

Reshaping Approaches to Sustainable Peacebuilding and Development in Fragile States

Part II: A Comprehensive Educational Programme on Ethics

Geneva Paper 27/20

Dr Gervais Rufyikiri

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GCSP
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The author would like to thank Ms Lauren Anderson, Dr Stef Vandeginste, Dr Jean-Marc Rickli and Mr Peter Cunningham for their helpful comments on the manuscript of this article.

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ISBN: 978-2-88947-110-2

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The views expressed in the publication do not necessarily reflect those of the project's supporters or of anyone who provided input to, or commented on, earlier drafts.

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Executive summary

Fragile states face the impact of interrelated pressures stemming from dysfunctional public institutions, political instability and crises, the disintegration of the social fabric, economic collapse, and ineffective leadership. Part I of this study argued that leaders' unethical behaviour is the root cause of state fragility and probably the most difficult challenge for any state to overcome. Part II identifies the ethical leadership dimension as a key factor in any attempt to lay the foundations for a lasting remedy to the various manifestations of state fragility. Then, a comprehensive ethics education programme is suggested as an efficient and effective way of cultivating ethical leadership in fragile states.

I. Introduction

Although there is still no consensus on the definition of state fragility and which countries are members of the fragile states cluster, fragile states are commonly defined in terms of the levels of the dysfunction of a state's public institutions, political processes, social mechanisms and economic systems.¹ These deficiencies make them particularly vulnerable in many ways. Most fragile states face the impact of complex interrelated pressures stemming from the disintegration of the social fabric, economic meltdown, political instability and crises, pressure of various kinds from the international community, and natural disasters. Even in the absence of violent conflicts, fragile states experience what Mahmoud has called “negative peace”,² placing them in precarious situations. State fragility poses serious problems, not only at the national level, but also at the regional and global levels. The violent crises starting and developing in fragile states can have various ramifications beyond national borders, including diplomatic tensions, terrorism and criminal networks, refugee and migrant flows, and illicit trafficking. Examples are the second civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 1998-2003, referred to as “Africa’s World War”, with the armies of nine African countries fighting on Congolese soil,³ the civil wars that erupted in Syria and Libya in 2011 – widely described as a series of overlapping proxy wars between regional and world powers⁴ – and the civil war that started in 2012 in Mali resulting in the establishment of terrorist networks in the Sahel region and West Africa that have adversely affected regional peace and security.⁵

Beyond the absence of a single global definition of fragile states, which is mainly explained by the complexity of a definition's typology and the objective in terms of which a given institution defines and classifies countries as fragile states, the main gap in all existing definitions is that they overlook the leadership dimension. Yet the factors on which the definitions of fragile states are built inform the measures taken by domestic and international policy-makers to end state fragility. The leadership dimension is a key determinant for the laying of foundations for sustainable peace, but the challenges that this dimension poses are probably the most difficult to overcome. But, because of its transversality and omnipresence as a multiplying factor in all the other dimensions of state fragility, any initiative that neglects it is doomed to failure, or at most will simply help to develop a negative peace.

The various manifestations of “wicked problems” in fragile states reflect poor governance – in terms of both policies and practices – which is itself caused by ineffective leadership. It is therefore crucial to focus on and identify the factors underlying the ineffectiveness of leadership in fragile states. Youssef Mahmoud, the former executive representative of the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General for Burundi, has raised a

fundamental question: “What kind of leadership does sustaining peace require?”⁶ Creating a sustainable solution to the issue of state fragility first requires diagnosing the nature of the problems that afflict fragile states and then addressing their root causes. The UN has reaffirmed through various resolutions⁷ the importance of national leadership in peacebuilding, but none of these resolutions mentions the major problem of inadequate leadership, which undermines governance in general, and peace and security in particular. What is currently presented as the root causes of state fragility, such as poverty, poor governance and internal conflicts,⁸ are rather the external manifestations of the actual root cause, which is unethical leadership. With this understanding in mind, Part I of this two-part study argued that the unethical behaviour of leaders is the root cause of state fragility and suggested reshaping current approaches to peacebuilding to cultivate ethical leadership in fragile states.⁹

Part I of this study lays the foundations for a comprehensive and groundbreaking approach to address the challenges of ethical leadership in fragile settings, which will be discussed in Part II. It responds to the urgent need to introduce interventions aimed at building ethical leadership that will result in lasting peace and social justice in fragile states.¹⁰ After this introduction, the next section focuses on the merits of ethical behaviour in individual and professional life and its role in building just and properly governed societies. The following section discusses a pragmatic approach – that of implementing ethical leadership education – to overcome the hurdles caused by unethical leadership. If it is implemented, this practical solution should help to reverse current governance trends, nurture positive change, and shape a new trajectory towards lasting peace and good governance in fragile states. The arguments that are presented are primarily based on the author’s own reflections on and experience of leadership and governance issues gained from his role as a former leader in a particular fragile state, Burundi, supported by relevant data and ideas from the literature and discussions with colleagues.

II. The development of ethical leadership

Human societies are governed by values on which all aspects of their functioning are based. These values or guidelines form the standards and principles of individual and collective conduct, determine the patterns of social and professional relationships between individuals, and inform a society's organisational dynamics. The following discussion seeks to understand the important role played by ethics – one of the core personal values guiding any leader¹¹ – in creating effective leadership, and the hurdles facing attempts to develop ethical leadership.

A. Ethics as an ideal basis for social and professional conduct

Leadership manifests at the individual, organisational and societal levels. From an ethical perspective, the ideal situation is the congruence of these three levels. An ethics policy defines what an individual, organisation and society can do or not do, and how to behave in an ideal way. Leaders who aspire to succeed only within the confines of ideal conduct are ethical. Inspired by his experience as a public policy advisor in New Zealand, David Bromell¹² advised people to apply ethical competencies if they wish to be effective in public leadership. The term “competencies” encompasses several elements, including knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours that are causally related to professional performance.¹³ The importance of ethical principles in setting priorities or in decision-making in general has been evoked in technical domains like health care,¹⁴ education, science and technology,¹⁵ as well as in political domains like global security,¹⁶ military training and operations¹⁷ and government policy.¹⁸

In the past there have been profound transformations in the world that would, perhaps, not have happened if great leaders had not been courageous enough to address serious ethical value-related issues that were haunting their societies, adopt ethical principles to guide their own conduct, and encourage their adoption by their country's citizens to guide their interaction with one another. Examples are the abolition of slavery in the United States by President Abraham Lincoln in 1865, Mahatma Gandhi's dedication to non-violent anti-colonial protests in India between 1919 and 1947, President John Kennedy's introduction of legislation to address problems of civil rights and racial segregation in the United States in 1963 and Nelson Mandela's role in the the transition from apartheid to a democratic South Africa in the 1990s.

In South African society, the most important ethical principle is expressed in the term “*ubuntu*”, which refers to a philosophy of life characterised by personhood, brotherhood, dignity, humanity, humaneness, morality,

trustworthiness, respect, and responsiveness that individuals and groups display in their interactions with other people. The concept of *ubuntu* has received much attention from researchers since the 1990s and has increasingly become a popular term in ethics, especially amid its implementation in the post-apartheid racial reconciliation process in South Africa.¹⁹ In his book *No Future Without Forgiveness*, Archbishop Desmond Tutu explained the deeper sense of *ubuntu* in terms of the interdependence of all human beings. The term basically means that “A person is a person through other persons”.²⁰ As an ideal, *ubuntu* is the opposite of egoism and egocentrism and stems from an indigenous cultural tradition of ethics. The well-known champion for global peace and reconciliation, Nelson Mandela, took inspiration from the *ubuntu* concept for his personal and professional conduct while struggling to cope with apartheid politics in South Africa. He was a strong believer in the principles of honesty, humaneness and forgiveness, which made him a symbol of reconciliation politics in post-apartheid South Africa and abroad. His exemplary behaviour made him a highly respected international figure, and thanks to his strong reputation, he became a peacemaker by encouraging people in crisis to follow the path of peace and reconciliation. Mandela's most remarkable achievements outside his country include the mediation of inter-Burundian negotiations that helped Burundians to conclude a peace and reconciliation agreement in 2000²¹ and his emotional speech at the White House that helped Americans to put an end to the national debate around the impeachment crisis of 1998 stemming from the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal.²²

Different regional versions of *ubuntu* are widely apparent across sub-Saharan Africa. In Burundi, *ubuntu*, also known as “*ubushingantahe*”, was the guiding principle of dignitaries known as “*abashingantahe*” who were considered to be role models of virtue and were perceived as wise people with high levels of integrity. Their role was to ensure public order, citizen cohesion, community mediation and justice, and to promote respect for human rights and commonly held concepts of ethical behaviour. Like other pre-modern societies relying on oral traditions to preserve their cultural heritage across generations, in Burundi poetry and sayings were the main channels to convey value judgements from generation to generation. During my childhood, it was in the evening “*au coin du feu*” (by the fireside) that we (children) learned from our elders, parents and grandparents the “facts of life” based on the telling of stories promoting individual values such as sincerity and the rejection of lies. The aim of the tales and sayings was eminently educational by making us understand the merits or not of our acts and attitudes, and thereby encouraging our personal awareness of the values by which we should live our lives. The concepts and metaphors used in the poetry and sayings were value-laden, and integrated ethical values into the narrative. For example, in Burundi, the saying “*kananirabagabo ntiyimye*” (i.e. whoever is deaf to the advice

of the wise cannot accede to the throne) states that no one could be become a leader if he/she does not behave ethically. The saying “*umwami agirwa n’abagabo*” (i.e. despite the king’s position in the hierarchy, he himself depends on the people and their representatives) conveys the idea of the interdependence of leaders and their followers.

In Tanzania, former president Julius Nyerere embraced *ubuntu* ethics as a benchmark for his social and political thoughts and conduct, and he codified a set of principles taken from the ideal of brotherhood known as “*ujamaa*”.²³ His own behaviour became a role model for *ujamaa* through his humility, incorruptibility, integrity and compassion. His influence extended outside Tanzania, notably through his substantial contributions to the creation and development of the former Organisation of African Unity (which later became the African Union) and his support for Africa’s liberation movements.²⁴ Although the institutionalisation of *ujamaa* as a political ideology did not yield the expected results, especially in terms of the country’s political economy,²⁵ its greatest significance was that it was used to sustain peace and stability in post-colonial Tanzania. One of the legacies of Nyerere’s leadership and the implementation of *ujamaa* is Tanzania’s strong culture of the peaceful transfer of power. The leadership styles of both Nyerere and Mandela teach us two main lessons. The first is the capacity of a leader to effectively inspire a vision and to influence, energise and align his/her followers to make this vision a reality. The second is that the positive values and principles of ancestral cultures and paradigms, particularly those related to ethics, can serve as the foundation for shaping governance policies adapted to local contexts.

However, leaders should be aware that the inappropriate use of ethical concepts in political ideologies or economic policies can lead to various forms of crises. The failure of the political economy dimension of Nyerere’s *ujamaa* paradigm is illustrative of this. In Latin America, indigenous communities have lived in harmony with nature based on the idea of the interdependence of human societies and the environment, thanks to the ethical principles underlying their cosmic vision.²⁶ Ethical values were embedded in the ancient Andean cultures, including “*sumak kawsay*” (good living in English; *buen vivir* in Spanish) among the Quechua people in Ecuador and “*suma qamaña*” (living well in English and *vivir bien* in Spanish) among the Aymara people in Bolivia.²⁷ While in terms of ethics, the historical value of *buen vivir* or *vivir bien* should be encouraged for the benefit of humanity resulting from a focus on the protection of the environment, its institutionalisation to provide regulatory guidelines for public and economic policies in Bolivia and Ecuador has created controversies. The problem basically lies in these concepts’ instrumentalisation for political purposes to challenge various models of modernity and development.²⁸

Ethical values, principles and behaviour are the core ingredients of a whole range of types of effective leadership, characterised by terms such as servant, spiritual, authentic, responsible, transactional, transformational, charismatic, democratic (participative), visionary, strategic, and affiliative. At the opposite extreme are unethical leaders. The outcomes of unethical leader behaviour are multiple, and are expressed by specific terms in the literature, such as destructive, toxic, immoral, narcissistic, dark, bad, dysfunctional, Machiavellian, self-protective, authoritarian, command-and-control oriented, autocratic, dictatorial, despotic or kleptocratic. Unlike ethical leaders who in their lifetimes improve society through processes that often continue after their deaths, unethical leaders have the opposite effect, because they fail to demonstrate ethical practices.²⁹

B. Personal and professional ethics

Although both personal and professional ethics are interdependent and complementary, they are essentially different and sometimes even in conflict. On the one hand, personal ethics refers to individual traits and skills related to morals and principles that individuals manifest in their behaviour both in their private lives and in their workplaces. Thus, personal ethics determines an individual's moral standing, which expresses itself through the choices the individual makes in his/her private and public lives, and how he behaves. On the other hand, professional ethics refers to the organisational rules and procedures to which employees and workers are bound regarding their behaviour and interactions in their professional lives. Hence, professional ethics help to build the reputation of organisations, but only if the norms that are articulated are actually implemented by these organisations' staff. Thus, professional ethics always require a strong sense of personal ethics among an organisation's staff members.

Certain circumstances can also cause conflicts between personal and professional ethics and lead to moral conflicts. Thirty years ago the king of Belgium experienced a serious conflict between his personal and professional ethics because of the law on the decriminalisation of abortion that parliament had just voted to support in March 1990 and which he had to sign into law, as the Constitution required. He was radically opposed to this law, and said: "This Bill raises a serious problem of conscience in me".³⁰ Arrangements were made for him to "abdicate" for two days, giving the government time to complete the formalities of signing the Bill into law.

While citizens have an obligation to comply with the law, some laws have been criticised for provisions that do not comply with ethical standards or whose interpretation may violate such standards. For example, according to recent reports of NGOs such as the Research Social Platform on Migration and Asylum³¹ and Amnesty International,³² as well as academics,³³ some laws governing immigration in Western countries have been

misinterpreted by public institutions (the police and judiciary) resulting in the criminalisation of acts of compassion and solidarity, turning them into illegal acts of human trafficking. However, personal ethics have helped a number of local leaders to challenge “unethical” policies stemming from central powers or federal authorities. For example, the controversial issue surrounding immigration policies in Western countries led to the emergence of solidarity-based approaches in some cities referred to as “sanctuary states” in the United States and “solidarity cities” in Europe.³⁴

Legal and institutional reforms to improve governance implicitly seek to build professional ethics based on written laws, rules and professional codes of conduct. Politicians’ willingness to comply with accepted professional ethics is essential to enhance the legitimacy of government institutions. However, although professional ethical systems are linked to penalties if they are infringed, if personal ethics are not developed beforehand, ethics-based reforms are not enforced, and consequently the development of professional ethics is almost impossible without the initial presence of personal ethics. The post-war experience of Burundi is an illustrative case of this phenomenon. Since 2005, in addition to reforms provided for in the Constitution drawn from the 2000 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, a number of donor-led reforms – some negotiated and others imposed in the form of aid conditionality – led to the improvement of the country’s legal framework and the establishment of several new institutions. These included anti-corruption institutions, the Office of the Ombudsman and the Independent National Commission on Human Rights. However, these reforms have not helped Burundi to improve its governance practices.³⁵ What some had described as a “success story” or forms of governance that donors viewed as “good enough”³⁶ were short-lived. The country’s post-war leadership gradually consolidated itself into an authoritarian regime and government legitimacy was eroded. The subsequent deterioration of the political environment culminated in the 2015 crisis, prompting donors to impose sanctions and withdraw aid.³⁷ Innovations, which included professionally oriented ethics, have been poorly implemented, not necessarily due to lack of technical capacity or skills, but mostly due to the lack of political will and the weak development of ethical skills in the individuals responsible for governance.

According to process-based intervention theories, changing group norms is an essential step towards achieving behavioural change.³⁸ To be successful, the next step of (post-war) peacebuilding interventions must be strategically directed at the individual level to help national leaders develop their personal ethics. The need for the parallel development of personal and professional ethics is particularly acute for countries transitioning from long-term civil war and authoritarianism to democracy. Kodi has argued that pervasive corruption in the post-war DRC and other forms of unethical behaviour were to a large extent the legacies

of Mobutu's 32-year authoritarian regime, and has stated his belief that eradicating corruption in the DRC with only technical remedies, strong institutions and a strong legal framework is not possible.³⁹ Similarly legacies of corruption that had escalated in the late apartheid era and corruption within the African National Congress liberation movement continue to haunt the political, social and economic environment of South Africa, 25 years after the first democratic elections in that country.⁴⁰

The weak development of personal ethics is the main cause of the high prevalence of failed peacebuilding and democratisation processes in fragile states,⁴¹ particularly those laid down in negotiated settlements to end violent conflicts. Without intervention, the militarised history of a rebel movement may have a long-lasting influence on the individual behaviour of former warlords who have become politicians under the post-war settlement.⁴² These experiences of being anti-government "freedom fighters" shape the trajectory of post-war political groups and political networks; determine governance strategies, style and politics; and influence the interaction between citizens and the state in the post-war period, as has been reported in several countries, including Zimbabwe,⁴³ Burundi,⁴⁴ Lebanon⁴⁵ and South Sudan.⁴⁶ Other studies have showed that the prior militarisation of a liberation movement's struggle against colonial or authoritarian rule makes former warlords prone to unethical practices such as "big man rule", monopolies on power, the supremacy of the military over civilians, predation, intolerance, clientelism, the exercise of power by force, human rights violations, lack of respect for the rule of law and the fundamental principles of democracy, and reliance on informal structures resulting in the continuation of old politico-military command structures and systems.⁴⁷

C. Ethical leadership and ethical dilemmas

Statistics show that people are likely to face ethical dilemmas in their workplace⁴⁸ due to the misconduct of their line managers, colleagues or subordinates, e.g. in the case of discrimination, corruption, sexual harassment, or infringement of law or company procedures. Many other dilemmas can originate from their interactions with superiors and people or entities outside the organisation. For example, an ethical dilemma arose among parliamentarians when they were requested by their respective governments to amend their countries' constitutions to extend presidential terms in office beyond the initial limits in Nigeria in 2006, Senegal in 2011, and Burkina Faso and Burundi in 2014. Regardless of the leader's position as a victim of, witness to, or originator of the issue, a conflict of interests can suddenly arise, creating a disorienting situation in which the leader must make a choice. Whether the decision is made instantly or unilaterally or whether it comes from consensus following consultations,

what makes these situations so difficult is that there is not always a single right or wrong answer and each choice presents both advantages and disadvantages, which creates a moral dilemma. Gallo's⁴⁹ four options for handling conflicts – do nothing, skirt the issue, confront the issue, or exit the situation entirely – show that many elements have to be taken into account in order to make a deliberate choice between “agreeing” and “disagreeing” with the issue. Admittedly, the person facing an ethical dilemma must consider the risks of their choice, but it is essential to know and maintain their ethics and stay in step with their principles.⁵⁰

The challenge goes like this: “Do I support the boss’s decision even if it is a bad one, or do I not?” I dealt with this dilemma in 2015 when the late president of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza, decided to run for a third term in office in violation of the Constitution and the 2000 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement. I had two options – to support the decision or to oppose it. For my personal safety and well-being, the first option was clearly the most advantageous because it would guarantee me protection, a good position, and a generous income. However, for me, violating the Constitution was a serious and unethical decision that constituted an inviolable red line. I was already thinking about the harmful consequences of the violent crisis that would likely follow the decision. Taking this route would destroy my ethical principles. On the other hand, opposing the decision was risky because it would expose me to significant threats, including unemployment, imprisonment, exile and possibly death. I ultimately opted to oppose the decision, which allowed me to remain committed to my ethical principles, even though I knew I would have to deal with the costs of my choice, such as isolation and very real threats, including exile.⁵¹ The lesson to be learned from my decision is that the way you deal with an ethical dilemma depends on where you stand in relation to it and whether you prioritise your personal interests or consider the people who would suffer from it the most.

When one is struggling to manage a contradiction between personal ethics and the rules of an organisation or orders from competent authorities, as in any dilemma between ethical and unethical choices, personal ethics helps each person to set benchmarks, set a red line not to cross, and make a choice between possible responses. Until the red line is reached, people tend to reframe their personal ethics to tolerate some abuses and setbacks and to gear their attitudes to the actual circumstances that prevail. Thus, people’s reactions to a particular ethical dilemma can be very different depending on a variety of factors, including their geographical locations (geographical relativism), the time at which the problematic situation arises (its relative importance in terms of its context),⁵² their cultural and social identities (denying the universality of ethical norms),⁵³ their value systems (e.g. individualism or communitarianism), the country’s previous history (e.g. retaliation for past “wrongs” or reconciliation), the

importance of the decision that needs to be made (e.g. collaboration or competition) and the effect of external influences.⁵⁴ Managing a moral dilemma is always difficult. In public life, events that antagonise leaders are frequent, and in several cases leaders are more often defeated than winning such confrontations. Most people choose to accept the situation and live with its outcomes, sometimes even with regret and remorse for complicity in perpetuating imperfections in the organisation. Especially in fragile countries, ethical leaders must remain committed to their ethical principles despite the difficulties of the predicaments they find themselves in. In addition, they have also to be resilient in terms of how to deal with complex problems, including pervasive corruption and serious human rights abuses. It is, however, a morally unfulfilling situation, as I experienced it for ten years of responsibility in Burundi. Some leaders can endlessly reframe their personal ethics and can comfortably make their peace with all types of situations, including the very worst. They swing between unethical leadership and amoral leadership. For others, when the situation reaches intolerable proportions, resignation is an ethical option if they wish to remain true to their principles.⁵⁵

Unethical leaders themselves often try to legitimise their unethical behaviour by referring to the principles of ethical leadership and the way in which they claim to be “inspired” by them. They also undertake specific ethical actions in certain circumstances. Leaders who act to display the two extreme behaviours (ethical and unethical) at the same time find themselves in a paradoxical situation.⁵⁶ Such was the case of the self-proclamation of Burundian president Nkurunziza as a “visionary” leader of the CNDD-FDD ruling party in March 2018⁵⁷ and as a “Supreme Guide for Patriotism” for the state,⁵⁸ and his references to himself as a form of “*mwami*” (king: under monarchical Burundi, the king was a unifying leader) and to the religious sources of his moral and spiritual inspiration,⁵⁹ despite the fact that his regime had been criticised for many unethical acts, in particular crimes against humanity and pervasive corruption. Obviously, this was a strategy to strengthen his absolute power.⁶⁰ But in another sense, these idealised claims mean that Nkurunziza knew that the public desired the ethical management of the state, which he was prepared to pay lip service to in order to strengthen his position.

Managing ethical dilemma effectively requires leaders to refer to best practices or theories and to be creative. There are many practical tips on how to do this. Firstly, leaders should avoid cutting corners in the thinking process that precedes (or should precede) action. Hastily taken decisions are mostly emotional, and the decision-maker integrates few objective data and little valid information prior to making a decision. “Sleeping on the issue” and taking enough time to think and better balance the pros and the cons of alternatives can help leaders to make decisions based on an optimal mix of emotional and rational ingredients.

Secondly, leaders whose minds are veering between competing options must set up objective screening criteria to identify priority options, using a combination of thinking approaches, including ends-based thinking or utilitarianism, rule-based thinking and care-based thinking. Thirdly, leaders should consider the contribution of other ideas and enrich their reflections with different opinions from a variety of relevant sources before making a decision. For example, listening to advice, engaging in dialogue with opponents and agreeing to a compromise are key tools for making choices that help build trust. In short, whatever strategy is used to manage an ethical dilemma, ethical skills are essential.

D. Fostering the emergence of ethical leaders

Despite the challenges of ineffective leadership, moral citizens and potential ethical leaders do exist in fragile states. The few of them who have been able to access high responsibilities have marked their countries and the world with their strong personal and professional ethics and visions, and by their impressive achievements. They have promoted profound changes that shaped their countries' political trajectories toward liberty and equality, and helped war-torn countries to bury the hatchet in the interests of national reconciliation and stability. Some of them are showcased in sub-section A (p.11).

However, the emergence of ethical leaders in the high-level decision-making arena and the most influential positions can often only lead to short-lived changes. The case of South Africa in the post-Mandela era showed that when changes are based on one person's vision, the continuity of their policies/vision is not guaranteed in all its aspects after they leave the political stage. Xenophobic violence against foreign immigrants, corruption, nepotism⁶¹ and an inconsistent approach to human rights abuses – e.g. South Africa's failure to arrest Omar al-Bashir, the Sudanese president, in June 2015 even though he was wanted by the ICC,⁶² and its attempt to withdraw from the Rome Statutes in 2016⁶³ – which adversely affected South Africa under former president Jacob Zuma were contrary to what Mandela's course of action would have been and a betrayal of his legacy.⁶⁴

Other cases showed that when leaders introduce deep changes to their societies that are not yet rooted in the whole society or simply that these changes are frowned upon by the defenders of the status quo, people's reactions can be indifferent or even negative. The ahistorical nature of the new order can spark "allergic reaction" to the transformational mindset the leader is trying to cultivate. A number of ethical and revolutionary leaders have failed to implement their ideas, and in extreme cases they have been victims of bloody plots, as in the case of the former president of Burkina Faso Thomas Sankara, in 1987. Despite his reputation as a

leader committed to the common good of the Burkinabè people, which is still reflected in the nicknames that are attributed to him, such as “African Che Guevara”, “Upright Revolutionary” and “Father of the Burkinabè Revolution”,⁶⁵ Sankara was betrayed by some of his fellow citizens, including his closest friend and political ally, former president Blaise Compaoré. The threats against Sankara’s revolutionary approach included those from people who feared losing the benefits they had illegally acquired, especially the corrupt elite and tribal leaders, whom he had stripped of their longstanding traditional right to demand forced labour and tribute payments from their subjects. Sankara’s fate indicates that fragile countries need first to build a strong and lasting ethical culture that allows their systems of governance to protect values and promote ethical behaviour at all levels of leadership.

Moreover, the persistence in fragile states of cases of cyclical civil wars, violent insurgency, terrorist activities and systemic corruption indicates that the emergence of ethical leaders in politically fragile contexts is the exception rather than the rule. An illustrative example is Burundi, which has experienced cyclical instability since its independence in 1962: five successful military coups (in 1966, 1976, 1987, 1993 and 1996) and one failed one (in 2015) and seven bloody crises (in 1965, 1969, 1972, 1988, 1991, 1993-2005 and since 2015). In a democratic setting, the conventional path for people to achieve political consensus, including with regard to the choice of political leaders, is through elections – although cases like those of former Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi⁶⁶ and current US president Donald Trump⁶⁷ show that transparency in elections does not always guarantee the election of ethical leaders. But, by trial and error, democratic countries often still manage to pull quickly through the crises caused by the election of unethical leaders and subsequently elect more acceptable leaders. In contrast, elections in non-democratic states have been organised to bolster the legitimacy of autocratic regimes. In many fragile states the problem is that, currently, unreliable electoral systems do not allow ethical people to gain power. In a context where the processes for choosing candidates in the elections are not transparent and where the results are not credible, the people are effectively unable to choose leaders according to ethical criteria.

Furthermore, state capture by unethical “elected” leaders, once in power, prevents talented and honest people from gaining influential non-elective responsibilities, such as leadership positions in the judiciary, public and state-owned companies, and independent public institutions. Through widespread patronage, clientelism and nepotism practices, these managerial positions are the preserve of family members, friends and supporters of the corrupt leader. Technical and ethical skills are relegated to the bottom of the criteria list when selecting candidates for appointments of this kind.

The development of independent and dynamic civil society organisations and media is an essential way to move toward the holding of credible elections – and subsequent transparent practices in the management of public affairs – because they serve multiple roles, including raising citizens’ awareness of their rights, putting pressure on governments, and overseeing the electoral processes and the management of public affairs. However, the chance of holding credible elections is often hampered by unethical leaders’ violent repression. For example, not only did the mobilisation of civil society organisations not prevent the violation of the Constitution in Burundi in 2015, but it was also followed by harassment, intimidation, threats and crackdowns against activists, and the imposition of severe restrictions on all independent media and civil society organisations.⁶⁸

The success of a credible election can also be ephemeral, as was the recent case in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwean civil society organisations played a significant role in the overthrow of former president Robert Mugabe, but according to Human Rights Watch,⁶⁹ little has changed in the governance system in the post-Mugabe era. These two cases show that the unethical behaviour of political leaders must be addressed as a priority to allow the actions of other ethically motivated actors to be effective.

The discussion above has outlined the scope of the ethical dimension as it applies to leadership. With arguments drawn from cases of exemplary leaders who have marked the world by their impressive achievements, it has shown that ethics is a key ingredient of successful leadership. However, the discussion has also shown that state fragility is persistent in many societies because numerous obstacles hinder the emergence of ethical leaders in communities and societies. It is therefore essential to identify ways to deal with these obstacles.

III. Ethics education

Ethical leadership is more than ever a central concern today. This section examines the growing endeavour around the world to improve behavioural ethics among leaders. It then builds on the successes that have been identified to reflect on the approaches to ethics education that can be implemented to deal with the persistence of unethical behaviour among many leaders in fragile states.

A. Growing focus on ethics education

“A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination.” These words, uttered by someone who, through his wisdom, has left his mark on the contemporary history of humanity, Nelson Mandela, are key to successful leadership. Scholars have discussed the issue of ethics for years,⁷⁰ but the debate has been mainly descriptive, and practical formulations of how to build ethical leaders were lacking. A 2014 survey by the University of North Carolina’s Kenan-Flagler Business School⁷¹ rated ethics at the top of the competencies needed for leadership, but in most cases its development results from leaders’ personal efforts to rule ethically. Prentice has argued that training is the most promising approach to improving behavioural ethics.⁷²

The good news is that studies reporting an interest in promoting ethical behaviour and developing ethical leaders have intensified over the past decade.⁷³ Although well intentioned, these studies offer little guidance on how to develop sustainable solutions to the problems of systemic unethical leadership.⁷⁴ The question is whether ethics can be taught with sufficient impact to prevent unethical behaviour. In his book *Essays on Religion and Education*, Hare has argued that ethics can be taught at schools.⁷⁵ Advances in neuroscience research and the neurophilosophical theory of human nature have developed new knowledge to support Hare’s arguments. Knights et al. have reported that negative behaviours can be unlearned in the same way that positive behaviours can be learned.⁷⁶ Al-Rodhan has argued that an individual’s moral compass is greatly informed by circumstances, background conditions and environmental factors such as education or the social and cultural context in which the individual lives.⁷⁷ Thus, the unethical behaviour of their leaders does not have to be the inevitable destiny of fragile states.

Ethics education is not about inculcating substantive positions, but helping people reflect on the moral dimensions of the decisions they make and how they interact with others. Since the 2000s, the interest in ethics education in schools has been growing and ethics education programmes have proliferated in many countries and professional areas. For example,

in Australia, a course entitled, “Primary Ethics: Ethics Education for Children” has been offered to children as an alternative to religious or scriptural teaching since 2010.⁷⁸ And centres such as the Cranlana Centre for Ethical Leadership were established to strengthen the capacity for ethical leadership in various sectors of Australian society through education, research and community engagement programmes.⁷⁹ Dzurainin et al.⁸⁰ have reported that a course entitled “Building Ethical Leaders Using the Integrated Ethics Framework Program” that was introduced in 2006 at the Northern Illinois University College of Business helps students enhance their ethical awareness and their ability to identify appropriate decisions when presented with ethical and unethical alternatives. Several executive education institutions such as the Institute for Ethical Leadership at the Rutgers Business School, the Columbia Business School, the Louvain School of Management at UCLouvain and the Rotterdam School of Management at Erasmus University have offered courses on ethical leadership to help future leaders identify, prevent, and resolve ethical challenges in their work. In general, the prevalence of ethics training in business organisations has dramatically increased over the last two decades. The 2013 National Business Ethics Survey⁸¹ revealed that professional misconduct in US companies has declined as the culture of ethics has improved thanks to comprehensive ethics and compliance initiatives, including ethics education. At the UN level, following the request of member states, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) initiated the Ethics Education Programme in 2004 to promote the integration of ethics into the education systems of all member states.⁸² Through one of its education sector programmes, “Education for Global Citizenship”, UNESCO seeks to give people of all ages cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural skills based on an ethical approach.⁸³ Ethics is also a major dimension of research and education programmes in the field of artificial intelligence.⁸⁴ This was outlined in the White Paper on Artificial Intelligence recently published by the European Union.⁸⁵

In fragile states, many leaders move rapidly from rebellion or participating in a longstanding opposition struggle against authoritarian regimes to political leadership in a new dispensation, but, with little or no experience and minimal preparation for the management of public affairs. I had such an experience when, following the first post-war elections held in 2005, I was elected president of the Senate of Burundi, even though I had never exercised administrative or parliamentary responsibility. In addition, the Senate was a newly created chamber that needed to be developed in terms of the organisation of its services and its parliamentary/legislative work. Learning everything on my own was difficult, but I was fortunate to be imaginative and creative, and to have good ideas and leadership qualities, which helped me to succeed in my mandate.⁸⁶ For example, in its function of overseeing government activities, the Senate has successfully countered a number of unethical decisions made by the executive, including the

president's appointment of a government in violation of the Constitution.⁸⁷ However, it is a mistake to take for granted that ethical conduct will follow the accession to positions of responsibility of all appointees without some form of intervention. By nature, people are not as ethical as we may think.⁸⁸ Tushar has argued that individual moral development and knowledge about the importance of ethics should have been acquired before an individual joins any organisation.⁸⁹ The need for training in ethical leadership is intensified because of the gravity and complexity of the problems caused by poor ethical governance, especially in fragile states. In particular, ethics education can help people who have experienced oppression and injustice to control their frustration and move from a desire for retaliation to reconciliation. Ideally, this would increase the desire to make a difference by building a better society, which would be essential to ending cyclical conflict in fragile states. However, like other international interventions in such states, it is noticeable that political will and ownership are key factors for lasting success.⁹⁰ The role of donors should be to serve as catalysts of change towards ethical government. Therefore, governments in fragile states should adopt ethics education as an explicit objective in country development strategy documents, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, with defined benchmarks and indicators of progress. International organisations and donors dealing with development challenges in fragile states should also strengthen training in ethics as a core function of sustainable and equitable development.

Once ethics education is clearly seen as a tool to build ethical leadership, perhaps the most important and challenging step is determining *what, who* and *how* to teach. Reviewing the existing literature on ethics education and adapting any suggested curriculum to a particular country's cultural context, the leaders' specific needs, and cultural realities will all help to create a tailor-made ethics education programme. It will also be necessary to identify and define realistic goals for each category of leaders.

B. Tailor-made ethics education programme

In terms of state governance, leaders are ranked as top, senior, middle and frontline grassroots leaders in pyramid-shaped governance hierarchies. In such top-down hierarchical structures, fewer positions exist the closer one gets to the top of the hierarchy, and the higher the position, the greater the political power and level of influence that the person holding such a position can exercise. The core of the ethics education curriculum should be identical for the various categories. It should focus on the importance of the ethical basis of leadership if the country is to overcome challenges facing the implementation of fundamental concepts such as good governance, lack of corruption, leadership, sustainable peace and security development, transparency and accountability, respect for

differences and diversity, and gender equality, as well as cross-border threats and opportunities. To be effective, the programme must stand out through its *meaningful learning strategies*. *Meaningful learning* means that the transfer of knowledge does not occur through the rote memorisation of theories, but rather through a deep understanding of their meaning in terms of real-world problems and their solutions. Then, illustrative case studies, storytelling and tabletop exercises or any other discussion-based exercises should be used to familiarise participants with or to develop new policies and procedures,⁹¹ and to make ethical choices in a variety of situations that would be customised to each of the concepts referred to above. This is crucial for instilling critical thinking skills and the capacity to act responsibly and for building problem-solving capabilities. Therefore, the programme must be designed and implemented to cultivate a holistic leadership competence by developing ethical leadership in four dimensions: cognitive, socio-emotional, behavioural and “convection” (see below).

Firstly, the cognitive dimension allows the learner to acquire the theoretical and practical knowledge necessary for the development of the capacities of understanding and critical thinking. Mumford et al.⁹² have suggested a list of nine cognitive skills that are critical determinants of leadership performance: (1) problem definition, (2) cause/goal analysis, (3) constraint analysis, (4) planning, (5) forecasting, (6) creative thinking, (7) idea evaluation, (8) wisdom, and (9) sensemaking/envisioning.

Secondly, the socio-emotional dimension aims to help the future leader develop relational competencies. Socio-emotional skills are part of the non-cognitive skills/intelligence that have many other names in the literature, including soft skills, personality traits, life skills and character skills. The importance of socio-emotional qualities to leadership is widely acknowledged,⁹³ and researchers argued that socio-emotional competencies can be developed among people through proper training.⁹⁴ In fact, unlike “traits”, which seem to have a permanent character of hereditary origin, “skills” refer to competencies that can be learned.⁹⁵ In its report published in 1998, the Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organisations presented 22 best-practice guidelines for developing the emotional intelligence of staff in organisations.⁹⁶ Beyond cognitive intelligence, the development of socio-emotional competencies makes it possible for a leader to be sensitive and responsive, to be emotionally present in any situation, to manage emotions and negative memories, to live together with others respectfully and peacefully, and to exercise a sustainable positive emotional influence.

Thirdly, the behavioural dimension should cultivate a leader’s ability to act responsibly⁹⁷ at the personal, interpersonal and organisational levels. Personal behavioural skills relate to the capacity to handle oneself in situations of stress, conflict, time pressure and change, and to manage one’s personal desires. Any leader needs the capacity to deal with various

sources of emotional, moral and physical vulnerability. For example, he/she might be able to identify the limits of affirmation and perseverance vs stubbornness; the sense of his/her own personal importance vs grandiosity; ambition vs greed (for instance for power, control and wealth); the use of force to safeguard public order and security vs repression; intimacy vs dishonour; customs vs societal norms; and private life in relation to public life. Thus, personal behavioural skills imply high standards of ethics, including morality, honesty, integrity, accountability, fairness, trustworthiness, selflessness, flexibility, the ability to adapt to new circumstances and resilience. Interpersonal behavioural skills are reflected in improved listening, communication and empathy capacities. Organisational behavioural skills relate to, among other things, task management, teamwork and teambuilding, time management, mediation, negotiation, persuasion, counselling, conflict prevention and resolution, and vertical and horizontal communication. These skills are vital for leading a group (no matter how large or small), an organisation or a society, since such a responsibility requires the ability to inspire, encourage and motivate subordinates to successfully carry out their duties.

Fourthly, the “convection” dimension ensures that the programme’s outcomes are disseminated in space and time. Currently, most existing educational institutions and training centres, including those focused on the ethics of leadership, focus on only one of these dimensions or at most on the first three dimensions described above. The omission or neglect of the “convection” dimension is a major gap, because these four dimensions must all be included if a lasting impact is to be achieved for any ethics training programme. The “convection” dimension is analogous to physical convection, which is the process of redistributing heat in a fluid, and which continues as long as the heat source continues to supply heat. Beyond building individual capacities during training sessions, the paramount goal of any ethics education programme is the sustainability of the changes that leaders can achieve. Leaders with this ability stand apart from others by their adaptability, patience, energy and passion, and by their ability to make proactive decisions with a strong vision for the future.⁹⁸ To this end, the “convection” dimension provides leaders with skills to understand the crucial role of spreading the skills they have developed to their subordinates through mentorship, coaching, knowledge transfer, collaboration and shared leadership so that they can cope with the multidimensional and evolving challenges that leaders at any level of the organisational pyramid have to deal with. Finally, this “convection” dimension is crucial for connecting personal ethics with organisational norms (professional ethics), which are essential for both the sound performance and good reputation of organisations.

What training programmes are called also matters. Capacity-building programmes usually have words such as “executive education”, “course” or

“training” in their titles. However, studies in the field of psychology have found that incompetent individuals are often unaware of their deficient abilities and therefore see no need for further training.⁹⁹ Moreover, some people overestimate their knowledge, skills, abilities and qualities, and therefore underestimate their need for training.¹⁰⁰ In September 2005, during a training session organised for members of the Burundian government (at the request of the president) presented by the Burundi Leadership Training Programme (BLTP) in Bujumbura, a participant complained that the programme was nothing more than brainwashing.¹⁰¹ A source revealed to me that it had become difficult for the BLTP even to get senior leaders of political parties to attend training sessions. Thus, leaders, misled by their illusory superiority, could disregard “training” or “education” and be reluctant to attend a course with words such as this in its title. This may be one of the causes of the lack of buy-in from senior leaders, which has been identified as being among the key challenges facing attempts at leadership development.¹⁰² This hurdle should be skirted by using terms that sound less educational such as “retreat”, “workshop” or “symposium”.

Designing and delivering an effective training programme is another ingredient of successful training. The method by which ethics training is delivered is more important than the content of the training itself.¹⁰³ Retreats designed specifically for top and senior leaders should combine, among other things, group discussions, leadership games, simulations and training sessions. An ethics education programme should be interactive and enable experienced academics, practitioners and participants to co-create a productive learning environment. The training approach applied by the Geneva Leadership Alliance – a partnership between the Geneva Centre for Security Policy and the Center for Creative Leadership – can serve as a model in this regard.¹⁰⁴ The literature gives other alternative approaches that have already been developed by well-known centres that can also serve as a source of inspiration.¹⁰⁵ Choosing an appropriate environment that allows participants to break free from their regular work pressures, and particularly to move away from their “normal” workplace, is an important condition for ethics training to be effective. An out-of-town site is therefore a preferable option.

C. A top-down or bottom-up approach?

The role of leaders in any society is expressed in age-old proverbs or sayings such as “fish rots from the head down”. On the one hand, this implies that the way in which a leader exercises his/her power determines the nature of the entire society. On the other hand, it means that, for any society to decline or collapse, an organisational structure will be present that allows bad practices to take root and then expand. Few people recognise their own flaws or weaknesses, especially those in leadership.¹⁰⁶

Bad governance practices are criticised by the public and often denounced in leaders' official speeches, as if nobody were guilty of them. For example, President Nkurunziza of Burundi made a good impression when he spoke about "zero tolerance for all perpetrators of acts of corruption" during the inauguration speech for his second term in office on 26 August 2010.¹⁰⁷ The speech was enthusiastically applauded by the public, but corruption continued to be systemic.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, former South African president Jacob Zuma proudly boasted in September 2013 about the progress being made to hunt down corrupt officials, whereas his administration had classified as "top secret" the report on the corruption scandal related to the renovation of his rural home, in which he was allegedly involved.¹⁰⁹ The tendency to refer to poor governance practices and misconduct as being carried out by others ("he", "she", "they", "leaders should ...") and not to themselves ("I", "we should ...") is striking, particularly in fragile contexts. This clearly indicates the need for ethical leadership education at all levels of a given country's government and civil service to achieve tangible results.

What should motivate the choice between top-down and bottom-up approaches to ethics training is the answer to these questions: "*who whose behaviour has more influence on society?*" and "*who should respond positively to the programme?*" The answer is again given by the principal-agent-client model (see Part I), which has been extensively applied to public accountability studies.¹¹⁰ The implementation of policies and the functioning of institutions and organisations are based on this concept. In the principal-agent-client model the principal and agent are bound by a contract by which the principal gives incentives (e.g. wages) to the agent. In the normal sense, the agent undertakes actions on behalf of the principal. An agent can also choose actions to serve his own interests instead (e.g. a corrupt agent). This kind of situation is normally prevented by specifying the costs of infringing laws and rules (e.g. fines, imprisonment).

To succeed in the normal sense of the principal exercising direct control over the agent, the principal needs first to behave ethically and then also know how to exercise his/her responsibilities ethically. In particular, given that unethical actions develop through extensive networks, ethical engagement by top political leaders is a key requirement to tackle systemic misconduct within a state. In a report published in 2000, the OECD Council stated that by setting the best example and taking the best action, political leaders are responsible for promoting and maintaining a high standard of ethical conduct throughout the government and public services.¹¹¹ Based on this concept of the importance of the "tone at the top", it is recommended to start by training top and senior leaders on ethics so as to create good role models within groups, institutions and society. The belief should be that ethics education will help the principal to better define goals, comply with norms and standards, and align the thinking and actions of his/her subordinates with these goals. In Burundi there is a saying "*umwera uva i*

bukuru ugakwira hose” (light comes from above), meaning that compliance with ethical values in an organisation is the primary responsibility of the leader. The guidelines for ethical behaviour in the management of public affairs presented by President Masisi of Botswana during a three-day retreat for the members of his cabinet in April 2018 follow this logic.¹¹² It is clear that the tone at the top is one of the most important elements of long-term organisational success.¹¹³ In this regard, the behaviour-modelling training approach, which has resulted in a number of high-profile behavioural changes for trainees in various domains,¹¹⁴ may be a particularly effective strategy for transferring ethical behaviour from top to middle-level and grassroots leaders.

However, in tightly run political systems like authoritarian regimes, the willingness to change is clearly very low among top leaders. Unethical leaders do not even admit their responsibility for the abuse of power, but target scapegoats to blame.¹¹⁵ In their defensive discourse when they are criticised about power abuses in their administrations, it is not unusual to hear leaders put forward the importance of preserving national sovereignty in order to dismiss any suggestion of the need for the provision of technical assistance by external sources to solve political problems.¹¹⁶ A bottom-up approach to ethics education might be the best choice in new democracies and non-democratic states. In particular, grassroots leaders, such as those leading civil society organisations, have considerable capacity to mobilise for resistance and change. Now more than ever they are key actors in revolutionary mass movements to achieve democratic changes.¹¹⁷ For example, they played a key role in defeating the unethical ambitions of presidents in Burkina Faso in 2014, Senegal in 2011-2012, Gambia in 2017, Zimbabwe in 2017, South Africa in 2018, and Algeria and Sudan in 2019, to name a few examples.

The bottom-up approach to ethics education is also a way of cultivating leadership ethics among young men and women who will be a country’s future leaders. Women in particular have a key role to play in leading change – together with men, but not behind them. Women-led civil society organisations, such as Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace in 2003,¹¹⁸ women in peaceful protests alongside men during the 2011 Arab spring,¹¹⁹ and women at the forefront of the movement for democracy and change in Sudan in 2019¹²⁰ are striking examples of this. Cultivating youth leadership ethics can enhance youth civic engagement for positive change, e.g. by consolidating the powerful role played by young people as the driving force behind uprisings in defence of democracy in democratic transitions around the world. It can also help to prevent negative youth engagement, such as involvement in extremism and terrorism.

Top-down or bottom-up approaches both offer the advantage of moving step-by-step from a simple to a more complex programme that allows organisers to learn from the first sessions and build on the success.

Once the programme has achieved a large measure of success, top-down and bottom-up training sessions can be organised in parallel to constitute a holistic approach. As Pickerd et al. have reported,¹²¹ a strong ethical tone at all levels of leadership is essential to establish an effective internal control environment conducive to the good governance of an organisation, including a fragile state.

D. Outputs, outcomes and impact

The immediate goal of this kind of ethical leadership education should be to increase leaders' awareness of and sensitivity to ethical issues in fragile states. Ethics training should provide leaders with a clearly defined set of tools, including concepts and examples of good practices in terms of ethics and leadership, enrich their personal experience of the concept of ethical behaviour, and create new benchmarks for such behaviour. The knowledge gained by course participants should increase their understanding of and critical thinking skills regarding increasingly complex global issues. But this cognitive dimension can only be considered as a limited form of "output", because even unethical leaders often think in some way before making their decisions. This is why, for example, criminals attempt to minimise the risk of being caught and punished, making crimes not just wayward incidents but real options.¹²² This is also why corrupt transactions take place behind closed doors and aid diverted by political elites in developing countries is hidden in offshore financial centres known for their banking secrecy and private wealth management.¹²³

The intermediate goal should be to strengthen skills in ethical decision-making, including in situations where leaders face ethical dilemmas. There is a need to address the fundamental question: *how to shift from leadership ethics training to cultivating leadership ethics, and then translate the concepts of ethical leadership into practice?* Biesta's book *Beyond Learning*¹²⁴ teaches us the importance of distinguishing *learning* from *education*. In this paper, the term *education* refers to the concept of the cultivation of an individual's humanity.¹²⁵ Ethics education should enhance an individual's socio-emotional and behavioural skills and generate as its "outcome" the individual's engagement in ethical behaviour. The acquisition of socio-emotional and behavioural skills and competences should translate into the cultivation of specific attitudes, mindsets and behavioural patterns as part of a leader's enlightenment at the individual level.

The paramount goal should be to cultivate skills and ethical behaviour at all levels of leadership and to achieve positive individual behaviour changes in the group, organisation and society as part of a dynamic process affecting both the present and the future. Leaders' collective compliance with ethics at all levels should shape a new governance trajectory towards lasting

peace with improved levels for indicators such as the peaceful resolution of disputes, and respect for human rights, the rule of law, the fundamental principles of democracy, and the promotion of political and economic freedoms. This “impact” could be achieved through networking, mentoring and coaching as part of the programme to help ethical leadership grow at the organisational/state level.

E. Nurturing momentum for change

Behavioural change is not about quick fixes, but requires time-consuming stages of development; nor is it ever a fully finished process, because an individual’s personality attributes can modify over time. Thus, ethics education must be envisaged as a continuous convection process to maintain momentum for change and achieve long-lasting “impact” for the programme. Hence, the programme must be evaluated regularly to assess its impact, identify imperfections and make relevant adjustments. While the cognitive dimension of ethics learning can be easily assessed by summative and formative methods through individual tests and examinations or group work,¹²⁶ the other dimensions (socio-emotional, behavioural and convection) would require more sophisticated assessment methods that measure their external expression. The literature suggests several assessment methods, some of which are theory-based models measuring specific types of leadership built on specific ethical values and behaviours, such as the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire¹²⁷ and Servant Leadership Questionnaire.¹²⁸ Other methods focus directly on ethical leadership, including the Ethical Leadership Survey,¹²⁹ the Perceived Leader Integrity Scale,¹³⁰ the Ethical Leadership Work Questionnaire,¹³¹ the Ethical Leadership Behaviour Scale,¹³² the Revised Ethical Leadership Scale¹³³ and the Web-based Questionnaire of Ethical Skills.¹³⁴ Although these methods have been developed primarily to assess various ethical dimensions of leadership in companies and organisations, despite their limitations¹³⁵ they can be sources of inspiration when designing a method to evaluate the ethics-related attributes of leaders at the various levels of government.

The most important assessment will involve measuring the ethics education programme’s impact on society. This requires a methodology to gather relevant data on the effect of changes in leadership style and governance indicators resulting from attending the ethical leadership education programme on the country’s overall political, social, economic, environmental and cultural landscape. The leadership style should be assessed by measuring the perceived occurrence of forms of leadership that negatively influence governance, such as kleptocracy, patronage, nepotism, a winner-takes-all policy, coercion, autocracy, big man rule, formal vs informal settings, and opacity, and those forms of leadership that have a positive influence, such as power-sharing, dialogue and

compromise, democracy/participation, vision, mentoring, inspiring, pacesetting and team work. The nature of governance should be assessed by collecting data on the perception of levels of, among other things, corruption, human rights abuses, democracy or the lack of it, the inclusiveness of the economic system, transparency or its lack, accountability, the application of the rule of law, and inclusion. Most of these data are regularly provided by international organisations and institutions that have developed specialised methodologies to measure these kinds of effects in specific fields. These include, for example, Transparency International's National Integrity System,¹³⁶ Freedom House's Freedom in the World index,¹³⁷ the Fund for Peace's Fragile States Index,¹³⁸ the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment¹³⁹ and Doing Business index,¹⁴⁰ Equal Measures 2030's SDG Gender Index,¹⁴¹ the Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom,¹⁴² the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index,¹⁴³ the Institute for Economics and Peace's Global Peace Index¹⁴⁴ and Human Rights Watch's World Reports on human rights.¹⁴⁵

Moreover, the findings in the literature on the positive impact of ethics courses on students' personal beliefs and behaviours¹⁴⁶ should encourage states to incorporate ethics education into their schools curricula to cultivate momentum across generations. This means that ethics education is more than a one-off event, so it must be contextualised in a broader long-term effort. Financially, it is obvious that cultivating ethical leadership to fight against state fragility will be expensive, but leaders' ignorance and unethical behaviour are much more costly. The proposed programme could be a major breakthrough in the fight against leaders' unethical behaviour and in the development of resilient leadership in turbulent times, not only for existing fragile states,¹⁴⁷ but to prevent vulnerable states from falling into fragility.

IV. Conclusion

After defining the unethical behaviour of leaders as the root cause of state fragility in the first part of this study (Part I), the next step was to reflect on a sustainable solution to this issue. Part II analysed the invaluable role played by the ethical dimension in leaders' fulfilment of their responsibilities, including the achievement of the most difficult changes and the management of complex situations characterised by dilemmas and contradictions. The interdependence and complementarity of personal and professional ethics in the development of ethical, effective leadership was also noted. In addition, Part II has highlighted the challenges that hinder the emergence of ethical leaders in fragile states, which explains why state fragility persists in many countries around the world, despite the multiple programmes that have been put in place and the well-meaning interventions of peacebuilders.

After noting that current peacebuilding programmes focus mainly on the symptoms of state fragility, Part II of the study then suggests an approach based on ethics education for leaders to tackle the root causes of the problem. This approach is envisaged as a continuous convective process intended to cultivate ethical skills and behaviour at all levels of leadership. The fact that positive changes in individual behaviour are reflected in the behaviour of the entire group, organisation or society should maintain momentum for positive change and promote the long-term impact of the programme.

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