CHAPTER 5

Implications for Policymakers and the International Community

Reassessing Assumptions

Implementing a peace agreement is the next most important thing to its signing. While research indicates that civil wars eventually do end,\(^1\) many wars may need more than one peace process to finally reach a settlement. As the work by Hartzell, Hoddie, and Rothchild (2001) shows, the average peace agreement staved off renewed conflict for approximately forty-two months.\(^2\) Multiple peace agreements not only mean that the civil war continues but in some cases may intensify. This was the case in Angola and Rwanda; the violence after the failure of the peace agreements was worse than in the civil war preceding it.\(^3\) Therefore, it is important to get it right the first time.

The lack of focus on implementation processes leads to poor recommendations for the factors that bring stability to a country. In particular, little consideration in the academic literature and policy prescriptions is given to the changing relationship between the parties to an agreement as they proceed to implement the accord. While some recommendations for the post-accord period, such as work by Hartzell (1999), Paris (1997), and de Soto and del Castillo (1994), tend to focus on political and economic institutions to ensure political stability, such organizations may take years to develop. In the meantime, how a country starts on the road to stabilization remains unclear. The cases in this book reveal that the implementation of a peace agreement involves continued negotiation and compromise between the parties. This book has focused on the interactions between the entities involved in the implementation of the accord and how these interactions elicit particular responses that advance or hinder the implementation process.

Broadly, there are two common recommendations for the post-accord period. First, drawing from the conflict management literature, recommendations center on the adoption of power sharing strategies.\(^4\) Second, acknowledging the heavy involvement of the international community in mediating and managing peace accords and processes, scholars and practitioners make recommendations on the level of international involvement.\(^5\) These are reviewed briefly in this chapter.

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Advocating the use of power-sharing strategies is increasingly common. Almost all mediators strive to create some system by which all interested parties can have a stake in government after the settlement of the conflict. Usually, power sharing manifests itself through either territorial autonomy, governments of national unity, and proportional representation. But the manner in which these strategies determine the success of an implementation is inconclusive. In one of the few large-scale studies examining power-sharing strategies, while Hartzell (1999) shows that most agreements that institutionalize territorial, military, and economic participation eventually resulted in stable settlements, it does not shed any light on how a country navigates through the implementation period. Specifically, it gives no indication for the difficulty of an implementation of a peace agreement, the dangers that may derail it, or the role that regional entities or the larger international community may play in ensuring its success. In a follow-up study by Hartzell, Hoddie, and Rothchild (2001), territorial autonomy is shown to result in stable settlements. Again, it is not clear which mechanisms are at work to provide this stability.

The case studies in this book display important characteristics that are at odds with the power sharing advocates. Mozambique is widely hailed as a success, but its peace agreement did not make power sharing provisions. Notably, Chissano was clear about not wanting a government of national unity even as the international community pressured him to consider one.6 Angola offers a stronger contradiction. Supposedly, the lesson from the failure of the Bicesse Accords was the lack of power sharing.7 As a result, the Lusaka Protocol was more robust, with explicit power sharing provisions between the government and UNITA.8 Yet, the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol failed. Finally, during the course of Liberia’s sixteen peace accords, power sharing was included beginning with the Cotonou Accord in 1993, the twelfth peace agreement.9 Still, there had been a fragile peace with some of the previous accords. Furthermore, the Cotonou Accord itself did not bring lasting peace.

The experiences of Liberia and Angola suggest that while a peace agreement may contain provisions for institutions and other governing structures, these future promises do not necessarily seem to factor into whether a faction leader may decide to continue or to stall an implementation process. On the other hand, Mozambique’s results suggest that factors besides an explicit position in government may sustain a party’s interest in advancing the implementation of a peace accord.

Besides the provision for a range of power-sharing mechanisms, another common prescription is the involvement of the international community. There are two main recommendations advanced in the policy and academic communities: the international community must significantly intervene and it should be united. As expressed by Boutros-Ghali (1992), the international community is expected to provide resources to bring stability to the post-conflict period.10 From case studies, Hampson (1996) concludes that those with a greater amount of involvement by the international community