore, even though NSAs sometimes flout environmental and human rights laws, there is often unwillingness on the part of African governments to bring them to account. In cases of mounting pressure from African countries for NSAs to be more accountable in terms of human rights, they threaten African governments with either lawsuits or mass relocation or both. For many African countries with nascent democracies, weak foreign exchange, poor economies and massive legitimacy deficits, these are largely unaffordable conditions.

This is largely the case across Sub-Saharan Africa where many NSAs operate far below global best practices and outside the social responsibility and human rights code obtainable in their home countries. Apart from local inability to hold NSAs to account, global and international legal frameworks are also liable. For example, NSAs have sovereign immunity within their local operational environments and international arbitrators are often reluctant to indict NSAs who they see as *helping Africa develop,* especially in the face of the declining state authority and weakening international trade of African countries. Considering the importance of NSAs in Africa's development, a need exists for more responsibility from the NSAs, particularly relative to human rights. More strategic and tangible obligations need to be attached to NSAs and more workable policy and legal frameworks must be put in place to make NSAs more accountable for more sustainable development and sociopolitical stability in the Sub-Saharan African region. NSAs have to be made to act more appropriately in a manner that can better enhance human rights in Africa.

NSAs have also played a positive humanitarian role in Africa and beyond. Important examples of such humanitarian roles are collective engagements to mount pressure on ANSAs to disarm, respect and adhere to national and global humanitarian norms (The Geneva Call). This includes advocacy for the ban on anti-personnel (AP) mines. These advocacy efforts of the NSAs have been widely acknowledged even by the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) as the advocacy not only involves benefits for humanitarian efforts but also peacebuilding and human security in Africa and around the world. NSA efforts thus promote the struggle for compliance with international humanitarian laws and policies for the ultimate

protection of human rights for the common good and continental development and for the world at large.

Poverty and Non-state Actors

Arguably, the single most important development problem facing Africa is poverty. Africa is virtually synonymous with poverty. Poverty has an overarching influence on every other development problem in Africa be it health, human rights or even armed conflict. Many ethnic militias and terrorists in Africa, for example, cite socio-economic marginalization (poverty) as their main reason for taking up arms against the state. Even though Africa is heavily endowed with resources (it is the world's second largest continent only second to Asia, with a huge population and extensive natural resources), it is the poorest continent. The single most definitive underdevelopment identifier in Africa is poverty. From Nigeria to Malawi, Ghana, Sudan, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Congo, Burundi, Mozambique and Uganda and across the continent, poverty is preponderant and successive efforts to eradicate it have largely failed over the years. Around 70% of Africans live in poverty. In some countries like Zimbabwe, the figure is higher. Many in Africa, unlike Europe and America, live in extreme poverty with poverty outrunning the population and available resources. Over the years, overseas development assistance to the continent has fueled corruption, violence/conflict and aggravated poverty and built super rich political class amidst extraordinarily poor populations (Easterly 2007).

While most African countries depend on primary products like crude oil for foreign exchange, the continual decline in global prices has meant poor foreign exchange and aggravated poverty. Unfortunately, income from such primary products over the past years of favorable high prices was never wisely invested but rather embezzled. Most Africans live in rural areas making the continental average rurality about 70%. Although urbanization is increasing in places like Nigeria and Egypt, rural dwelling holds sway generally across Africa—rural dwelling is as high as over 80% in Ethiopia for example. The case is no different in East and Southern Africa which have the highest numbers of rural poor in the world. Most rural dwellers are poor, depending on subsistence agriculture and unfortunately local and international development assistance to agriculture has continued to decline. Development problems like deforestation, climate change, land degradation, overgrazing and erosion have also reached crisis levels and this has aggravated poverty in Africa especially as it co-relates with other crises on the continent.

It is against this background that NSAs become key actors in the development marketplace of Africa. It is apparent that governments in Africa lack the capacity and will to end poverty on the continent without any external partnerships. Such external assistance and partnerships include direct funding, technical assistance and oversight. For instance, United States Landsat Earth observation satellites have collected data that will help reduce hunger and poverty in Africa. This has also assisted Africa in harnessing technology for environmental management and poverty

redress. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the UK Department for International Development (DFiD) have also been assisting African countries since the 1980s in the fight against poverty. The Swedish and Canadian governments through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) have also been at the forefront of NSAs' fight against poverty in Africa through capacity building, policy development, program funding, technical partnerships and experience sharing. This is in order to drive economic growth pragmatically and holistically and make governments work for everybody to reduce poverty in Africa through interventions in critical sectors of the countries. Such mutually reinforcing poverty-impacting areas include capacity building, climate change, agriculture, good governance, consolidated democracies and free and fair elections, health and natural resource management.

Local and international assistance and pressure in relation to poverty in Africa may have yielded some positive results over time. For example, poverty has responded slightly to interventions in Sub-Saharan Africa over the last two decades: while as many as about 56% of Sub-Saharan Africans lived in poverty in 1990 (by the less than $1.90 a day measure), this number declined slightly to 43% in 2012. This figure remained stable at slightly below 50% in 2016. Rapid population increase in the face of dwindling resources and increased unemployment, however, mean that difficult living conditions and poverty remain very high on the continent and in Sub-Saharan Africa particularly. Poverty remains a problem in Africa as more people are poor in Africa than in any other continent in the world.

Even when there have been some gains in education and health, gains in these sectors have not translated to widespread development, unlike in Brazil, India and China. While marked disparities exist in proportion and experiences of poverty in Africa, the high continental poverty burden overshadows pockets of poverty reduction success stories. For example, Ghana, has reduced its poverty burden by more than half in the last 26 years and Ethiopia, Rwanda, Botswana, Tanzania and Senegal have done well in reducing poverty by increasing agricultural investments and outputs as well as the adoption of some innovative poverty-reducing innovative policies like giving non-financial aid to poor families (an initiative borrowed from Brazil). An important point in this regard is that NSAs play an important role in these poverty-reducing efforts even though more is still needed from the NSAs to continue to fight poverty in Africa. Perhaps it can become history in the near future.

Armed Non-state Actors and Development in Africa

Issues around ANSAs are the most controversial in Africa as well as globally. ANSAs are major impediments to growth and development in Africa. From Al-Shabab (Kenya/Somalia) to Boko Haram (Nigeria), the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People – National Liberation Forces (Palipehutu-FNL) (Burundi), Alliance des Patriotes pour un Congo Libre et Souverain (APCLS) (Congo), Forces

Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) (Congo), Puntland State of Somalia (PSS) (Somalia) and so on, ANSAs have an impact on the peace and development infrastructure of the affected African states and the continent at large. Since development can only thrive in an atmosphere of peace, it is understandable that development remains elusive in spaces affected by ANSAs in Africa. Unfortunately, the development implications of ANSAs are wide ranging and critical. This is because local, national and international rules that regulate governments and other NSAs even in conflict situations appear not apply to ANSAs.

ANSAs often operate outside all laws and rules. They actually set their own rules outside the state and international frameworks to legitimize their interests and activism. Even when some ANSAs make efforts to comply with international human rights laws (IHLs) and cooperate with humanitarian organizations like the Geneva Call on humanitarian grounds in Africa, such cooperation is piecemeal, always concessionary and not enforceable as agreements are broken at will unlike when states are involved.

Many ANSAs take up arms against the state and deliberately undermine the state and state efforts to achieve group interests. While ANSAs fight the common enemy—the state—they also fight inwardly against themselves further making the implications and development deficits of ANSAs complicated and wide ranging. It is thus very difficult to regulate the destructive activities of ANSAs. For example, while it is possible to charge a government or president for crimes against humanity in cases of genocides and abuse of human rights of a group of people, it is practically impossible to apply such rules to ANSAs who do this regularly as a sign of their potency and capacity to undermine the state for their own interests. Destruction of lives and property are common objects of operations and negotiations of ANSAs. The more collateral the damage, the better for ANSAs and this has been demonstrated by the many ANSAs in Africa through hostage taking, suicide bombing, non-suicide bombing and random attacks on soft targets like crowded open markets, schools, hostels, shopping malls, stadiums and so on in Kenya, Somalia, Nigeria, Mali and Sudan among others. Unfortunately, African countries have not developed enough infrastructural and intelligence capacities to counteract ANSAs on the continent. This is why many of the ANSAs on the continent have continued to threaten development and have grown consistently in numbers and operations to the extent that some have graduated to the level of pledging allegiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to fortify, professionalize and globalize their operations.

As conflicts, wars and violence remain aggravated in Africa, poverty, hunger, internal displacement, ethnic cleansing and general underdevelopment hold sway on the continent. This is not surprising because conflicts, wars and violence are proven drivers of underdevelopment wherever they operate including the more developed systems. In Nigeria, for example, owing to the activities of Boko Haram, the northeastern part of the country, the epicenter of Boko Haram's operations, has one of the highest numbers of internally displaced persons in the world, as well as the most shut down schools, closed businesses, destroyed government infrastructure and abandoned private offices. Many of the local government areas and villages also

remain deserted. How can development thrive in such a sociopolitical space? Boko Haram, by implication, not only affect northeastern Nigeria but also the entire country in development terms and the whole sub-region of West Africa as a whole, as Niger, Chad and Cameroun also directly bear the brunt of the terrorist group's venom. The case is similar in Burundi for example. The number and proportion of people living in poverty increased by 43% (21–64%) in Burundi as a result of the 13 years of war (1993–2006) in the country.

While many African countries are rich in resources, including but not limited to crude oil, diamonds and gold, conflicts and terrorism have made it impossible for these nations to peacefully translate the benefits of these resources to development. The resources actually partly fuel the conflict, militancy and terrorism. The now popular cliché of 'blood diamond' and 'oil curse' are relevant to this analysis. While conflict and violence through ANSAs in Africa may not necessarily be sufficient factors for the underdevelopment of Africa, they are nevertheless important. Other factors include corruption, misgovernance, external connivance, poor value addition to primary products, declining global prices of resources and technological advancement in providing alternatives globally. Armed struggles and conflicts through NSAs are, however, necessary and important factors in Africa's underdevelopment. Armed conflicts in NSA domains have translated to comparatively less competitive and less attractive investment climates, high insecurity, lower life expectancy, illiteracy, higher malnutrition and poverty and increased domestic violence. Cases abound but aggravated examples of these situations can be found in Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and the South-Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia. Africa can now be described as a continent under siege to violence, terrorism and ANSAs. Based on recent events, it can be submitted that ANSAs are on the increase and terrorism is on the rise in Africa with about 200 violent attacks between 2015 and 2017. Interestingly, these attacks are well planned, very focused and determined, well-coordinated and increasingly sophisticated. ANSAs are also quick to claim responsibilities on the continent to show their invincibility and supremacy to the state in terms of capacity to deploy violence as the object of negotiation and statement issuance.

There has been consistent violent extremism in North and West Africa and the Sahel. Terrorist threats are severe in Sudan, Mali, Niger, and Libya and international terrorist groups (like al-Qaeda and the Islamic State) have continually made these African countries their battle ground on the continent thereby undermining the socioeconomic growth of the continent. The Niger Delta and the Horn of Africa also present a rising and consolidated case of local terrorism and violent extremism in Africa. Of interest here are Niger Delta Avengers (NDA), the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and the rise of Al-Shabaab in Somalia and beyond to Kenya and Ethiopia for example. Of note generally is the fact that these ANSAs are the products and consequences of poor governance, weak and irresponsible state and continental security systems and apparatuses, poor coordination and deployment of anti-terrorism policies and structures in Africa. The attitude of many African nations and leaders is that if it is not affecting my country and it is

not happening in my country, it is their problem not mine. This attitude is deep-rooted in Africa and it is affecting collective efforts against violence, terrorism and ANSAs on the continent. Until these problems are seen as collective ones to be collectively fought, they will proliferate and affect the continent as a whole. This is particularly so as most African countries lack the resources and capacity to fight ANSAs on their own. Collective, broad-based, multi-stakeholder approaches are thus key and the right way to go.

Many African countries also politicize and sensationalize the activities and threats of ANSAs. They erroneously describe such groups as 'disgruntled elements', 'political opponents', 'opposition groups', 'criminals', 'powerless troublemakers', 'mischief makers' and so on. Underrating ANSAs is the greatest undoing of African nations. It is these years of underestimation that have allowed most ANSAs to thrive and undermine development and states in Africa. Most African governments do not even take the time to understand the trajectories and drivers as well as root causes of ANSAs' extremism and violence. They disregard them and dispel their threats with a wave of hand yet the ANSAs remain potent. A good case in point is the case of Boko Haram in Nigeria. Boko Haram started as a simple, harmless, small religious group in Borno state Nigeria until it became violent, political and indoctrinated. When the sect was preaching radical Islam, political actors simply condoned this and used them for political gains against opponents. When it became national threats, the then President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan of Nigeria blatantly refused to recognize their destructive terrorist capabilities as he described them as a ploy of his northern opposition groups to blackmail his government. Not even the abduction of over 200 schoolgirls in Borno convinced the president of the serious threat posed by Boko Haram to Nigeria and Africa. He continued to make use of denial, politics and blame game narratives in relation to Boko Haram until the 2015 general elections. At that point, he suddenly realized how much damage his poor handling of the Boko Haram problem had done to his chances and his political credibility.

It is thus not surprising that President Goodluck Jonathan suffered a massive loss in the election to his rival. He became the very first sitting president to ever lose elections in the history of Nigeria. The two most important campaign points his opponent used to gather votes against him were promises to defeat Boko Haram and corruption—two extreme issues that were also traceable to terrorism in Nigeria. To check the proliferation of ANSAs in Africa and put the continent of the path to growth, it is important for states and continental/global stakeholders to check and counteract radical education, create more inclusive socioeconomic systems and deglamorize terrorism (NSAs). The media—both old and new—have a critical role to play in this regard. Long-term strategies must also be put in place to disarm and rehabilitate the ANSAs but both local/national and international development partners must be involved in this as no single African country has the capacity and resources to defeat violence, extremism and terrorism as core approaches of ANSAs on the continent. It is not until this is done that growth and development can be achieved in Africa.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined NSAs and their implications for development in Africa. The chapter triangulated academic and practice approaches to make the important subject covered relevant to broader users and increase its value across a broad spectrum of experts. The gap in the literature on Africa's development relative to the roles of NSAs was first engaged and a case made for the need to better factor NSAs into the development processes and narratives of Africa. The chapter also engaged the conceptualization and characterization of NSAs for a better understanding of their development trajectories and implications. Four critical areas of development were systematically adopted to demonstrate the dynamics and contours of the NSAs' role in the development marketplace of Africa. The areas adopted included health, human rights, poverty and humanitarian/general development of Africa. These four broad clusters of development indicators were presented in ways that demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of the NSAs so the implications are clearer.

This chapter, unlike many others, boldly engaged the two core types of NSA to have a clear and harmonized perspective and understanding of the NSAs as they affect development in Africa. From the foregoing, it can be maintained that NSAs are very important to Africa's development and they play uniquely critical roles. They often fill the gaps in development where governments have failed and they hold important positive promises and prospects for the development of Africa. More coordination, monitoring, evaluation and political will are, however, needed on the part of African states and international partners to make all NSAs more transparent, more accountable, more synergistic and more responsible. Only then will NSAs be able to contribute positively to the sustainable development of Africa by reducing threats, minimizing waste and optimizing strengths and opportunities on the African continent for the continent of Africa.

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