East Africa Learning Hub on Governance, Peacebuilding, and Local Faith Actors

1. Background

The [Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities](#) (JLI) is a global network of researchers, practitioners, and local faith actors, who share a commitment to advancing evidence on the roles and contributions of local faith actors in humanitarian and development action.

Since its inception in 2012, JLI has founded numerous global [Learning Hubs](#), convening a transdisciplinary collective of actors from around the world, to address evidence gaps on issues of common interest – such as [Gender Based Violence](#), [Ending Violence Against Children](#), [Refugees and Forced Migration](#), and [Anti-Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery](#).

In 2020, JLI made a strategic decision to focus its efforts on challenging the unequal power dynamics that we see manifesting in the way evidence is used and created globally. JLI's [Fair & Equitable Initiative](#) is the organisation's response to these power imbalances in the humanitarian and development sector. The Initiative seeks to shift power, resources and leadership to local, national, and regional levels, by creating and support new Regional Learning Hubs.

Regional Hubs would be transdisciplinary, horizontal learning communities, allowing for local, national, and regional actors to **define** and **pursue** their own evidence agendas.

The East Africa Learning Hub was jointly founded by JLI with:

- [TAABCO](#), a research and development consultancy based in Nairobi, Kenya
- [Peacemaker Corps Foundation Kenya](#)
- [Center for Media, Democracy, Peace and Security](#)

The East Africa Hub was launched in April 2022, following a series of Listening Dialogues in **Kenya, Uganda** and **Tanzania**, in which relevant institutions and individuals were invited to reflect on the state of the evidence in the region, and collectively identify a way forward for the East Africa Hub.

2. Vision and Values

The Hub will focus on the broad themes of **Governance, Peacebuilding, and Local Faith Actors**. However, this is subject to change, depending on the needs, preferences and priorities of the Hub members.

The vision of the East Africa Learning Hub is as follows:

> *The creation of a self-sustaining, locally-rooted, and regionally-led East Africa Learning Hub on Governance, Peacebuilding, and Local Faith Actors.*
>
> *The East Africa Learning Hub would be a **transdisciplinary collective learning space** where **researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and local faith actors** in the region could **address research gaps in the region, conduct original research,** as well as **share best practice and evidence** from their experiences.*
>
> *The East Africa Learning Hub would **define and pursue its own evidence agenda**, with support from the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities (JLI), TAABCO, Peacemaker Corps Foundation Kenya, and the Center for Media, Democracy, Peace and Security.*

The East Africa Learning Hub would aim to be a **fair** and **equitable** space, which aims to:

- reach out beyond traditional and dominant international humanitarian and development actors in the region.
- be led by local faith and non-faith actors, researchers, policy makers, and humanitarian and development actors.
- be inclusive, accessible - allowing for differences in languages, communication styles, abilities, and technology, and ensuring the participation of groups that are often excluded from such spaces.

3. Objectives

To begin with, the East Africa Joint Learning Hub would engage with individuals, organisations and communities from the following East African countries: **Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania**

By Years 2-3, the Hub can look to engage with the **broader East Africa Region**, including Burundi, Ethiopia, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The Hub would seek to:
- Map **existing evidence and research** relating to governance, peacebuilding, and local faith actors in the East Africa Region
- Map **institutions**, **individuals**, and **activities** that would be of relevance to the Hub
- Identify **gaps in knowledge** and epistemic positions on faith actors, to decolonise governance and peacebuilding in East Africa
- **Generate locally-led evidence** that serves the knowledge and practice needs of actors in the East Africa region, by:
    ○ Conducting further research to address gaps in the knowledge
    ○ Support and train local faith actors to document their own work
    ○ Challenging Western-centric and colonial methods of academic knowledge creation, by supporting and amplifying existing forms of documentation and creative evidence creation in local communities.
- Create **feedback mechanisms** whereby local actors and communities are able to respond to and utilise evidence generated about the East Africa region
- Arrive at practical actionable recommendations in these areas for use in programmes and policy in the region, and which JLI members would be encouraged to implement in their own organisations

The Hub will work alongside other JLI Hubs to ensure complementarity.

4. Activities & Timeline

The East Africa Learning Hub launched in April 2022. The expected stages of the Hub's development are as follows (but may be subject to change):

1. **Consultation and convening of the group:** Bring together academics, researchers, policy makers, local faith actors, and practitioners to leverage joint expertise to overcome evidence gaps re: governance, peacebuilding and local faith actors in East Africa.
2. **Scoping:** A review will be conducted of existing evidence on 'what is out there' and 'what is being done' with regards to relevant thematic sub areas. A Scoping study, annotated bibliography and summary brief will be produced. This will be led by the Academic Co-Chair of the Hub with the active involvement of the other Co Chair and Hub Members. This would lead to outlining a number of questions and areas where further research needs to be conducted.
3. **Learning and sharing:** Ongoing learning and sharing of existing analysis, research, debates and evidence relating to key thematic areas and trends within the Hub, to encourage collective learning, dialogue and influence and identify future opportunities for collaboration.
4. **Research & Practice:** based on questions and gaps identified in the Scoping phase, funding would be sought for specific projects - both research focused and practice focused. These could include, for example, pilot programmes, training, academic research, creative evidence creation etc. The Hub's role will be to identify funding opportunities and encourage Hub members to do the same so that research gaps can be addressed. The Hub may also link members from academia, policy and practice in research collaborations, as other JLI Hubs have done in the past.
5. **Publication and Dissemination:** The policy and practice implications of the research and practice would be fed back as learning to members and participating communities, to digest

internally, further other collaboration, and be used in advocacy to wider policy, practitioner and academic communities across the region. The broader implications of the research would also be shared widely with interested public audiences, including through media outputs, contributions to online fora, and relevant public events.

6. **Hub sustainability:** It is anticipated that the Hub would help form partnerships and relationships that would endure beyond its active collaboration. Leaders and members will be expected to commit to active participation during the initial start up and scoping. Learning Hubs on average last from 12 months to four years. If members so wished, discussions can occur about how to continue such a platform beyond its JLI lifespan.

The proposed timeline of activities for the Hub for 2022-2023 are as follows (these may be subject to change depending on funding, availability, and projects):

<u>Quarterly Regional Zoom Hub Meetings</u> - Discussing Hub plans and progress - Presenting and discussing evidence that arises through Scoping Study - Hub Members presenting their own activities as case studies - Planning for training and events with local faith communities	<u>Responsibilities:</u> - Hub Chairs convene and facilitate - All Hub Members attend and contribute feedback, ideas, or content where requested - JLI provide technical support where needed	June 2022, September 2022, December 2022, March 2023, June 2023, September 2023, December 2023
<u>Annual Regional Physical Hub Meetings</u> - Discuss results of Scoping Study / activities of the past year, and the way forward / plans for the next year	<u>Responsibilities:</u> - Hub Chairs convene and facilitate - All Hub Members attend and contribute feedback, ideas, or content where requested - JLI provide technical support where needed	November 2022 November 2023
<u>Scoping Study</u> - Mapping of existing evidence, literature, case studies etc. - Identification of evidence gaps and research and practice needs	<u>Responsibilities:</u> - Academic Co-Chair lead - JLI & TAABCO provide technical support where needed - Academic Co-Chair proactively engages Hub membership throughout the Scoping Study process - Hub Members actively	May 2022 - Feb 2023

	participates in shaping the Scoping Study through providing feedback on plans, attending meetings to review progress, and contributing case studies or content where requested - All stakeholders share responsibility for dissemination of final report i.e. through their own networks, or amplifying any launch events or activities	
Webinar Series - 1-3 Webinars for East Africa audience and global audience highlighting findings of the East Africa Scoping Study, presenting case studies on governance, peacebuilding and local faith actors, communication vision for the East Africa Hub - Potential to be available in different languages	Responsibilities: - Hub Members collectively identify themes,topics, and suggest speakers for Webinar(s). - JLI supports Hub Members and Hub Chairs in technical aspects of delivering Webinar(s) - JLI & Hub Chairs prepare marketing materials and follow up reports for Webinar(s) - All Hub Members actively promote Webinar(s) to ensure widespread attendance and engagement	Oct 2022 - Mar 2023
TBC: Documentation & Evidence Training for Local Actors (Faith & Non-Faith) - Training local actors on how to better document their work for evidence creation - Training local actors on how to better utilise evidence to inform their work	Responsibilities: - Hub Members identify spaces and participants for training - Hub Chairs develop training programme with active support and engagement from JLI and Hub Members	Jan 2023 - June 2023
Funding - Securing funding to support research and activities	Responsibilities: - JLI and Hub Chairs lead in funding applications - All Hub Members share	Ongoing

	relevant funding opportunities with the group	
<u>Communication</u> Communicating activities of the Hub through: - Blogs - Academic Literature - Books - Video - Webinars (see above) - Social Media	<u>Responsibilities:</u> - Hub Chairs lead in coordinating and creating communication outputs for the Hub overall - JLI and Hub Chairs to support Hub Members in creating and disseminating their own communication outputs	Ongoing
<u>TBC: Policy & Practice Roundtable</u> - Inviting policy makers and practitioners from around East Africa to present evidence, learnings, and policy recommendations from the Hub	<u>Responsibilities:</u> - Hub Chairs coordinate and facilitate Policy & Practice Roundtable - JLI provide technical support - Hub Members support Hub Chairs in outreach and content planning for Roundtable	October 2023
<u>TBC: Annual Public Outreach Activities on Governance, Peacebuilding and Local Faith Actors (Peace Activation)</u> through Music, Art and Cultural Strategies I.e Music, Art & Cultural Festival for Peace (Rotational; Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania)	<u>Responsibilities:</u> - Hub Members identify spaces, participants and activities for Public Outreach - Hub Chairs coordinate and facilitate Public Outreach, or support key Hub Members in doing so - JLI provide technical support	October 2nd 2022 Kenya October 2nd 2023 Tanzania

5. Leadership

The convening co-chairs of the East Africa Learning Hub on Governance, Peacebuilding and Local Faith Actors are:

- John Okanga, Director and CEO, Taabco (Practitioner Co-Chair)
- Prof. Fredrick Ogenga, President and CEO, The Peacemaker Corps Foundation Kenya and Director, Center for Media Democracy, Peace and Security (Academic Co-Chair)

The Hub will also appoint leading organisations or individuals to represent Uganda and Tanzania.

Expectations of Co-Chairs

The Hub chairs will:

- Identify, recruit, and engage a diverse and relevant Hub membership
- Set the strategic goals and direction for the Hub, with the participation of Hub members
- Guide the development and production of a Scoping paper
- Participate in efforts to secure funding for the Hub activities
- Lead an active learning and sharing community amongst the Hub on an ongoing basis, facilitating exchanges of information encouraging members to contribute to the knowledge base and activities of the Hub
- Provide leadership for any research pieces and project activities that emerge from the hub.
- Build and hold key strategic relationships in the region to benefit and forward the Hub's activities (e.g. in government, media, or civil society)
- Champion the dissemination and communication of Hub research and activies
- Participate in periodic meetings with JLI staff and JLI Network members to provide updates on Hub activities and ensure complementarity where possible
- Lead and/or facilitate communication of Hub activities e.g. through articles, blogs, books, policy briefings, events, webinars, video, social media

6. Membership

Membership of the East Africa Learning Hub on Governance, Peacebuilding and Local Faith Actors is open to any academic, researcher, practitioner, policy maker, and faith actor working in Kenya, Uganda or Tanzania on issues relating to faith, governance and peacebuilding.

It aims to have members representing expertise in a diverse cross section of different faith identities, genders, nationalities, ages, and abilities. A full list of members at the time of launching can be found in Annex I.

Expectations of Members

Learning Hub members will participate as both holders and seekers of evidence and will be expected to participate actively in the shaping of the Hub itself, including the development of research questions, the process of evidence gathering, and providing oversight and contributions to the preparation and editing of the Scoping Report.

Members will:

- Join the East Africa Learning Hub through the [registration form on JLI's website](#).
- Actively participate in shaping the East Africa Hub's strategic focus, activities, and research questions
- Contribute evidence and case studies to the Hub Scoping Study
- Attend Hub meetings and events, and respond to communications and requests by Hub Leadership
- Actively participate in knowledge exchange during Hub meetings, by sharing existing learning on key thematic areas (studies, reports, case studies, including examples of their own work

etc.) and engage with the insights shared by other members.
- Provide feedback on scoping study, policy briefs, papers, talking points and powerpoint presentations summarizing the best evidence from the Hub.
- Seek opportunities to present the Hub's work and support the dissemination of the evidence produced by the Hub to appropriate policy makers, networks, professional gatherings, journals and conferences
- Where necessary, support the Hub Leadership and JLI in seeking funding for Hub activities

Hub Member Benefits
- Access to latest evidence
- Ongoing regional learning and practice community for presenting own work and learning from others
- New cross-sector collaborations and partnerships
- Useful communications tools which can be adapted and branded to own work

7. JLI Role

JLI, through its Fair & Equitable Coordinator, will provide support to the East Africa Learning Hub. Where possible, JLI will also provide limited financial support for Hub core funds and research assistance for the Scoping report.

Key expectations of JLI / Fair & Equitable Coordinator:
- Support Co-Chairs in communicating with and engaging Hub members (e.g. in planning meetings, communicating requests for evidence or feedback on activities)
- Support Co-Chairs in onboarding new Hub members
- Support Co-Chairs in developing communication outputs for the Hubs e.g. presentations, webinars, articles, etc.
- Communicate Hub activities to the wider JLI Leadership and JLI Network
- Manage and ensure accessibility of web resources and dissemination to members and JLI network
- Assist with research funding applications, including serving as financial intermediary where useful

Annex I: Participating Members of the East Africa Learning Hub (at time of launch: April 2022)

1. Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities
2. TAABCO
3. Peacemaker Corps Foundation Kenya
4. Centre for Media, Democracy, Peace, and Security
5. Better World Uganda

6. Building East Africa Community Network (BEACON)
7. CamelBell Limited
8. SEETO Kenya
9. Muslim Centre for Peace & Reconciliation
10. Arigatou International
11. Institute for Inter-religious Dialogue and Islamic Studies (IRDIS)
12. Rural Women Peace Link
13. University of Nairobi Enterprises Services (UNES)
14. Usawa Platform
15. Uganda Joint Christian Council
16. Forum for International Cooperation
17. Rongo University
18. St Paul's University
19. Equity Voice
20. Free Pentecostal Fellowship in Kenya
21. Dialogue Reference Group
22. Muslim Centre for Peace & Reconciliation
23. Kenyatta University
24. Institute for Inter-religious Dialogue and Islamic Studies (IRDIS)
25. Islamic Relief East Africa
26. Sustainable Participatory Intervention for Development (SPAIDE)
27. University of Dar es Salaam - Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies
28. Save the Children
29. Jhpiego Uganda
30. St. Simon Peter's Vocational Training Centre
31. Uganda Kolping Society
32. Hoima Moslem Community
33. Anglican Church of Uganda
34. Window International
35. Independent Consultant
36. Kazi Njema News
37. Fredo Media Services
38. Hoima Union of Dissabled Persons
39. Hoima District Farmers Association
40. Navigators of Development Association
41. Uganda Refugee Employment Promotion Project
42. Hoima Network of Child Rights Clubs
43. Better World Uganda
44. Bunyoro Kitara Diocese
45. Enabel Uganda
46. AVSI International

47. Jamii Integrated Development Initiative (JIDI)

Annex II: Guiding Research Questions for East Africa Learning Hub (subject to change)

1. What is the historiography of African /pan-African epistemic positions when it comes to faith actors, peacebuilding and governance in East Africa?
2. What are the emerging gaps in discourses on governance and peacebuilding between faith actors, practitioners and academia when applying the ideal definition of peace as the ideological slate of reference and encouraging theoretical reflections on peacebuilding and governance issues in East Africa?
3. Which criticisms are leveled on faith actors regarding their roles in governance, development and peacebuilding in East Africa?
4. How can constructive voices from the faith community be appraised to enable documentation of their voices and those of the local community in policy debates in East Africa?
5. To what extent can the capacity of local faith actors and religious leaders to conduct research be built and their voices amplified in order to appreciate communities as reservoirs of knowledge?
6. Which innovative and creative approaches to governance, development and peacebuilding that leverage on technology, music, arts, and cultural strategies working with local faith actors, can be used as avenues for creating awareness, making governance, development and peacebuilding messaging accessible and actionable in East Africa?
7. What feedback and follow-up mechanism can be established after research done to build trust with local communities in East Africa?