**Policy Brief Writing Workshop, in five parts**

With **African Leadership Fellows** from across the continent, in Nairobi

Facilitator: **Kathryn Toure**

*See publications on academia.edu and researchgate.net and at* [*www.kathryntoure.net*](http://www.kathryntoure.net)



After this 3-hour workshop, participants will have a greater understanding of what should be considered in drafting a policy brief, what should be included in one, and what makes for an impactful policy brief.

Part 1: **Icebreaker: Getting to know each other** (10 - 10:20 a.m. or 20 mns)

* Describe your relationship to writing.
* What are you learning or appreciating most thru your ALC Fellowship experience?
* What do you hope to gain from our time together today?
* If you were to write a brief to impact policy or action, what would you write about and for whom?
* Questions for/about me?

Part 2: **Some principles for writing impactful policy briefs** (10:20 - 10:40 a.m. or 20 mns)

See PowerPoint presentation at [www.kathryntoure.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Policy-brief-writing-K.Toure-for-ALC-2022.pptx](http://www.kathryntoure.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Policy-brief-writing-K.Toure-for-ALC-2022.pptx) and discuss together briefly.

Sources:

<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/policy-briefs> with an example of a “not-so-good” policy brief and a “better policy brief”

[www.researchtoaction.org/2022/11/top-tips-for-writing-impactful-policy-briefs](http://www.researchtoaction.org/2022/11/top-tips-for-writing-impactful-policy-briefs)

Part 3: **Review of policy briefs: Strengths and weaknesses** (10:40 - 11:10 a.m. or 30 mns)

Review one policy brief (see links in Annex A) and note three strengths and three weaknesses (in 15 minutes) and then share with the group one strength and one weakness (15 minutes).

**HEALTH BREAK**

(11:10 - 11:20 a.m. or 10 mns)

Part 4: **Drafting a policy brief summary**

(by each participant) + discussion

(11:20 a.m. - noon for reading/writing, 40 mns,

and noon - 12:40 pm for sharing, 40 mns)

Draft a **policy brief summary** based on the following article (or another piece of research): [www.researchgate.net/publication/355374757\_Introduction\_**reframing\_narratives\_of\_peace-building\_and\_state-building\_in\_Africa**](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/355374757_Introduction_reframing_narratives_of_peace-building_and_state-building_in_Africa)

Indicate the **audience** and include:

a) policy brief **title**

b) paragraph **summary**

c) three practical and actionable **policy recommendations**, and

d) a list of anything else you would like to include in the full policy brief (i.e. date, authoring person(s) and/or organization(s), source of the evidence) and any particular considerations (policy brief formulation process, formatting, etc.).

Hopefully, we will have time for each participant to share the title of their brief and read the summary paragraph and policy recommendations. Listeners should note two strengths for each brief and two areas for potential improvement – to be shared with the presenter. (If the number of workshop participants is more than three or four, this could be done in groups of two or three).

*Titles participants in the December 2022 workshop came up with*:

* Driving peace through **state building conversations** and peace building interventions
* **Building Peace from Within**: Recognising Contextual Realities of Peacebuilding and State-building in Africa
* Merging peacebuilding and state-building conversations to **build lasting peace**
* To **Foster Peacebuilding** and State-building, **Facilitate Conversation** in Society (see sample policy brief summary in Annex B)

Part 5: **Wrap-up and evaluation** (12:40 - 1 p.m. or 20 mns)

Final discussion/wrap up and evaluation. Share your thoughts by email with the facilitators, in relation to these four points:

a) **My biggest takeaway** from the workshop

b) **What I appreciated** about the workshop

c) What to consider for **future iterations of this workshop**

d) **Title of the policy brief** I drafted

*Some of the feedback from the December 2002 workshop participants:*

* “I think this session has undone a lot of anxieties I had associated with writing and left me feeling a lot more liberated.”
* “I appreciated the high level of preparedness, practical assignments, affirming guidance, clarity of the guidance, and the open, welcoming and kind space cultivated.”
* “I would not have minded more time (that’s how much I enjoyed this engagement) and also additional sessions on other forms of writings.”
* “What I appreciated about the workshop was the step-by-step approach of the deliverance. I like how you made the effort to share with us what is expected and how to do it. My biggest takeaway is that I am clear about how to write a policy brief and what to include in it. I am left feeling more confident about my writing.”

Annex A: **Examples of policy briefs**

**Benefits of subsidized childcare in Kenya** (4 pages)

<https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/56973/IDL-56973.pdf>

**The case for investing in childcare** (4 pages)

[Recovering from COVID-19: The case for investing in childcare](https://www.idrc.ca/en/research-in-action/recovering-covid-19-case-investing-childcare)

[**Food systems and food security in the time of lockdowns**: Insights from sub-Saharan Africa | IDRC - International Development Research Centre](https://www.idrc.ca/en/research-in-action/food-systems-and-food-security-time-lockdowns-insights-sub-saharan-africa) (5 pages)

<https://includeplatform.net/publications/>[**freedom-of-movement-unlocking-africas-development-potential**](https://includeplatform.net/publications/freedom-of-movement-unlocking-africas-development-potential) (8 pages)

At COP27 in Egypt in November 2022, the African Group of Negotiators was actively (daily) making use of the “fact sheet” **briefs** produced through a collaboration between the **Climate and Development Knowledge Network** (CDKN) and **African contributors** to the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group (WG) 2 report**, specifically the Africa Chapter. Because the briefs were so intensively used, we assume they must be good. The report on which the briefs (listed below) are based is the IPPC [report](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-ii) titled *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*.

East Arica brief: <http://cdkn.org/ar6-eastafrica> (20 pages, in English)

Southern Africa brief: <http://cdkn.org/ar6-southernafrica> (in English and Portuguese)

Central Africa brief: <http://cdkn.org/ar6-centralafrica> (in French and English)

West Africa brief: <http://cdkn.org/ar6-westafrica> (in French and English)

Policy briefs by **Partnership for Economic Policy** (PEP), based in Nairobi and working globally

[www.pep-net.org/publications/policy-briefs](http://www.pep-net.org/publications/policy-briefs)

Policy briefs of the **United Nations University** Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability

<https://ias.unu.edu/en/publications/unu-ias-policy-brief-series>

Annex B: **Sample policy brief summary**

(mock) **POLICY BRIEF** – for peace and security committee of IGAD

2021

**To Foster Peacebuilding and State-building, Facilitate Conversation in Society**

There is an assumption that peace comes through top-down state-building. But grassroots conversation is a part of the peacebuilding that feeds into sustainable state-building. Studies in conflict-affected countries in eastern and West Africa show that support for conversation shifts the focus to local and national concerns rather than favoring international perspectives, “the technical over the political,” and “power over agency.” Prescriptive approaches to peacebuilding agendas focus on concepts rather than contexts and on what ought to be rather than on contextual realities. Fostering conversations, at multiple levels of society, about the future of communities and the nation, brings context to bear and contributes to peace, stability and the building of institutions that are culturally relevant and likely to serve the people of the nation in sustainable and relevant ways. Talking and talking back in conflict-affected societies is part of the process of building positive peace and could take forms such as music, artefacts, and theatre.

Practical policy recommendations

* To inform its 5-year women in peace and security strategy, IGAD should inventory its approaches to peacebuilding and state-building and their effectiveness, identifying technocratic approaches and ones that engage communities and the effects of each. Concern for gender equality and social inclusion should be integral to the studies.
* IGAD should work with national governments in conflict-affected countries to foster mechanisms and platforms for community conversation about the future of the nation.
* Those responsible for facilitating conversation about the future of the nation should promote space for discussion about history and specific sociocultural contexts, conflicts, challenges, and aspirations.
* IGAD should launch an initiative to support national ministries of culture in conflict-affected countries to promote conversation, talking, and talking back through art exhibits and participatory community-based arts and cultural programs.

*This (mock) policy brief is based on research in Ethiopia, Somalia, Somaliland, Rwanda, South Sudan, Cote d’Ivoire, and Sierra Leone by Funmi Olonisakin, Alagaw Ababu Kifle, and Alfred Muteru.* [*www.researchgate.net/publication/355374757\_Introduction\_reframing\_narratives\_of\_peace-building\_and\_state-building\_in\_Africa*](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/355374757_Introduction_reframing_narratives_of_peace-building_and_state-building_in_Africa)