Role of the Inter-religious Council of Addis Ababa in Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution

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1. Introduction

Religion is a positive force for peacebuilding and preventing violent extremism (PVE). Indeed, religious institutions and actors play an important role in building peace yet underutilise instruments in the prevention and resolution of violent extremisms. Although the role of religious institutions in peacebuilding has been the focus of researchers and scholars in recent times, in most cases where this subject has been investigated, the research has not been effectively organised to capture institutions' role in peacebuilding. Only a few research studies focus on the peacebuilding process from religious dimensions. Combining new theoretical perspectives on building peace and fieldwork, this study investigates the role of interreligious peacebuilding perception and practice in the Inter-religious Council of Addis Ababa (IRCAA), Ethiopia. It specifically examines the IRCAA's activities, outcomes and processes, as well as the challenges and opportunities for peacebuilding in Addis Ababa. The study investigates the role of religious institutions in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in light of the challenges and opportunities by examining the case of the IRCAA.

The research topic is relevant to several stakeholders, including the IRCAA, in many ways. Firstly, this subject has not been effectively researched and well organised. Many researchers have not fully examined the role of religious organisations in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the Addis Ababa context. Secondly, this research will be shared and documented for the IRCAA office and member organisations. In addition, the Joint Learning Initiatives will use this material for further engagement in Ethiopia. Thus, the research contributes to filling gaps in existing bodies of knowledge. Therefore, it serves as a resource for the IRCAA's effective and sustainable peacebuilding efforts. In addition, suggestions and recommendations will be made about how to reduce the challenges and strengthen the opportunities to promote peacebuilding that can lead to positive peace in the community.

Keywords: *Peacebuilding, Conflict resolution, Inter-religious Council of Addis Ababa, Prevention of violent extremism, PVE*

2. Literature review

2.1. The concept of peacebuilding

Traditionally, the term peace is the absence of war. This concept is too different from the modern definition of peace. Modern views have a wider meaning, encompassing the establishment of developments that ensure and foster positive human conditions because long-lasting peace requires reforming the fundamental societal institutions that cause conflict and war (Jeong, 2005).

The term "peacebuilding" is vague and can refer to a wide range of activities. It became popular following the proclamation of Boutros Boutros-Ghali, then-Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his 1992 Agenda for Peace (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). Several authors and organisations define it, and the techniques used to achieve it, differently. According to the United Nations Agenda for Peace, peacebuilding encompasses a wide range of activities related to reconciliation, capacity-building and societal transformation (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). It requires a wide range of approaches, processes and phases to transform governance models and create equal opportunities.

Lederach (1997) described peacebuilding as all the efforts employed to transform the underlying structural, cultural and relational roots of violent conflict. It could be the tool used to address the causes. Peacebuilding is a comprehensive, continuing process that is bottom-up but also addresses society at all levels, from the grassroots to the middle-level actors to the national and international levels (Lederach, 1997). It is transformative of unequal relations towards more collaborative and democratic relations. Therefore, peacebuilding is also a sociopolitical process through which religious institutions and actors strongly position themselves to find voice, legitimacy and agency to deploy religious resources for peace (Lederach, 1997).

Besides the above definitions, peacebuilding occurs before conflict and violence happen. It is a sustainable way of life. Through establishing effective institutions for conflict resolution and promoting a "culture of peace", tensions and conflicts can be resolved. It is directed at restoring positive peace based on equality, equity, justice and good relationships. Therefore, the potential or root causes of the conflicts will be addressed. In this way, it attempts to establish societal peace to reduce the possibility of future violence and conflicts (Lederach, 1997).

2.2. Religion in peacebuilding

In the peacebuilding process, religion is becoming a renewed force that is recognised as a significant factor in modern social interactions (Haynes, 2007). Correspondingly, religious values play an important role in shaping both the private and public spheres. This includes building peace, resolving conflict and creating harmony. In a divided society, religion and religious actors have the power to bring stability and togetherness to communities divided by conflicts. Therefore, religion and interreligious interaction have the power to teach and nurture attitudes of forgiveness, unity and reconciliation between followers and society. Accordingly, these powers play a significant role in building peace

among conflicted communities. Therefore, throughout the world, religion and religious actors have played an important role in transforming conflicts into peaceful situations, including in East Germany, Poland and the Philippines (Appleby, 2008).

In Africa, there have been success stories of religious figures and organisations mediating and peacemaking. For instance, Sudan's short-lived 1972 Addis Ababa Peace Agreement was mediated by the World Council of Churches and the All Africa Conference of Churches[1] (Addis Ababa Agreement, 2020). In addition, several South African churches were at the forefront of the anti-apartheid movement and the peaceful transition to democracy (Iyi, 2014). The most interesting story is Mozambique's civil war that ended in 1992 thanks to mediation by the Rome-based Community of Sant'Egidio (Smock, 2006). Therefore, all major religions have a vital role in promoting and sustaining peace.

Religion appears to be related to conflict and violence in many parts of Africa (Essien, 2014). Most conflicts in Africa are multifaceted and complex. Several conflicts and civil wars have occurred in the region, and they continue to do so. However, some efforts to manage and resolve them are inconsistent. Religion and religious actors have played a positive, although sometimes only partially successful, role in helping to reconcile and resolve previously warring communities in Nigeria, Mozambique, South Sudan, Sudan and other Sub-Saharan countries (Haynes, 2007). On the more positive side, religion in Africa maintains peace in some parts of the continent. However, approaches to peacebuilding do not provide a complete solution; but rather a complement to the formal institution of peacebuilding productively (Smock, 2006). Their peacebuilding approaches have had a wide range of positive consequences for the development of the continent. They have demanded more effective conflict resolution and peacebuilding initiatives on the continent, particularly in the Horn of Africa.

In Ethiopia, religious institutions have a significant and important role in peacebuilding and conflict resolution (Karbo, 2013). While the formal interreligious relations of Addis Ababa peacebuilding and conflict management institutions may appear strong, their ability is very limited, and ties between different stakeholders may impede cooperation. These stakeholders, along with religious institutions, can also help by providing conflict early warnings, functioning as moral agents in times of violence and conflict, and facilitating advocacy for negotiation and mediation (Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia, 2012). Religion has the potential to be a key source of information and a unique resource for preventing and addressing the core causes of violence and conflict in society (Zerihun, 2013). Religion may be a valuable asset in creating peace and resolving conflicts that go beyond traditional diplomacy. This is because religion and religious actors have a broad audience to influence, making religion an ideal vehicle for promoting peaceful cooperation (Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia, 2020).

Accordingly, the dynamism of both secular and interreligious conflict transformation and peacebuilding mechanisms is one of the country's most pressing societal challenges. Several religious groups have lived peacefully alongside one another for decades. The

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[1] The Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus are both members of the World Council of Churches and the All Africa Conference of Churches.

country's largest religious denominations are Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism and other Indigenous religions. The Central Statistics Agency of Ethiopia reported that 43.5% of the population belongs to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (a Coptic Church), 33.9% are Muslims, less than 2% are Catholic, 18.6% are Protestant, and 2.6% are followers of a traditional religion or other religion (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Population Census Commission, 2008). In addition, because of globalisation, new religions like Bahai, Buddhism, Hinduism and other contemporary religions have been introduced to the country.

The IRCAA consists of several religious denominations and is represented at the federal, regional and district levels. The Council membership includes seven major religious denominations: the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council, the Ethiopian Catholic Church, the Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia, the Seventh Day Adventist Church, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and the Ethiopian Kale Hiwot Church (IRCAA, 2018). These institutions represent over 95% of the total population (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Population Census Commission, 2008). The Council was established in 2010 with a vision "to develop religious freedom and equality based on peace, love and tolerance, which will be mutually beneficial to all" (IRCAA, 2018). It promotes interreligious harmony and peacebuilding as the primary objectives at the Addis Ababa level. In light of this, the researcher expected this study to address specific questions and improve the understanding of the subject. The research looks systematically at the role of religious institutions in peacebuilding. It examines their perceptions and participation in light of the challenges and opportunities by focusing on the case of the IRCAA.

3. Methodology

The research will predominantly use qualitative research methods. Besides the in-depth interviews, observation and attendance of IRCAA meetings could be a way to get more accurate information during the data-collection stage. As a result, purely purposive techniques will select the key informants for interview considering their experience, relevance to the topics and understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the role of religious institutions in building peace. Furthermore, the researcher chooses and reviews secondary documents to understand the nature of the data, which helps to gather opinions and experiences. Therefore, the decision to use a qualitative approach will be significant in assessing attitudes, views, understanding and knowledge about responding to and implementing the subject area questions in the Addis Ababa context.

4. Findings and discussions

The findings of this study are presented in major subsections in relation to the background and functions of the IRCAA, peacebuilding perception and practice in the IRCAA, understanding of PVE and cooperation among stakeholders in peacebuilding, including challenges and opportunities.

4.1. Background, functions and activities of the Inter-Religious Council of Addis Ababa

The following background information was gained from the IRCAA's public officer:

IRCAA membership consists of seven major religious denominations registered under the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia. The Council has been represented at the federal and district levels since 2010. The IRCAA's vision is to promote peace and tolerance that will contribute to the stability of the city and the country regardless of religious denomination.

The Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia (2020) confirmed this: "IRCAA was established in 2010 to bring together all religious leaders by joining hands and hearts around common interests at the national and sovereign level". In line with the above findings, a peace practitioner who serves in the IRCAA made the following comment:

IRCAA member organisations believe that all are one human family regardless of religion and ethnicity. Respected religious leaders function as models of peace both over religious and non-religious matters. Most religious institutions and actors share the same values and common ground. These religious sects believe in loving one another regardless of divisions in religion or ethnicity and teach this to their followers, promoting peace and justice in the fragmented society.

These religious groups support the message of peace through various religious beliefs and sacred teachings that shape the action of their followers. The major underlying aim is to

advocate for peaceful coexistence. Their followers and members are expected to nurture a culture of peace (Tarimo, 2002).

An informant, who is an IRCAA board member, added:

> The Federal State of Addis Ababa is one of the sub-councils of the Inter-religious Council and cascades its structure to the sub-city and *woreda* levels. The Council has organised many consultative and experience-sharing workshops, training of trainers and peacebuilding dialogue forums with the participation of religious leaders, faith-based organisations, government officials and other stakeholders on several issues. Through these workshops, the awareness of the participants has increased. Religious leaders and actors have shown a keen interest in teaching peacebuilding and conflict transformation education alongside spiritual preaching on a weekly or monthly basis.

In line with this, Panggabean (2004) emphasised that religious organisations and leaders play a preventive role by mobilising community discussions, problem-solving workshops and training in peacebuilding and conflict transformation skills. He further highlighted that they organise discussion and training programmes to combat conflict within society and serve a conflict prevention function through direct involvement in a mediating role. Therefore, the role of religious leaders and religious institutions similar to the IRCAA in this context is enormous.

An analogous remark from another IRCAA board member discussed the major activities and areas of interests of the IRCAA designed in the framework of the strategic plan:

> The major activities are enhancing youth and women's involvement in peacebuilding endeavours; promoting peace education through transforming conflicts (working to prevent conflicts); advancing peace by promoting just and harmonious societies (promoting peace education); and conducting different dialogue forums at the federal level on peace and advocacy on federal and regional agendas.

Drawing on these various education resources, religions also have a special role in the national peacebuilding process and efforts. Religious institutions and leaders in Ethiopia possess and boast a wealth of resources for peace, including Holy Scriptures, credibility with the people, sacred teaching, cultural practices and rich experience (Hagos, 2019). Hagos (2019) added that religious institutions and leaders also have access to social infrastructures that can provide vital foundations for peace and peaceful coexistence from which lessons can be learned. Based on this understanding, Ethiopia needs religious institutions and leaders to develop knowledge and skills for peacebuilding and conflict resolution from the grassroots to the top levels of society. Therefore, a religion-based approach to building peace and transforming conflict based on grassroots experiences involves focusing on the complex web of interconnected conflict root causes.

4.2. Peacebuilding perception and practice in the Inter-religious Council of Addis Ababa

4.2.1. Peacebuilding perception in the Inter-religious Council of Addis Ababa

The perception and teaching of peace reveal spiritual and moral formulations that support peacebuilding and reconciliation, as demonstrated by the following response from an IRCAA board member:

> The word 'Shalom' in Hebrew or 'Selam' in Muslim is crucial in both the Christian and Muslim world and has the same meaning: 'Peace'. This means living the fullness of life, unity, good relationships, joy, well-being, harmony, success, blessedness and richness. It helps an individual to lead a peaceful life, be an instrument of their God and serve the purpose of God for society. Religious members are peacemakers as workers of peace, messengers of peace and men/women of peace. Therefore, for most religious followers, peace teaching starts from within, and it is mandatory to live at peace with all human beings and God's creations.

Another IRCAA board member echoed this:

> The IRCAA works with communities more exposed to intersecting risks. Because of this, religious institutions and figures use the principles of religious reconciliation and peace/peacebuilding from the Bible or Quran to guide their followers. All teachings order their followers to respect human beings regardless of any differences and obey them to live in harmony. None of the religions allows the harming of human beings, and all treat every human being equally regardless of race, ethnicity or religion. Therefore, the IRCAA reaches out to all communities, regardless of their religious beliefs, without discrimination.

Accordingly, another IRCAA board member said the following regarding teaching peace:

> Religion played a significant role in preventing a rise in violence between the two groups through discussion and reconciliation, and they insisted the local leaders restore and assure peaceful coexistence. Religion promotes discussions and dialogues, carrying significant weight to bring peace by setting aside differences in the political realm. Religious organisations have been an instrument of peace and played a major role in bringing peace between opposed parties to resolve their problems through advocacy activities.

In line with the response, religious institutions and figures act as a third party, a bridge between the community and the government. They advocate for the voiceless, mediate in case of disagreement and play an active role in conflict resolution. Karbo (2013) discussed similar findings and highly credited the role of religious institutions in Ethiopia, where divisions are getting heated. He states that it is fundamental to take religious actors and

figures to create social cohesion and transform previously divided societies. Religious institutions and leaders have significance within communities, both at the federal and regional levels, to provide a political and social voice for the voiceless. He added that they are powerful figures capable of influencing violent or divisive behaviour, promoting peacebuilding and rebuilding social relations through reconciliation (Karbo, 2013). Therefore, the role of religion and leaders was considered as effective in bridging divided communities and effectively mobilising people towards peace at times of violence and conflict.

4.2.2. Peacebuilding practice in the Inter-religious Council of Addis Ababa

Along with community peace dialogues and discussions, religious institutions facilitate and conduct supportive peacemaking activities between conflicted communities. This is demonstrated by an IRCAA board member informant:

> Religious actors and figures from all members of the IRCAA used to open with prayer offers according to their traditions when eating together. They become role models. They discuss peace and reconciliation from the perspective of the Bible or Qurans. In general, they also fast and provide advice to conflicting parties, later moving on to condemnation and abomination.

More information gathered during the interview shows that the IRCAA promotes peacebuilding approaches in their peacemaking environments. In line with this, an IRCAA board member shared the following with regard to conflict resolution and peacebuilding cooperation with Federal Police Commission police officers:

> The primary purpose of police officers is to keep the peace and stability of the country together with civilians, including religious leaders and actors. Nevertheless, we took part in dispute resolution and made peace with religious leaders and actors, who were established figures at the grassroots to the district, sub-city and city levels from each of the seven religious organisations of the IRCAA. These groups include youth and women. Therefore, together with the police officers, we resolve disputes or conflicts using various techniques and approaches.

One good example of religious leaders and actors practising and taking part in peacebuilding and conflict resolution is the case of the pre-conflict between the National and Tigray regional government, as confirmed by an IRCAA youth committee member:

> The conflict between the national government led by the Prosperity Party, based in Addis Ababa, and the regional government led by the Tigray People's Liberation Front had been rising for years. Religion and religious actors have played an increasing role in the dynamics before and after conflicts in Addis Ababa and beyond. Religion can evoke deep sensitivities and profound historical memories. Pre-conflict, the role of IRCAA leaders is crucial in mediating the crisis between the Prosperity Party and Tigray People's

Liberation Front. Religious institutions invite all political parties to resolve their differences through dialogue and discussions. The Council tried such initiatives, which are especially encouraged to resolve such political problems in Ethiopia.

In 2020, the Voice of America Amharic News service also reported that "The discussion was about peace". However, one party imposed a precondition, and the other refused to negotiate. As a result, the Council's many attempts at negotiation were unsuccessful (Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia, 2021).

Coward and Smith (2004) use the phrase religious peacemaking and peacebuilding conducted by religious institutions and leaders to refer to various events that address and avert deadly disputes and violence and establish social and political systems marked by a non-violence ethos and tolerance. In these positions, religious leaders and actors are usually overlooked, to the detriment of the peace process (Coward and Smith, 2004). This is where the use of religious figures and institutions comes into play. Marshall (2007) stated that religion is an important instrument in disputes and social unrest, and it often needs to include being part of the solution during peacemaking and peacebuilding times.

Furthermore, Tarekegn (2008) mentioned that religion is significant and provides a powerful resource for peace and the transformation of conflict in the country. From the result, the researcher can interpret that most religious institutions and leaders have excellent peacebuilding participation. Rasul (2009) asserted that religious institutions and leaders create relevant approaches and strategies in peacebuilding and conflict management processes and are open-minded to work together with other stakeholders to transform conflicts into peacebuilding processes and strategies. In addition, religious institutions have influence in decisions making and are greatly involved in peacebuilding and conflict resolution at the district, federal and regional levels. Therefore, it is important to include religious leaders in peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes regardless of their religious denomination.

The IRCAA is working with different stakeholders, including the Ministry of Peace (MOP). The MOP is a government body focused on maintaining peace throughout the country and tolerance among different religions and beliefs by providing peacekeeping and conflict resolution training (Yimer, 2018). The MOP is working with different stakeholders on peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Ethiopia, and the IRCAA is one such stakeholder. In relation to this, an informant who is an IRCAA board member stated:

> The recent establishment of the MOP presents additional opportunities for peace and reconciliation for religious institutions and leaders both at the federal and national levels. The Ministry works in cooperation with and with the participation of religious institutions, religious fathers, figures and leaders, as well as other organs taking part in creating a peaceful country. In addition, it provides an opportunity to mainstream peacebuilding and conflict resolution tasks to address the lack of clarity of purpose in peacemaking activities and challenges in the conflict transformation processes. With this background, the

MOP and IRCAA maintain and enhance a people-to-people peaceful relationship between developing strategies and undertake awareness creation to ensure the peace and stability of the country and its people.

In an interview with the Ethiopian News Agency on 16 October 2018, Muferiat Kamil, Minister of Peace, noted that Ethiopians have been sharing religious values among culture, living conditions and many other things. She added that the MOP is working hard towards boosting those values and fostering peace in the country. We, the MOP, aim to work in cooperation with stakeholders (such as religious institutions and leaders) to enhance the participation of all citizens in creating a peaceful country. In general, the above collaboration and intervention show the commitment of the government and interreligious organisations to the peacebuilding and conflict resolution agenda.

4.2.3. The understanding of preventing violent extremisms in the Inter-religious Council of Addis Ababa

With regard to the understanding of PVE in the IRCAA, the organisation's capacity and research team leader said the following:

On the one hand, religious diversity has a significant impact on the unity and peace of the country. On the other, violent extremism, specifically religious radicalism, is a source of enmity. Due to this, religion is used to incite people to violence, contributing to radicalism and extremism. In contemporary Addis Ababa, violent extremism, radicalism and terrorism are not visible. As such, they are not burning issues for the IRCAA. In addition, many grassroots leaders do not understand PVE. As a result, the IRCAA do not prioritise it in their yearly mission and activities. One good example is the recent conflict between the two major religious institutions in an area called Bethel. The IRCAA immediately prevented violent extremism evident on both sides.

Tarekegn (2008) stated that religions officially advocate for the prevention of radicalism and violent extremisms. However, there are persistent and common allegations made against religions, involving them in violent conflicts. The problem is very complex to explain as religion and society often go hand in hand in other structures and interests – political, economic, identity and cultural. However, religious institutions and leaders have played a significant role in resolving violent conflict in society with key stakeholders, including government and non-governmental institutions.

A capacity-building and human resource team leader who served in the IRCAA as a peacebuilder backed up this fact as follows:

Some years back, some IRCAA member organisations were considered the source of conflict. However, nowadays, IRCAA member organisations are on the front line and seen as taking part in the prevention of any violent extremisms.

In an analogous remark, Smock (2006) mentioned that a public understanding prevails that religion and religious institutions are a major source of conflict, but the role of religion and religious institutions as a force in peacemaking is usually overlooked. Smock (2006) added that religious institutions and leaders could serve as a communication link between opposing groups and provide training in peacemaking strategies. Therefore, the finding of this study is that the IRCAA has a minimal understanding of PVE. However, the Council has positively contributed to reconciling disputant parties using different frameworks focused on conflict and peace.

4.3. Peacebuilding contributions by religious institutions

4.3.1. Opportunities and strengths of the Inter-religious Council of Addis Ababa in peacebuilding

The study examined the various opportunities and strengths of religious institutions and leaders in their peacebuilding activities, including:

- Encouraging their followers and others to build peace and transform conflict regardless of their religious denomination

- Spreading teaching and educating their followers on peace and justice

- Mobilising their members and other individuals to promote and foster peace regardless of race, ethnicity or religion

- Mediating actively between conflicting parties before and after conflict

- Reaching out to government officials and police officers to ensure peace

- Attempting to reach out to women and young people

- Reaching out to cooperate with religious-based schools, faith-based organisations, civil society communities and other stakeholders

- Promoting reconciliation and dialogue during interreligious disputes to promote a culture of peace and religious tolerance

- Facilitating and connecting faith-based communities with member organisations, including by holding significant peacebuilding meetings

- Contributing to post-conflict situations by providing spiritual, social and psychological assistance

- Having a function specifically for their members and followers to mobilise for peace

4.3.2. Challenges and limitations of the Inter-religious Council of Addis Ababa in peacebuilding

The study examined various challenges and limitations faced by religious institutions and leaders in their peacebuilding activities, including:

- Lack of knowledge, skills, experience, budget and peacebuilding manuals. Relevant manuals on peacebuilding may not mitigate or adapt to conflicts at a different historical moment in another country or region

- Lack of professionalism in using modern peacebuilding mechanisms rather than an emphasis on religious aspects

- Lack of understanding of PVE knowledge at the grassroots level

- Lack of emphasis on long-term peacebuilding activities rather than shorter-term peacebuilding deliverables

- Limited youth and women participation in peacebuilding activities – mostly patriarchal with male leadership

- Potential risk of accusation of proselytisation and engagement in violent extremism

5. Recommendations

This research aimed to investigate the role of religion and religious organisations as significant actors in building peace and transforming conflicts plaguing contexts like Addis Ababa. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher makes the following recommendations to suggest how the concerned bodies might accomplish peacebuilding.

The IRCAA should build a nexus with relevant faith-based and civil society actors that are necessary for success in sensitive environments, which can enhance the quality of activities. Budgeting and capacity-building for youth and women committee members are important in environments where conflicts directly affect youth and women. The committees can be valuable in reducing violence by engaging youth and women, giving them a sense of ownership during conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities. The IRCAA should also work with different stakeholders to address the gaps in knowledge, skills, experience and budget and the need for a peacebuilding manual. Together with other stakeholders, such as faith-based organisations, civil society actors and local and international non-governmental organisations, the IRCAA should advocate and lobby for a change of government policies with regard to the involvement of religion and religious organisations, which hold significant sway within communities.

The IRCAA should also strive to raise the awareness of its member institutions and religious leaders to increase their understanding of PVE to positively contribute to it. Finally, the IRCAA conflict transformation and peacebuilding process should engage the different stakeholders involved in bringing long-lasting peace to reduce violence and conflicts in Addis Ababa.

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About the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities

The JLI is a learning network of researchers and practitioners, building fair and equitable spaces to create and share evidence on religions in development and community work. The JLI aims to strengthen partner-ships between and amongst faith and non-faith actors, internationally and locally.