

**PERSISTENT CONFLICT IN SIERRA LEONE AND SOUTH SUDAN, A
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GENDER FACTOR**

NAOMI WANJUGU GITHUI

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

NAME: NAOMI WANJUGU GITHUI

REG. NO: R52/80397/2012

Sign: Date:

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

SUPERVISOR: PROF. MARIA NZOMO

Sign: Date:

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my family. Thank you for your support.

ABSTRACT

Conflict is fuelled by deeply engrained divisions, mistrust and exclusionary politics.

There are indeed different gender roles evident in conflict. Particularly for this study, women's peace efforts, like many civil society activities, often challenge these dynamics in both formal and informal spheres by advocating consensus building instead of recrimination and inclusion instead of elite-dominated politics. These efforts often aim to address the structural changes necessary for sustainable peace, and can attract wide support for women's groups and build their legitimacy.

The research project seeks to Examine the different combatant and non-combatant roles of the female in armed conflict analyze gender roles in conflict resolution in South Sudan and Sierra Leone, determine the extent to which female can facilitate the reduction of conflict in Sierra Leone and South Sudan, determine the extent to which women can facilitate the reduction of conflict in Sierra Leone and South Sudan as well as explore the challenges of the gender roles in conflict resolution

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

In the last few decades, governments, international organizations and civil society have increasingly recognized the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women while acknowledging their positive contributions in the world. . In this regard, the research paper will discuss the involvement of women in conflict and non-combatants and as combatants. However the focus on women as combatants will not take centre stage to the paper as the main focus of research paper is on the role conflict management. On combatant roles of women, the factors explaining the increased ‘feminization of the militarization process’ associated with conflicts will be discussed.

Experiences from Somalia, Sudan, and Sierra Leone, Kenya, South Africa among others, have revealed women as victims, actors, and perpetrators in conflict. Women have also been actively involved in informal and community-based peace efforts. Moreover, women’s participation in, and their support to, inclusive peace initiatives cutting across communitarian, national, religious and/or social barriers, have sometimes led to the adoption of sustainable peace agreements.¹ However, formal peace processes taking place at the international level often ignore and sometimes discourage the contributions and expressions of women. For example, during the Arusha negotiations for a peace settlement in Burundi in 2000, only two of the 126 delegates were women.²

¹ ICG. “Beyond Victimhood: Women’s Peacebuilding in Sudan, Congo and Uganda”, International Crisis Group, Africa Report No.112, 28 June 2006 (available at http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/africa/112_beyond_victimhood_women_peacebuilding_in_sudan_drc_and_uganda.pdf ; accessed 22 January 2007).

² Lisa Schirch and Manjrika Sewak, “The Role of Women in Peacebuilding” (available at www.gppac.net/.../Research/Role_of_CS_in_CP/Issue_paper_on_the_Role_of_Women_in_Peacebuilding_Jan2005.doc ; accessed 26 January 2007).

Building on regional efforts to promote the participation of women in decision-making and gender equity such as the 2004 AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa,³ the Women's Protocol recognizes the right of women to a peaceful existence and commits governments to ensuring the increased participation of women in peace processes and in all aspects of planning, formulation, and implementation of conflict management post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes.⁴

Previous scholars and researchers in conflict management have ignored the great part that gender plays in conflict either as perpetrators or victims and this has led to persistent conflict in Sierra Leone and South Sudan. As such, the research is geared towards finding a solution on whether the involvement of gender in conflict management can enhance lasting solutions that ensure the conflict is resolved and societies transformed, thus preventing prolonged conflicts.

To ensure women's participation in peacemaking and peace processes, the study will emphasize on the participation of a significant number of women in peace processes and reconstruction, but also on the effectiveness of their participation. However, poverty, lack of confidence, practical peace skills, and illiteracy, exacerbated by patriarchal cultural practices, has often hindered women's participation in these initiatives. This project therefore discusses and examines the potential roles of women in conflict management thus bringing out the successes and challenges of such participation. By committing African governments to the elimination all forms of discrimination against women and by guaranteeing them equal opportunity and access the study suggests that the women's participation will ensure effective and successful peace process.

³ Centre for Conflict Resolution, "Women and Peace-building in Africa". Available at <http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za>

⁴ Ogunsanya Kemi (2007), *Women Transforming Conflicts in Africa: Descriptive Studies from Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Sudan*, Durban: ACCORD, Occasional Paper Series, vol. 2, no. 3

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

International instruments have been on the forefront in the promotion of the participation of women in matters of conflict and peace. More than a decade after the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) was unanimously adopted, however, the striking absence of women from formal peace negotiations still reveals a troubling gap between the aspirations of countless global as well as regional commitments and also the reality of peace processes. It has been 35 years since the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 32 years since the UN General Assembly's Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Cooperation, 19 years since the UN convened the Fourth World Conference on Women and participating governments issued the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and 14 years since resolution 1325 (2000) made women's participation in all aspects of peacekeeping. Even after such efforts there is a problematic level of participation from women.⁵

Though women have played destructive roles in the civil wars that ravaged some states, they are also in the forefront of the peace processes that eventually ended these wars, especially in Sierra Leone despite different challenges they face.⁶ Such women's roles can be located within the context of war fatigue since they became tired of losing their loved ones to war and wanted to put an end to living in perpetual fear. The roles of these women in peacemaking in South Sudan and Sierra Leone are becoming more noticeable with the formation of women's civil society groups through which they mobilized and galvanized the society (women in particular) to call for peace, democracy, and an end to hostilities. Most important to the study is

⁵Ibid

⁶ Mazurana Dyan, Susan, A. McKay, Khristopher , C. Carlson, and Janel, C. Kasper (2002), "Girls in Fighting Forces and Groups: Their Recruitment, Participation, Demobilisation and Reintegration", *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, vol. 8.

the role of women in the area of conflict management. This focuses on the implications of women's active involvement in conflict and especially what the current and prospective roles of women in mediation and post-conflict peace-building are.

Most of the studies have focused on feministic differentiation of gender characterizations. However, this study appreciates the roles played specifically by women in conflict management, thus upholding the importance of applying these roles in persistent conflicts such as the case in Sierra Leone and South Sudan.⁷ Whereas the consideration of a gender perspective in development assistance has been recognized by most bilateral and multilateral agencies, the same is not true for the areas mentioned above. So far, most concepts and approaches to crisis prevention and conflict management have either ignored or marginalized issues of gender as well as women. Conflict management and peace-building warfare are, however, highly gendered activities. Embracing a gender perspective challenges the idea of 'gender-neutral' policies, programmes as well as institutions of crisis prevention together with conflict management.⁸ It as well sheds light on how activities of women and new experiences in the conflict can have social, political as well as economic consequences for the post- conflict settlement and also peace-building processes. Gender equality, in addition to in a wider sense social justice, is thus an necessary requirement for any sustainable development along with peace-building activity. Therefore the study seeks to examine the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming in conflict management, by examining past works and bridging the gap of the missing link to the implementation of the existing provisions on gender roles in peace-building and conflict management.

⁷ Ogunsanya Kemi (2007), *Women Transforming Conflicts in Africa: Descriptive Studies from Burundi*, op cit.

⁸ George-Williams, Desmond (2002), *Changing Gender Roles in Conflict and Post- Conflict Situations in Africa*, Retrieved 15 th August, 2010 from <http://www.upeace.org/resources/gender_book>

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study is to analyze the persistent conflict in Sierra Leone and South Sudan, a comparative study of gender factor.

More specifically the study aims to:

- i. Examine the different combatant and non-combatant roles of the female in armed conflict
- ii. Analyze gender roles in conflict resolution in South Sudan and Sierra Leone
- iii. Determine the extent to which female can facilitate the reduction of conflict in Sierra Leone and South Sudan
- iv. Determine the extent to which women can facilitate the reduction of conflict in Sierra Leone and South Sudan
- v. Explore the challenges of the gender roles in conflict resolution

1.4 Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

- i. What are the different roles played by women in persistent armed conflict?
- ii. What are the gender roles in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post conflict reconstruction?
- iii. What is the state of gender mainstreaming in the African Union, UNSCR 1325 and national policies?
- iv. What are the challenges women faces as actors in conflict resolution?
- v. To what extent is the formal and informal participation and involvement of women in conflict management?

1.5 Literature Review

In the last few decades, governments, international organizations and civil society have increasingly recognized the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women while acknowledging their positive contributions in the world. In this regard, the research paper will discuss the involvement of women in conflict and non-combatants and as combatants. However the focus of women as combatants will not take centre stage to the paper as the main focus of research paper is on the role conflict management. On combatant roles of women, the factors explaining the increased ‘feminization of the militarization process’ associated with conflicts will be discussed.⁹ In order to explore these roles, this section introduces the study to the issues of gender mainstreaming, persistent conflicts and gender roles in conflict management.

1.5.1 The Nature of Conflict

Conflict is a universal feature of human society. It takes its origins in economic differentiation, social change, cultural formation, psychological development and political organization, all of which are inherently conflictual, and becomes overt through the formation of conflict parties, which come to have, or are perceived to have, mutually incompatible goals.¹⁰ The identity of the conflict parties, the levels at which the conflict is contested, and the issues fought over such as, scarce resources, unequal relations, competing values, may vary over time and may themselves be disputed. Conflicts are dynamic as they escalate and de-escalate, and are constituted by a complex interplay of attitudes and behaviors that can assume a reality of their own thus complicating conflict and in some cases making them persistent.¹¹ Third parties are likely to be involved as the conflict develops, and may themselves thereby become parties in an extended

⁹ El-Jack Amani (2003). *Gender and Armed Conflict: Overview Report*. Brighton, the United Kingdom: IDS BRIDGE (Development and Gender).

¹⁰ Khali, M. “Conflict Resolution in Africa,” *Journal of African Economies*, 9, 3, October 2000: 294 -322.

¹¹ Deutsch, M. (2006). *Cooperation and Competition*. In M. Deutsch, P. T. Coleman, & E. C. Marcus (Eds.), *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and practice* (23–42). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

conflict. An important point to note from the outset is how early theorists in the field such as Deutsch¹² distinguished between destructive and constructive conflict, suggesting that the former was to be avoided but the latter was a necessary and valuable aspect of human creativity. This remains key in understanding the normative orientation of the conflict management field as a whole, as is emphasized in the study.

Contemporary conflicts in Africa are typically complex, yet there is still a tendency to discuss them in over-simplistic, single-factor, terms: for example in terms of ethnicity, resource conflict, borders, youth alienation or poverty. In fact, the processes of violent conflicts tend to be driven by a complex interplay of a number of factors, including underlying structural features and a multiplicity of different actors with varying motivations. Moreover, conflicts are generally very dynamic.¹³ Conflict assessments can rapidly become out-dated; particularly for use in judging the likely effects of possible conflict management interventions.

The causes of armed conflict are often linked with attempts to control economic resources such as oil, metals, diamonds, drugs or contested territorial boundaries. In countries such as Sudan, for example, oilfield exploration has caused and intensified the impoverishment of women and men. Entire communities have been targeted and killed, displaced and/or marginalized in the name of oil development. The control of resources, like the exercise of power, is gendered. Those who do not have power or resources – groups that are disproportionately, though by no means exclusively, made up of women – do not usually start wars.¹⁴

¹² Deutsch, M. (1973). *The Resolution of Conflict: Constructive and Destructive Processes*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

¹³ Munkler, H. (2005) *The New Wars* Cambridge: Polity Press, p.10

¹⁴ Khali, M. "Conflict Resolution in Africa," *Journal of African Economies*, 9, 3, October 2000: 294 -322.

Unresolved struggles over resources, combined with the severe impact of displacement, impoverishment and increased militarization in zones of conflict, serve to prolong existing armed conflicts. Moreover, conflict tends to cause and/or perpetuate inequalities between ethnic groups and discrimination against marginalized groups of women and men, thereby paving the way for the outbreak of future conflicts. Armed conflict in the 21st century is growing in its complexity. At the international level, inequality in the distribution of power and resources has become more pronounced.¹⁵ Coupled with structural inequalities between and within nation-states, this disparity has led to more regional conflict, as well as an escalation of international armed conflicts. Furthermore, the nature of warfare itself has dramatically changed due to the development of increasingly sophisticated weapons technology.¹⁶ Nations have placed greater emphasis on increasing and/or reinforcing military strength. This worsens existing constraints on women's rights, which in turn exacerbates inequalities in gender relations.

Regardless of the type of conflict, the concept of men going to war at the 'front' and women staying safely at home with children and the elderly does not reflect the reality of war. In fact, the distinction between 'conflict' and 'safe' zones, whereby the home and workplace are viewed as safe, is a long-held myth, and has been problematized by feminists for some time.¹⁷ In conflict zones, war comes to women as they work on their land. War targets their homes – abducting, displacing and/or killing them along with their children.¹⁸ However the new realizations of the already existing roles of women in conflict management are being realized and will be the focus of this study in the subsequent chapters.

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ El Jack, A., 2002, 'Gender Perspectives on the Management of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Sudan', in V. Farr and K. Gebre-Wold (eds), *Gender Perspectives on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Regional and International Concerns*, Brief 24, Bonn: Bonn International Center for Conversion.

¹⁷ Cockburn, C., 1998, *The Space Between Us: Negotiating Gender and National Identities in Conflict*, London: Zed Books

¹⁸ El Jack, A., 2002, 'Gender Perspectives on the Management of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Sudan' op cit.

1.5.2 The Gender Factor

Gender is defined in contrast to sex, in order to draw attention to the social roles of as well as interactions between women and also men, instead of their biological differences.¹⁹ Female and male roles and also the relations between women and men are not unchangeable but subject to constant change since they are shaped by society, therefore they are socially constructed as well as depending on ethnicity, age, class etc. However, in all societies, gender relations between women and men have mostly tended to work to the disadvantage of women. They include different scopes for action, such as different possibilities for making choices and different rights as well as decision making powers. These actions are determined by existing cultural norms and values of masculinity as well as femininity. Individuals are not passive victims: as gendered actors, they also shape the very norms, values, and societal structures which restrict their autonomy of action.²⁰ Therefore it is important to notice that not only individuals' identities are gendered, but also cultural norms and values, as well as social institutions and organizations.

Taking up a gender perspective in the field of conflict management and peace building allows two rather neglected aspects to come to the fore: First because a gender perspective does focus on the individual it enables development experts to assess the different impact of policies, programmes, and institutions dealing with violent conflicts, crisis prevention, and conflict management concerning women and men as well as gender relations.²¹ As a project manager, s/he is also able to take into account the different needs and interests of women and men in the various stages of violent conflicts. Secondly, because the practices of warfare, crisis prevention and conflict management are built around and highly depend on the different roles of women and

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Giles, W. and Hyndman, J., (2003). *Sites of Violence: Gender and Conflict Zones*, Berkeley: University of California Press

²¹ Enloe, C., 1987, 'Feminist Thinking About War, Militarism and Peace', in B. Hess (ed), *Analyzing Gender: A Handbook of Social Science Research*, Newbury Park: Sage

men, a gender perspective helps to decode the very “gendered” nature of policies, institutions, and practices of warfare and peace-building. It challenges the notion of ‘gender- neutral’ policies, programmes and institutions of crisis prevention and conflict management.

Taking up a gender perspective in conflict management recognizes that only through changing social relations and institutional practices may gender equality emerge. The strategy of gender mainstreaming comprises the following aspects: the integration of a gender perspective into the analyses and formulation of all policies, programmes and projects, and initiatives to enable women as well as men to formulate and express their views and to participate in decision-making processes. Therefore, it encompasses interventions on the micro (the individual), meso (cultural norms and values) and macro (social institutions and organizations) levels which are necessary to overcome the structural causes of gender-specific discrimination and to achieve gender equality.²² This in turn is necessary in order to achieve sustainable development and social justice.

On the other hand, at the national and international level there has been an increased awareness of gender aspects in many policy issues related to peace-building processes like development policy and human rights protection. At the special session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on "Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century" held from 5-9 June 2000 in New York (Beijing + 5), considerable attention was paid to the gender aspects of armed conflicts.²³ The need for special protection of women and the issue of greater female participation in conflict prevention and conflict resolution has been put on the

²² Ibid

²³ Aning Emmanuel Kwesi (1998a), “Gender and Civil War: The Cases of Liberia and Sierra Leone”, *Civil Wars*, vol. 1, no. 4.

agenda. International governmental organizations like the UN and the European Union²⁴ have produced wide-ranging policy recommendations on the position of women in violent conflicts and on the mainstreaming of gender in policies related to post-conflict rehabilitation, development and peace-building.

The relevance of a gender approach in crisis prevention and conflict management has also been recognized by the European Union (EU). At its session on the 30th of November 2000 the parliament recommended that a UN Special Ambassador for the Situation of Women in Armed Conflicts be appointed. On 31st October 2000 the UN Security Council passed its first ever resolution on Women, Peace and Security.²⁵ Furthermore, NGOs like Oxfam, Amnesty International, International Alert, and Conciliation Resources have also begun to stress the gender dimensions of conflicts and their implications for the peace-building process as well as their significance for their own work. Their policy recommendations, project planning and assessment address and stress - to varying degrees - women's diverse experiences in war, including their particular and distinctive peacemaking roles and the psychological, physical, and mental consequences of violent conflicts on women, such as trauma and war injuries.²⁶

1.5.3 Gender Dynamics of Armed conflict

Gender relations are typically characterized by unequal access to, or distribution of, power. Given that gender discrimination is so prevalent, it influences other dynamics of armed conflict. More specifically, gender analysis in armed conflict highlights the differences between women

²⁴ Ogunsanya Kemi (2007), *Women Transforming Conflicts in Africa: Descriptive Studies from Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Sudan*, Durban: ACCORD, Occasional Paper Series, vol. 2, no. 3

²⁵ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, 2000.

²⁶ Mason, Simon, 2009, *Insider Mediators: Exploring Their Key Role in Informal Peace Processes*, Berghof Foundation for Peace Support, Berlin

and men in terms of their gendered activities, their needs, their acquisition and control of resources and their access to decision- making processes in post-conflict situations.²⁷

Men of combat age are most often the ones who are conscripted and therefore killed or injured during battle. Women, however, are the main victims of war. This is either directly as fatalities and casualties or indirectly through the breakdown of family and community structures.²⁸ Women in war zones may face contradictory demands from government and society. On one hand, the nation calls upon women to participate in nationalist struggles in their capacity as members of the national collective. In various war zones, women have been mobilized in armed conflict because their support, labor and services have been needed. At the same time, the construction of women as ‘mothers’ and ‘guardians of the culture’ within nationalist liberation movements has often constrained their activism in conflict and post-conflict reconstruction processes.²⁹

The construction of the identities of women in their gendered roles as ‘mothers’ and ‘guardians of the culture’ implies they are ‘victims’, thus justifying the intensified use of power and violence to ‘protect’ them. Often there is a perception that this ‘protection’ has failed, as is the case where public acts of physical and sexual violence such as rape occur. Sexual crimes, which disproportionately affect women, may be carried out in full view of family and community, thereby rendering the victims as ‘tainted’ and unworthy of protection.³⁰ Examples of women’s initiatives to achieve peace are often cited as evidence that women are innately nurturing in contrast to men, who are characterized as innately aggressive and warlike. Yet

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Byrne, B. (1996), *Towards a Gendered Understanding of Conflict*. Brighton, the United Kingdom: IDS BRIDGE (Development and Gender) Research Report no. 34.

²⁹ Stasiulis, D., 1999, ‘Relational Positionalities of Nationalisms, Racisms, and Feminisms’, in C. Kaplan, N. Alarcon and M. Moallem (eds), *Between Woman and Nation: Nationalisms, Transnational Feminisms and the State*, Durham and London: Duke University Press

³⁰ Bennett, O., Bexley, J. and Warnock, K., 1995, ‘Introduction’, in O. Bennett, J. Bexley and K. Warnock (eds), *Arms to Fight, Arms to Protect: Women Speak Out About Conflict*, London: Panos Publications

research by feminists in the North and the South has challenged the so-called peaceful nature of women by examining their involvement in national liberation struggles, their direct and/or indirect support of armed conflicts and their contributions to war and militarism generally.³¹

Africa is in a deep persistent malaise. By far it is the least developed of all continents economically, as well as the most conflict-prone politically. Such pessimism is caused partly the failure to manage, or resolve, the destructive cost of many violent conflicts. The ineffectiveness of conflict management efforts led by the United Nations, the African Union, other regional and sub-regional organizations, or even eminent personalities such as Nelson Mandela, Jimmy Carter, and others is itself due in large part to the deficiency of a conceptual framework for analyzing the internal disorders. Without an appropriate diagnosis of the many diverse causes of conflict, the corrective and remedial actions become a futile and dangerous exercise.

The problem of violent internal conflict in Africa is acute. It has been judged to be “the most warring region on the planet.”³² Nearly a third of Africa’s conflicts have started since the late 1980s and indeed Africa is experiencing a much greater rate of increase in the number of conflicts than other regions, and currently has the highest number of ongoing conflicts: half of Africa’s states are in conflict, affecting 20 per cent of the continent’s population. In mid-2001, serious internal conflict continued in Algeria, Western Sahara, Sudan, Chad, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Guinea, Liberia, Congo-Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Angola, and the Comoros.³³ Many other African states face instability, high levels of domestic political violence, or burgeoning secessionist or rebel movements such as

³¹ Moser, C. and Clark, F. (eds), 2001, *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*, London: Zed Books

³² Shawcross, W. 2000. *Deliver Us from Evil: Warlords and Peacekeepers in a World of Endless Conflict*. London: Bloomsbury.

³³ Richard Jackson. 2000b. “Successful Negotiation in International Violent Conflict”, *Journal of Peace Research* 37, 3:323-43.

Lesotho, South Africa, Namibia, Kenya, Central African Republic, Djibouti, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria.³⁴

The primary challenge posed by Africa's conflicts lies in their internally driven character. At present, the only inter-state conflict in Africa is between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Even this relatively simple border conflict, however, has been transformed into a wider regional conflict involving Kenya, Somalia and Libya, and has taken on many of the characteristics of internal conflicts. For example, both Ethiopia and Eritrea are supporting opposing Somali factions in a proxy war that has now spread to Northern Kenya. Eritrea is also supporting Ethiopian rebels operating out of Somalia and Kenya. Africa's internal conflicts pose particular conflict management challenges, not least because they tend to be more intense and intractable than inter-state ones. Empirical studies demonstrate that they tend to be more severe and costly in terms of lives and refugees than most inter-state conflicts, although there are clearly some exceptions.³⁵

1.5.4 Gender Mainstreaming in Conflict Management

The decision of the Norwegian Nobel Committee to award the 2011 Peace Prize to Leymah Gbowee, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and Tawakkul Karman for their non-violent struggles for the protection of women as well as women's rights so that they can fully participate in peace-building processes reaffirmed the centrality of the contribution of women to peace, as well as the essential connection between justice, democracy, and gender equality.³⁶ For the first time in history, the Nobel Committee referred to UN Security Council resolution 1325 in its statement, as it reiterated the decisive importance of women's leadership in international peace as well as security. On 22 June 2011, the United Nations General Assembly as well as unanimously approved

³⁴ Mitchell, C. 1992. "External Peace-Making Initiatives and Intra-National Conflict." In Midlarsky, M. (ed.) *The Internationalisation of Communal Strife*. London: Routledge.

³⁵ Jackson, Richard. 1998. "Negotiation Versus Mediation in International Conflict: Deciding How to Deal with Violent Conflicts." PhD Dissertation, University of Canterbury, New Zealand.

³⁶ *Ibid*

the first resolution (65/283) which is on peace mediation, the first to be adopted by this body.³⁷ The resolution encourages and strengthens the position of women in conflict resolution efforts as well as underscoring the need for further engagement with civil society to ensure this happens. The peacemaking as well as peace-building being part the Security Council remitting, has been reiterated in subsequent resolutions, including but not limiting to, 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), and the latest, 1960 (2010),³⁸ in addition to the several reports of the Secretary-General on mediation and on women, peace and also, security.

Despite the fact that there has been no significant improvement with regard to women's participation in official positions (chief mediators, signatories), their representation within mediation teams and the number and frequency of consultations between the mediation team and women's groups have been increasing. From August 2008 to March 2012, women were signatories in only two of the 61 peace agreements that have been concluded over the period. However, in the 11 mediation processes that the UN was (co-) leading in 2011, the mediation teams held regular consultations with women's civil society organizations in 7 processes.³⁹

These figures indicate that the underrepresentation of women at the peace table is much more marked than in other public decision, making roles, where women are still underrepresented but where the gap has been steadily narrowing. This includes the roles that typically dominate peace talks: politician, lawyer, diplomat and member of a party to armed conflict. When reviewing patterns of women's participation in peace processes, one must carefully distinguish between individual women filling an official role in the peace talks and those who participate on behalf of women as a social group—that is, speaking as part of a coalition of representatives of women's civil society or community groups. Women's structural

³⁷ United Nations Resolution 65/283, 2011

³⁸ UN Security Council Resolution 1820, 2008

³⁹ DPA/MSU informal communication, April 2012.

exclusion from peace talks has significant consequences for the extent to which issues of concern to them – such as violence against women or women’s citizenship rights – are addressed. Recent research highlights the devastating relationship between exclusion and fragility, highlighting a positive and significant correlation between severe economic and social horizontal inequalities and conflict.⁴⁰ States are particularly vulnerable when large numbers of people living within their boundaries are disconnected from state institutions, and when state institutions are accountable only to an elite minority.⁴¹ A degree of equality in social, political, economic and cultural rights is essential for rebuilding the trust between the state and society and among social groups. Therefore it is a plausible assumption that there is also a correlation between more inclusive and open models of negotiations and a higher likelihood that the outcome agreements will hold and prevent a relapse into conflict. The absence of women in formal roles in peace processes poses one set of problems; the scarcity of women’s civil society groups with consultative access to negotiators and mediators poses another. Women’s groups often represent and voice women’s priorities and concerns, and indeed are more likely to do so than women within negotiating delegations, who are bound to their particular party’s interests.

A strong case can be made for the involvement of women’s groups in some structured way that ensures that their perspectives are heard. There is a correlation between the organized participation of women’s groups and greater gender-sensitivity of the text of the agreements, which only enhances their comprehensiveness and legitimacy. Although this cannot be proven due to the very small number of cases to date, one can reasonably assume that the empowerment, mobilization and involvement of women’s groups during the peacemaking phase can only

⁴⁰ Østby, Gudrun, 2008, “Inequalities, the Political Environment and Civil Conflict: Evidence from 55 Developing Countries”, Stewart, Frances, (ed.) *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Understanding Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp 136-159

⁴¹ DFID, 2011, *The Politics of Poverty: Elites, Citizens and States. Findings from ten years of DFID-funded research on Governance and Fragile States 2011- 2010*. A Synthesis paper, London

support their engagement during the always - difficult phase of implementation and peacebuilding.⁴²

Since October 2000, only marginal progress has been made with regard to the number of women in formal peace processes or the design and conduct of peace talks in ways that would give greater voice to women, particularly from civil society⁴³. Over the same period, a limited number of provisions addressing women's human rights have been incorporated into peace agreements. This is in spite of growing participation of women in politics and the security sector, greater awareness about the differentiated impact of war on women and girls and the role they can play in conflict resolution, and evidence that peace negotiations characterized by high civil society involvement are less likely to result in resumed warfare.⁴⁴ UN WOMEN and its partners have made this issue an important element of their programming: supporting women's political leadership, strengthening women's cross-national peace coalitions, supporting the inclusion of women in peace talks, providing gender expertise to mediation processes, building women's voice at donor conferences and other forums for the implementation of peace agreements, and developing guidance on specific topics, such as the neglect of conflict-related sexual violence in mediation processes.⁴⁵

This paper will therefore examine and review modalities of engagements used in a variety of peace processes to increase women's participation or the very availability of gender expertise in it. It as well highlights women's demands during peace negotiations as articulated in statements as well as declarations, also assesses the gender-related content of peace agreements,

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ Marhaban, Shadia, Statement at the Security Council Arria Formula Meeting on Women's role in mediation and conflict resolution, 8th March 2012

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ UN WOMEN's Publications: Women at the Peace Table: Making a Difference (2000) and Securing the Peace (2005).

as well as offering recommendations for the way forward. The findings outlined will therefore provide a helpful reality check to policymakers and those within the international and regional organizations upon who rests the responsibility to address the disparity linking the goals of Resolution 1325⁴⁶ and the reality of women's participation in peace processes.

1.6 Justification of the Study

The role of gender in conflict management is of importance to this study due to the significant roles played particularly by women all through the peace process. The roles women play, in this regard, positive non-combatant roles that enhance the peace process as well as post-conflict reconstruction has been evident in cases of Sierra Leone and South Sudan. The study brings to light different aspects of women and conflict that helps in policy making and academia in regard to women participation in conflict management.

The study addresses different conundrum: what are the backgrounds to the wars in Sierra Leone and South Sudan, what factors explain the increased 'feminization of the militarization process' associated with conflicts in Africa, women as voluntary partners in war and also as 'reluctant' actors who are being manipulated by brutal army officers or warlords, the effects of women's active involvement in conflicts for the future of the entire communities in the affected countries, and what the current and potential roles of women in mediation as well as post-conflict peace-building are. These questions will be fully addressed in the subsequent chapters of this paper by, first of all, engaging in the theoretical discourses on gender difference and their relevance in fathoming the main objectives to the study. Furthermore, most of the analysis in this paper will focus on South Sudan and Sierra Leone.

From the conundrum, the study seeks to add to the academia so that the finding and recommendations as well as reviews are used for current and future research. In the policy arena

⁴⁶ UN Resolution 1325, 2000

the study will enlighten further to the importance of enhancing gender mainstreaming in order to remove or lessen the hindrances that women encounter in their participation in the peace processes, for effective conflict resolution and transformation in the conflicted societies.

1.7 Hypotheses

- i. Women have played a significant role in conflict resolution in South Sudan and Sierra Leone
- ii. Gender mainstreaming is actively gaining ground nationally and internationally
- iii. The participation and involvement of women in conflict management is faced with different challenges

1.8 Theoretical Framework

As already highlighted in the previous sections, the primary task in this paper is to analyze the multiple roles played by women in conflict situations within the broad context of empirical and theoretical conjectures. The focus is therefore, to explore the contending perspectives on gender difference as advanced by the two opposing schools of thought in gender research, viz, essentialism and constructionism.⁴⁷ The two schools of thought agree of existing gender differences but differ in their explanations and justifications. Despite these differences, the two schools unanimously agree that women, as a gender category, have made positive contributions in the post-conflict peacebuilding. In addition, the two approaches agree on the need for, and imperative of, sound analysis and explanation, which can be acted upon so as to create positive changes. Scholars in the opposing camps have strong convictions that the gender dimension plays a very fundamental role in shaping the parameters and conduct of warfare, and that efforts

⁴⁷ Smith Dan (1996), The Problem of Essentialism . Paper presented at the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on “Political Decision Making and Conflict Resolution: The Impact of Gender Difference” held in Santo Domingo, 7-10 October.

towards creating more peaceful solutions to conflicts must, of necessity, take the gender dimension into account.

The basic argument of the essentialist scholars is best captured by Skjelsbaek⁴⁸ when she contends that essentialism is based on the notion that some objects, no matter how they are described or defined, may have certain qualities which are timeless and immutable. In the essentialist worldview, gender identity is construed as natural, permanent, and unchangeable. Thus, gender, according to essentialism, is regarded as something which has its root from one principal origin and not from numerous aspects of our social worlds. Since essentialism deals with the natural thesis of gender identity, scholars honoring this theoretical tradition preoccupy themselves with the task of finding answers to such questions as ‘who am I’ and ‘where do I come from?’.⁴⁹ This is because gender, according to essentialism, is determined by the fundamental characteristics of an individual’s biology, then it (biology) becomes the primary source for explaining differences in male and female behavior, attitudes, and thinking. What it means to be a man or a woman is seen as having the same implications across time and space.⁵⁰

Furthermore, essentialist scholars contend that for men in power and position of authority means that there is, apparently, something about men’s power status that is rooted in their gender identity, the ‘true’ nature of men. The fact that women are mostly at home looking after their husbands and children is best explained in terms of women’s ‘true’ nature. This implies that from time immemorial, men and women have tended to do what they are naturally good at. From the essentialists’ point of view, gender difference becomes a matter of nature rather than nurture. It

⁴⁸ Skjelsbaek Inger (1997), *Gender Battlefields: A Gender Analysis of Peace and Conflict*, Oslo: Peace Research Institute of Oslo Report no. 6. p.24

⁴⁹ Smith Dan (1996), *The Problem of Essentialism*. Paper presented at the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on “Political Decision Making and Conflict Resolution: The Impact of Gender Difference” held in Santo Domingo, 7-10 October, p. 8

⁵⁰ *Ibid* 25

is worth bearing in mind that despite the contributions of the essentialist scholars to gender research, essentialism has been rejected on several grounds. First, the essentialist natural thesis is regarded as an anachronism since it recognizes gender identity as being static irrespective of time and space. Essentialism upholds the assertion that all men are masculine and all women are feminine. The essentialist postulation becomes more confusing and even problematic when the phenomenon of attraction, for example, is subjected to serious scrutiny.⁵¹

According to the essentialist scholars, a vital part of femininity should be attracted to males; hence all women should be attracted to men. When women feel attracted to other women, it then becomes absurd and seen as abnormal. The meaning of this, according to the essentialist scholars, is that their biological constitution is deficient, since this is where their gender identity is supposed to originate. Second, essentialism does not believe in change since it contends that human being remain the same throughout his/her lifetime; implying that a prostitute, for example, will always be a prostitute irrespective of her desire to change. Finally, the essentialist assumption that men possess certain unchangeable features that distinguish them from women has equally been rejected.⁵²

Constructionist view, on the other hand, is based on the belief that gender difference is itself a cultural construct subject to constant changes. Constructionists agree that the world (especially our social worlds) rather than being static is dynamic and metamorphosing.⁵³ Constructionists argue that an object is defined through our combined perceptions of the object and its qualities. It is along this line of reasoning that Skjelsbaek⁵⁴ concludes that gender

⁵¹ J. Kenneth Gergen (1994), *Realities and Relationships: Sounding in Social Construction*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ Burr Vivien (1995), *An Introduction to Social Constructionism*, London: Routledge. p.1-5; Gergen, 1994)

⁵⁴ Skjelsbaek Inger (1997), *Gender Battlefields: A Gender Analysis of Peace and Conflict*, Oslo: Peace Research Institute of Oslo Report no. 6.

difference, thus, becomes a question of perception of gender rather than innate qualities of men and of women. The social constructionism school of thought holds the view that: identities are not given by nature, that men and women become who they are through interactions with our social surroundings. The implications and meanings of our gender identity are not fixed, but constantly changing. This does not mean, however, that male and female identities change arbitrarily. Changes follow other patterns of the structures of a given society. Socio- economic changes as well as religion, ethnicity, and class will act to determine the meaning and implications of gender identity, just as gender influences the meaning of religion, ethnicity, and class.⁵⁵ From the foregoing analysis, constructionism offers a more convincing argument and is more beneficial in our search for a better understanding of the gender analysis of armed conflict. Constructionism's rejection of the essentialist's static and natural way of thinking enables us to be deeply convinced that changes are possible especially in the gender mainstreaming to encompass the participation of women in peace processes.

1.9 Research Methodology

This section will explore the methodology of the study which aimed at addressing the research objectives, the study sample and instruments for the study. In the study employed the method of content analysis with an emphasis on gender roles in conflict management all through the peace process, particularly on the participation of women in the peace processes. This method as a method used in social sciences is described by Hodder⁵⁶ to as mute evidence, "that is written texts and artifacts." Babbie⁵⁷ terms the concept of content analysis as the study of recorded human communications, for instance that of books, websites, paintings and laws. Content

⁵⁵ Skjelsbaek Inger (1997), *Gender Battlefields: A Gender Analysis of Peace and Conflict*, Oslo: Peace Research Institute of Oslo Report no. 6. p.27

⁵⁶ I.Hodder. *The Interpretation of Documents and Material Culture*.(Thousand Oaks, Sage Publication, 1994): 155

⁵⁷Babbie, Earl R. *The Practice of Social Research* (12th Ed). (Wadsworth: Cengage Learning, 2010): 530

analysis is therefore considered a scholarly method in the humanities by which texts are studied as to authorship, authenticity, or meaning.

This study will therefore rely on secondary sources of data – books, journals, internet sources, a collection and review of published material, academic papers and periodicals and other written material on the Sierra Leone and South Sudan. These will be taken through intensive and critical analysis.

1.10 Chapter Outline

Chapter one details the introduction, literature review, and conceptual framework, and problem statement, objectives of the study, justification of the study, hypothesis and the methodology.

Chapter two will present a discussion on the overview of the gender mainstreaming in peace and conflict, thus focusing on the international and national charters and structures that strengthen the equality of women in order to facilitate their participation in conflict management and peace building without discrimination.

Chapter three will be concerned with comparative analysis the role of women in conflict management in Sierra Leone and South Sudan.

Chapter four will provide a critical analysis on the findings of the roles played, the challenges to the full participation of women in peace processes and the strengthening of the mainstreaming of gender factor to enhance women's participation in peace processes.

Chapter five will provide conclusions based on the study, give recommendation and then provide suggestions on areas of further research.

CHAPTER TWO

AN OVERVIEW OF GENDERMAINSTREAMING IN PEACE AND CONFLICT

2.1 Introduction

The traditional perception of women in conflict and post-conflict situations is as victims of war. However, the active role women play in such situations is slowly starting to be recognized.⁵⁸ Indeed, armed conflict negatively affects both women and men and results in gender-specific disadvantages, particularly for women that are not always recognized or addressed by the mainstream, gender-blind understandings of conflict and reconstruction. Gender inequality reflects power imbalances in social structures that exist in pre-conflict periods and are exacerbated by armed conflict and its aftermath. The acceptance of gender stereotypes is one of the main reasons that such gender blindness persists. As highlighted in the previous chapter, the gender factor is one that has many stereotypical interpretations.

These stereotypical interpretations of roles shape and are shaped by social, political, economic, cultural and religious contexts. Armed conflict encourages expectations that men will fight and women will support them on the 'home front'. The popular perception is that men are soldiers or aggressors and women are wives, mothers, nurses, social workers and sex-workers. It is true that it is primarily men who are conscripted and killed in battle, but women make up the majority of civilian casualties and suffer in their role as caregivers, due to a breakdown of social structures⁵⁹. However, women are also combatants, as evidenced in Sri Lanka and Liberia, and men are also victims. These realities have consequences for gender relations, which often go unnoticed and unresolved.

⁵⁸ Cammack D., Promoting Gender Sensitive Operations, WFP Nairobi, 2000

⁵⁹ Bryne B. Gender and Humanitarian Assistance. Vol.1, 2 and Case Studies. IDS Sussex, compiled on behalf of the Government of Netherlands. 1996.

Gender differences are entrenched within national and private international provisions that intervene to end armed conflict and build peace.⁶⁰ Often where the term ‘gender’ is used, the focus still tends to be on women and girls without taking into account the ways in which gender inequality and power imbalances between women and men exacerbate their disadvantage.. Furthermore, many governments have yet to ratify the international commitments designed to protect the human rights of women and girls during and after armed conflict. Lack of recognition or enforcement prevents any real progress towards gender equality. ⁶¹

This chapter of study takes into account the stereotyping of the gender aspect and in this light examines the concept of gender particularly in regard to conflict and peace. Thus, the study in this section focuses on the gender mainstreaming, the understanding of the gender factor and incorporating the gender factor in conflict for a comprehensive outcome in conflict management, which is key in conflict resolution, transformation and post conflict reconstruction of societies.

2.2 International Provisions on Gender Aspects in Peace and Conflict

Gender-specific aspects of violent conflicts have become an increasingly important topic in policy making in recent years. Historically, there have always been differences in the way men and women experience armed conflicts and are affected by them. Men traditionally are mainly victims of direct combat operations, while women predominantly take on noncombatant roles and are, for example, subjected to various forms of sexual and gender-based violence. However, two factors have prompted the international community to increasingly view violent conflicts from a gender perspective and to pay special attention to the specific needs and roles of women today: First, the nature of warfare has changed significantly since the end of the Cold War. The

⁶⁰ Enarson E. and Morrow H. *The Gendered Terrain of Disaster: Through Women’s Eyes*. Greenwood Press. 1998.

⁶¹ Denov, Myriam. *Girls in Fighting Forces: Moving Beyond Victimhood*, 2007.
http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/DDR/Girls_fightingforces.pdf

vast majority of violent conflicts today take place at the intra-state level. In such civil wars, the civilian population is always strongly affected by violence and is often consciously targeted by the combatant parties. According to UN statistics, in today's conflicts, 90 per cent of the victims are civilians. Therefore, proportionally more women, children, and infirm persons are becoming victims of armed conflict than ever before. Secondly, the so-called 'sexualisation of the theatre of war' has increased. In addition to growing conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence, this phenomenon also includes human trafficking and forced prostitution in war zones and post-war societies. For instance, the then UN commander in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) stated some years ago that it is now more dangerous to be a woman than to be a soldier in modern conflicts.⁶²

Gender-specific aspects of violent conflicts became an issue of international law in the aftermath of the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Rwanda during the 1990s. In both conflicts, systematic rape was used as an instrument of warfare, an estimated 20,000 to 50,000 women and girls were raped in Bosnia-Herzegovina; in Rwanda, their number was between 250,000 and 500,000.⁶³ At the same time, the Srebrenica massacre made clear that men, too, can be victims of gender-based violence. The two UN international Criminal Tribunals for former Yugoslavia and Rwanda finally facilitated the establishment and codification of rape and other forms of sexual violence as crimes against humanity, as war crimes, and as acts of genocide under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.⁶⁴

⁶² Ogunsanya Kemi (2007), *Women Transforming Conflicts in Africa: Descriptive Studies from Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Sudan*, Durban: ACCORD, Occasional Paper Series, vol. 2, no. 3

⁶³ Ibid

⁶⁴ Ogunmola 'Dele and Isiaka Alani Badmus (2009), "Cote d'Ivoire: Understanding and Solving Ethno-political Civil Conflicts", *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, vol. 13, no. 1, Spring.

2.2.1 Resolution 1325

The UN Security General Resolution 1325 on ‘Women, Peace, and Security’ was unanimously adopted in October 2000. It is the first Security Council resolution to deal with gender-specific aspects of violent conflict, though it is limited to the female sex. The resolution notes that women suffer disproportionately from violent conflicts and demands that women have an active role in all phases of conflict prevention and resolution. It also calls for effective protection of women from sexual and gender-based violence and the inclusion of the gender perspective in all aspects of peace support.⁶⁵

Resolution 1325 in resolution 1325, the Security Council acknowledges that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women as well as girls, effective institutional arrangements to assure their protection plus full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.⁶⁶ This is the first inter- nationally binding legal text that links specific female experiences of violent conflict with international security. In this regard, the follow-up Resolution 1820 is even more specific, as it makes reference to conflict- related sexual violence as a tactic of war- fare that can threaten international peace. Other follow-up resolutions, in turn, constitute important complements to resolution 1325 by dealing with questions of implementation. For instance, in resolution 1888, the Security Council requests that the UN secretary-general appoint a special representative to fight conflict-related sexual violence. Resolution 1889 requires the UN secretary-general to submit a set of indicators for use at the global level to track implementation

⁶⁵ Wolte Sonja (2004), *Armed Conflict and Trafficking in Women*, Eschborn, Germany: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH.

⁶⁶ Ibid

of resolution 1325. Finally, resolution 1960 establishes an accountability system for the implementation of resolutions 1820 and 1888.⁶⁷

More than ten years after the adoption of resolution 1325, an interim assessment of the acceptance and implementation of these provisions must come to an ambiguous conclusion. On the one hand, it should be noted that much has been done in the past decade to develop norms and implementation mechanisms. These efforts were made under the auspices of the UN, which has defined an action plan for its own implementation of the norms, advocates on behalf of analogous national action plans, and has defined 26 indicators for monitoring the areas of prevention, participation, protection and aid, and reconstruction. On the other hand, the following sections of this analysis will show that not much has changed for women in practice. Of the states that are in principle supportive of resolution 1325 norms, a few have shown only limited interest in the gender- specific aspects of violent conflict.⁶⁸

Moreover, those states that are actively advocating for the implementation of resolution 1325 can make according provisions in their own peace support activities, but have only indirect means of influencing the actions of the parties to a conflict. Women in peace processes an initial focus of resolution 1325 is on the stronger involvement of women in conflict resolution and peace processes. In particular, women should increasingly hold key positions in peace negotiations and mediation processes. The underlying argument here is that the views of the female population, which is differently and often more grievously affected by conflicts, should

⁶⁷ Page M., Whitman T. & Anderson, C. Strategies for Policymakers: bringing women into peace negotiations (Institute for Inclusive Security, 2009)

⁶⁸ Ogunsanya Kemi (2007), Women Transforming Conflicts in Africa: Descriptive Studies from Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Sudan, Durban: ACCORD, Occasional Paper Series, vol. 2, no. 3

not be discounted and that taking into account women's experiences in the negotiation of peace agreements brings a sustainable peace dividend.⁶⁹

However, the resolution 1325 is far from implementation. While women have always, even in male-dominated societies, been engaged not only in advocacy for their own rights, but also for peace, they mainly do so in 'grassroots' movements, as illustrated, for example, by the initiative '1000 Peace-Women across the Globe'. Their involvement in peace negotiations and reconstruction processes remains marginal, apart from a few exceptions such as Liberia or Kosovo. A study of 24 peace processes from 1992 to 2008, shows that only 2.5 per cent of the signers, 3.2 per cent of the mediators, 5.5 per cent of the observers and 7.6 per cent of the negotiators were female. Accordingly, the UN rightly concludes that women's participation in peace processes remains largely adhoc and unsystematic today.⁷⁰

2.2.2 Other International Provisions

According to the Geneva Conventions (1949) and Additional Protocols (1977), during a war, certain humanitarian rules must be observed, even with regard to the enemy.⁷¹ These rules are set out mainly in the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August, 1949, and their Additional Protocols of 8 June 1977. The Geneva Conventions are founded on the idea of respect for individuals and their dignity. Persons not directly taking part in hostilities and those put out of action through sickness, injury, captivity or any other causes must be respected and protected against the effects of war; those who suffer must be aided without discrimination. The Additional Protocols extend this protection to 'any person' affected by an armed conflict. Any person therefore means it does

⁶⁹ Potter, A. G is for gendered: taking the mystery out of gendering peace agreements (Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2011)

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹ Page M., Whitman T. & Anderson, C. Strategies for Policymakers: bringing women into peace negotiations (Institute for Inclusive Security, 2009)

not discriminate between gender lines.⁷² Furthermore, they stipulate that the parties to the conflict and the combatants shall not attack the civilian population and civilian objects and shall conduct their military operations in conformity with the recognized rules of humanity.⁷³

On the other hand, the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (1951), states that parties that sign this Convention agree therefore to chastise any person who, to satisfy the passions of another: procures, entices or even leads away, for reason of prostitution, even with the consent of that person; exploits the prostitution of another person, despite the consent of that person. Additionally, the states parties adheres to punish a person who manages or, keeps or knowingly finances or takes part in the financing of a brothel, or lets or rents a building or other place for the purpose of the prostitution. The Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergencies and Armed Conflicts (1974) prohibits therefore attacks and bombing on the civilian population, inflicting suffering especially on women and children, who are recognized as the most vulnerable members of the population.⁷⁴ Moreover, it recognizes all forms of repression as criminal acts, including cruel and inhuman treatment of women and children, imprisonment, torture, shootings, mass arrests, collective punishment, destruction of dwellings and forcible eviction.⁷⁵

The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women – CEDAW (1979) also guarantees women equal rights with men in many spheres of life, including education, employment, health care, political participation, nationality and marriage. The Convention also affords women protection from abuses from which men are largely already protected. However,

⁷² OECD. 'Supporting Statebuilding in Situations of Conflict and Fragility: Policy Guidance, DAC Guidelines and Reference Series (OECD Publishing, 2011)

⁷³ ILO, ABC of Women Workers' Rights and Gender Equality, ILO Geneva, 2000

⁷⁴ Ibid

⁷⁵ Ogunsanya Kemi (2007), Women Transforming Conflicts in Africa: Descriptive Studies from Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Sudan, Durban: ACCORD, Occasional Paper Series, vol. 2, no. 3

it does not specifically protect women against rape, spousal abuse or other abuses suffered mainly by women. The Optional Protocol to CEDAW (1999) enables individuals to raise complaints with the UN Committee for CEDAW and the Committee to probe into violation of human rights in member states.⁷⁶ By ratifying the Optional Protocol, a State would recognize the competence of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women – the body that monitors States parties’ compliance with the Convention – to receive and consider complaints from individuals or groups within its jurisdiction.

2.3 The Gender Factor in Conflict

Before outlining the strategies to integrate a gender perspective in emergency and transition situations, it is necessary to review some basic concepts related to gender and conflict. When discussing gender, studies generally refer to the social differences and relations between men and women, which are learned and transformed. The term gender does not replace the term sex, which refers exclusively to biological differences between men and women.⁷⁷ The concept of gender is socially constructed, and includes variables identifying differences in roles, responsibilities, opportunities, needs and constraints in gender relations, while the term sex is biologically defined, determined by birth, is of universal character, and is unchanging. Gender roles thus define what is considered appropriate for men and women within the society, social roles and division of labor; involve the relation to power (how it is used, by whom and how it is shared); vary greatly from one culture to another and change over time; vary from one social group to another within the same culture, race, class, religion, ethnicity, economic circumstances

⁷⁶ Frederike Bubenezwer & Orly Stern (eds). *Hope, Pain and Patience – the lives of women in South Sudan*, (Fanele, 2011)

⁷⁷ ILO, *ABC of Women Workers’ Rights and Gender Equality*, ILO Geneva, 2000.

and age influence gender roles; sudden crisis, like war or famine, can radically and rapidly change gender roles.⁷⁸

For example, understanding gender differentiation and gender discrimination helps in understanding gender on various grounds. After a crisis, women ex-combatants who have engaged in liberation struggles have discovered old attitudes may return and the changes that occurred during the crisis, such as loss of property or death of a spouse, may also have a permanent impact.⁷⁹

The promotion of hyper masculinity together with violence (weapons) as the image of ‘manhood’ can be indicative of social forces influencing men. One indicator of potential for violence is high male youth unemployment, which can be easily manipulated politically if linked to unfulfilled expectations.⁸⁰ Identify the gendered impact of conflict. For example, an increase in violence against women, which affects their ability to engage in development related activities, reduces productivity and impacts their employment. The sale of jewelry or other items representing personal wealth and economic security by women can provide an early indication of increased tensions, and the increased vulnerability of women. In the aftermath of war, women-headed households can be particularly vulnerable in situations where women have no rights to inherit land or property.⁸¹ Restrictions of movement, random arrests of men, forced recruitment into militias or state armies, all of which can have long-term mental health consequences and affect employment, education and skills acquisition, are other examples of impacts from conflict. Identify the gendered dimensions of peace building.

⁷⁸ Morrison P.T., in *Weaving Gender in Disaster and Refugee Assistance*, InterAction, USA, 1998.

⁷⁹ Oxfam, *The Oxfam Training Manual*, Oxfam UK and Ireland, 1994.

⁸⁰ Ibid

⁸¹ Frederike Bubenezwer & Orly Stern (eds). *Hope, Pain and Patience – the lives of women in South Sudan*, (Fanele, 2011)

As conflict escalates, spreads and continues over an extended period of time, the gender dimensions are further exacerbated. Women often become the sole care-providers for the young, the sick and the elderly. Crises force them into new roles, economic, social, and political, that they may not be equipped for and are additional to their normal domestic burdens. Despite these new demands and responsibilities, in most instances women manage to ‘cope’, developing new skills, taking a lead in peace-building, economic recovery and reconciliation activities. In contrast, men’s involvement in warfare has a negative impact on their ability to engage in civilian life or productive economic activities.⁸² Many are often too traumatized and unskilled, and at times unwilling to revert to traditional lifestyles in rural areas, and thus can become potential sources of instability. Given their experiences in fighting, they are also prone to recruitment by criminal elements (drug and human trafficking rings) that offer more lucrative pay than is available in economies devastated by conflict.⁸³

Despite the significance of gender analysis to conflict and development, there is still little understanding of the issue among conflict analysts. As a result, gender variables are missing in most frameworks. Several factors contribute to the lack of understanding and confusion that arises when ‘gender’ is mentioned: There is a widespread tendency to conflate gender with women. As the focus in conflict analysis is on the causes of conflict, women (therefore gender) are not seen as agitators or general protagonists in promoting conflict and violence.⁸⁴ As a result, gender as a variable for analysis is ignored, discarded or considered to be of secondary importance. Yet there are clear indications across conflict-affected societies worldwide, that men’s social (gender) identities can be used and manipulated to promote violent action. There is

⁸² Ibid

⁸³ Accord 23. Consolidating peace: Liberia and Sierra Leone, (Conciliation Resources, 2012)

⁸⁴ Khali, M. “Conflict Resolution in Africa,” *Journal of African Economies*, 9, 3, October 2000: 294 -322.

also much talk of the significance of ‘youth bulges’ and ‘youth unemployment’. Implicit in such phrases is first, that youth equals men, and that young men can be readily mobilized or forced to engage in violence. While there is general acceptance of these linkages, it is rarely (if ever) presented as a ‘gender’ issue.

2.4 Gender and Power in Peace Negotiations

Literature on gender and negotiation tends to be essentialist, focusing on differences between men and women in the way in which they negotiate, the skills they bring to negotiation, the way in which they perceive such matters as peace or security or power, and how they perceive their own relative power⁸⁵. Indeed, research has shown gender differences in all of these areas, in some cases providing varied explanations ranging from gender role socialization to situational power - access to power such as resources- to combination of gender and situation - power affecting each gender differently - to expectation, with regard to each gender and self.⁸⁶ Yet, it is clear that while many of the factors raised by these explanations may be operative, there are different degrees of power amongst women (as there are amongst men) and different ways of using or responding to power in a negotiating situation.

While some researchers maintain that asymmetry of power - situational asymmetry - is more important a factor than gender with regard to negotiating style (collaborative or competitive), it has been found that while a woman with power - defined in terms of control of resources, status, numbers, may be more assertive in negotiation, she will have a harder time controlling the negotiation than a powerful man negotiating with a woman.⁸⁷ Namely a woman’s

⁸⁵ Golan, G. 2004. —The Role of Women in Conflict Resolution. | Palestine-Israel Journal 11/2: 92-96.

⁸⁶ Walters, A., Stuhlmacher, A. and Meyer, L. 1998. —Gender and Negotiator Competitiveness: A Mega-analysis. | Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes 76:1-29

⁸⁷ Watson, C. 1994. —Gender versus Power as a Predictor of Negotiation Behavior and Outcomes. | Negotiation Journal April 1994: 117-127.

power is diminished when she negotiates with a man, indicating greater importance of gender than power⁸⁸. Moreover, according to other studies, even a powerful woman employing an assertive negotiating style will be viewed as less effective than a male, too found that women's power was diminished and the man's power was enhanced in mixed groups, but only when gender identity was known.⁸⁹ One explanation for such findings is connected with the matter of expectations, namely, knowledge of and therefore reaction or adaptation to gender stereotypes.

Imploring the question of whether or not the expectation is justified, it derives from the stereotypical (if not proven) view of women as less assertive, competitive, or confrontational than men. Supported by psychological studies such as Gilligan's ground breaking work, women are said to be empathetic, compassionate, relational or other-oriented and communicative⁹⁰. In negotiation, it would follow, women would be expected to give greater attention to process and preservation of relationship (preference for harmony) than to be goal-oriented, with a greater degree of risk-aversion than men and less concern for one's own interests. To some degree these hypotheses were proven, particularly by testing in which there was stereotype activation⁹¹. Yet, the matter of asymmetry (of power) was not involved, unless, that is, one were to attach concepts of, weak or, powerfull to these different forms of behavior or styles – thereby adhering to stereotypical views of women as weaker, less effective. Obviously less effective would depend

⁸⁸ Watson, C. 1994. —Gender versus Power as a Predictor of Negotiation Behavior and Outcomes. | Negotiation Journal April 1994: 117-127.

⁸⁹ Sell, J., Griffith, W. and Wilson, R. 1993. —Are Women More Cooperative Than Men in Social Dilemmas? | Social Psychology Quarterly. 56/3: 211-222.

⁹⁰ Kolb, D. and Coolidge, G. 1991. —Her Place at the Table: A Consideration of Gender Issues in Negotiation | in Negotiation Theory and Practice, edited by W. Breslin and J. Rubin. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Program on Negotiation.

⁹¹ Krakovsky, L. and Miller, D. 2006. —Negotiator Style and Influence in Multi-party Negotiations: Exploring the Role of Gender. | Leadership & Organization Development Journal 27/1:50-65.

upon the type of negotiation – collaborative negotiation being one in which women would be expected to be more effective⁹².

A better measure of the relationship between gender and asymmetry may be found in looking at same sex negotiation, particularly all-female. Kray, and others⁹³ found that as distinct from mixed dyads, same-sex dyads did not respond to stereotype activation. Presumably, as Watson posited, - gender is not expected to have any impact on the power of negotiators in same-sex pairs of negotiators. Being a woman should not eliminate the power when one faces another woman, nor should being a man enhance one's power when one faces another man⁹⁴. Indeed, Watson found that a high powered woman did not become cooperative when dealing with a less powerful woman. Similarly, Sell found that women were not more cooperative in all-female groups than they were with men, though her more complex study did find that greater female cooperation resulted when the women were aware (but only when they were aware) of the gender of the whole group and the strategy adopted by both sides in the negotiation. Even studies of same sex, all-female groups in collaborative negotiations, found no significant gender effect.⁹⁵

2.5 Gender Mainstreaming in Conflict and Peace

The concept of mainstreaming gender issues into the society was clearly established as a global agenda to promote gender equality in the Platform for Action adopted during the UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in 1995 in Beijing. After the conference, development agencies agreed to adopt 'gender mainstreaming' as a new strategy to ensure the incorporation of

⁹² Ibid

⁹³ Kray, L., Thompson, L. and Galinsky, A. 2001. —Battle of the Sexes: Gender Stereotype Confirmation and Reactance in Negotiations. | *Journal of Personality and Social*

⁹⁴ Watson, C. 1994. —Gender versus Power as a Predictor of Negotiation Behavior and Outcomes. | *Negotiation Journal* Boyer, M., Urlacher, B., Hudson, N., Niv-Soloman, A., Janik, L., Butler, M. and Brown, S. 2009. —Gender and Negotiation: Some Experimental Findings from an International Negotiation Simulation. | *International Studies Quarterly* 53: 23-47. April 1994:124

⁹⁵ Ibid

gender perceptions in all areas and also sectors, at all levels, to promote gender equality and participation. The strategy would go beyond focusing on women in isolation, but to look at both women and men as actors in as well as development beneficiaries – in addition to how their rights are defined. The 1995 conference highlighted the need for ensuring that gender equality is a chief goal in all areas of societal development. Two years later in July 1997, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) defined the concept of gender mainstreaming as, the process of assessing the implications for women as well as men in any planned action, thus including legislation, policies or even programmes. It is therefore a strategy for making the concerns and the experiences of women and those of men as well, an integral part of implementation, design, monitoring and evaluation of policies along with programmes in all political, economic as well as social spheres, so that women and men can benefit equally and so that inequality is not perpetuated.

The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is notably to achieve gender equality.⁹⁶ Mainstreaming is not really about adding a ‘woman’s component’ or even a ‘gender equality component’ into an existing activity. It is beyond increasing women’s participation; it actually means bringing the knowledge, experience, and interest of women as well as men to bear on the development agenda. It may need changes in goals, strategies along with actions so that both women and men can participate, influence and benefit from the processes of development. Thus, the goal of mainstreaming gender equality is the transformation of unequal social as well as institutional structures into equal and just structures for both women and men.⁹⁷ Despite years of discussion, there are still misconceptions about exactly what “gender mainstreaming” entails. In the following table, some common myths and realities on gender mainstreaming in humanitarian

⁹⁶ UN Economic and Social Council, Agreed Conclusion, E/197/L.30, UN New York, 1997.

⁹⁷ ILO, Gender, a Partnership of Equals, ILO Geneva, 2000.

assistance are presented.⁹⁸ Mainstreaming a gender perspective involves changing how situations can be analyzed. The starting point of the analysis includes a brief profile of how and why the needs of women are different from men's. These fundamental insights should therefore influence the understanding of the contents as well as raise issues to be explored in the project components.

A gender mainstreaming strategy should therefore involve bringing a gender analysis into all initiatives, and not only developing an isolated subcomponent or project. A mainstreaming strategy does not preclude specific initiatives that are either targeted at women or at narrowing gender inequalities. In fact, concrete investments are generally required to protect women's rights, provide capacity building to women's NGOs and work with men on gender issues. Many of these initiatives can be more successful through a separate initiative rather than as a subcomponent in a larger project. Using a gender perspective involves incorporating an understanding of how being male or female in a specific situation contributes to vulnerability and defines capacities. It is not a screening process to exclude those who need assistance from receiving support. There may be times when given their different priorities and needs, women and men will best be served through the provision of different resources. Furthermore, it may be necessary to make additional investments to ensure that women's voices are heard. However, a gender mainstreaming strategy does not necessarily call for mechanistic 'favoring' of women over men.⁹⁹

It is indeed true that a lot of work on gender in humanitarian assistance tends to focus on women. This is so because it is women's needs and their interests that are more likely to be

⁹⁸ CIDA/MHA, Mainstreaming a gender equality perspective in the Consolidate Inter-Agency Appeals, Note prepared for the Donor Retreat on Consolidated Appeals Process and Co-ordination in Humanitarian Assistance, Montreux Switzerland, March 2001.

⁹⁹ Cammack D., Promoting Gender Sensitive Operations, WFP Nairobi, 2000.

neglected. Nevertheless, it is imperative that analysis and discussions look at both sides of the gender equation: both men and women. More consideration is needed to get to understand how men's roles, responsibilities, strategies and options are shaped by gender expectations during emergency situations and conflicts.¹⁰⁰

More often, gender mainstreaming is reduced to integrating women into the project design according to the old recipe 'add women and stir'.¹⁰¹ Research done by Emilie Hafner-Burton and Mark Pollack¹⁰² on gender mainstreaming in the World Bank and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) showed that more often gender and women's issues were added as a supplementary requirement for the projects rather than redefining projects from a gender perspective and designing genuinely new projects. Raven-Roberts¹⁰³ indicates that integrating a gender perspective into the humanitarian regime of the United Nations meant nothing more than -inserting the words 'women', 'girls', and 'gender' in as many places as possible.

Mainstreaming gender concerns into conflict resolution and interventions, such as humanitarian assistance and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes for ex-combatants, exacerbate gender inequality if they are administered in gender-blind ways. Mainstreaming gender awareness into the structures that govern armed conflict and post-conflict reconstruction requires better cooperation between international institutions, states and NGOs. It is particularly important to involve women's organizations at the decision-making level in the formation of political and legal structures.

¹⁰⁰ Oxfam Gender Team, Frameworks for Gender Analysis, Oxfam, Oxford (UK), 1996. Also refer to the Harvard Analytical Framework, November 1995.

¹⁰¹ Callenius, Carolin (2002): Wenn Frauenpolitik salonfähig wird, verblasst die lila Farbe. In: Bothfeld, Silke/Gronbach, Sigrid/Riedmüller, Barbara (Hg.): Gender Mainstreaming – eine Innovation in der Gleichstellungspolitik. Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag, 63-80.

¹⁰² Hafner-Burton, Emilie/Pollack, Mark A. (2002): Mainstreaming Gender in Global Governance. In: European Journal of International Relations 8 (3), 339-373.

¹⁰³ Raven-Roberts, Angela (2005): Gender Mainstreaming in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Talking the Talk, Tripping over the Walk. In: Mazurana, Dyan/Raven-Roberts, Angela/Parpart, Jane (ed.): Gender, Conflict, and Peacekeeping. Lanham: Rowman&Littlefield Publishers, 50

Indeed, the all-encompassing upheaval caused by armed conflict creates the potential to redefine gender relations in the post-conflict period in more gender equitable ways. But without greater support for organizations and interventions that promote gender equality in all sectors, there is a high risk that long-standing patterns of oppression will be re-established.

In principle, however, there is a major need for action here, too. This need concerns not only the systematic integration of the gender perspective in peace support and the establishment of instruments for gender mainstreaming such as gender trainings. In many states, there is just as much scope for developing a gender-sensitive staff policy in the realm of peace support. Just look at the UN's peacekeeping statistics. In UN Peacekeeping operations in 2010, women accounted for 2.42 per cent of military troops, 4.14 per cent of military experts (including military observers), and 8.7 per cent of police officers. Adding up these three categories, women accounted for a total of about 3.3 per cent of the approximately 100,000 soldiers and police officers deployed by the UN. Currently, they make up about 30 per cent of the international civilian personnel in UN operations. However, in civilian peace promotion, too, key positions continue to be held largely by men.¹⁰⁴

Irrespective of the kind of conflict being waged, the traditional image of men on the way to the front while women stay at home (which is considered so-called safe zone) with the children and elderly, is nothing but a myth. Attacks against women are in fact becoming an increasingly common war strategy. Sexually raping women, preferably in front of their husbands, is a strategy of war that is often used in order to break down families and cause social instability. The contempt (an expression of a forceful projection directed at female victims, who remind their

¹⁰⁴ Potter, A. G is for gendered: taking the mystery out of gendering peace agreements (Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2011)

men of their failure by their mere presence) and the social exclusion confronting these female victims of sexualized violence by ‘their own people’ frequently forces them to flee.¹⁰⁵

In extreme cases, women may even be vulnerable to abuse by aid workers. The UNHCR in Nepal reported at least 18 cases of Bhutanese refugees in camps who had been victims of sexual abuse and exploitation by aid workers. Victims included a seven year old girl and a woman with disabilities. By far the most pervasive cause of suffering for refugees however is the lack of basic economic, social and cultural rights. Refugees may live for years without proper access to education, medical facilities, or even water.¹⁰⁶

Moreover, the presence of peace-keeping troops contributes to increasing the incidence of prostitution and sexual slavery. The girls and women are sometimes treated as sexual possessions. They are often required to perform sexual services, in return for food and protection which also drastically increase the risk of HIV infection and forced pregnancies. Twenty-three years of conflict in Afghanistan during the successive governments of the Communist, Mujahadeen and Taliban eras has almost completely destroyed the country’s infrastructure. In large parts of the country, normal judicial structures are non-existent or function at a very basic level. The result is a complete lack of the rule of law and a climate in which armed groups and government soldiers can perpetrate acts of VAW with impunity. The raping of women by soldiers has been extremely common¹⁰⁷. Although not known to be a systematic policy sanctioned by those with command responsibility, the frequency of this crime shows commanders must have been aware of the issue and possibly acquiescent as a means of rewarding troops or traumatizing enemy communities.

¹⁰⁵ Rehn, E. & Johnson Sirleaf, E. (2002). Women, war, peace. New York: UNIFEM

¹⁰⁶ Naraghi-Anderlini, Sanam. Women, peace and security: A preliminary audit from the Beijing Platform for Action to Security Council Resolution 1325 and beyond. London: International Alert, 2001

¹⁰⁷ Ibid

Even today, despite the work over the past two years to rebuild Afghanistan's legal systems, the rule of law holds little sway beyond Kabul. The prevalence of armed groups and absence of formal justice mechanisms leave women almost completely unprotected. Women who suffer abuses do not have sufficient recourse to justice within the formal sector. Since the declaration of the 'People's War' by the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) (Maoist) in 1996 a pattern of serious human rights violations on both sides in the conflict has emerged.¹⁰⁸ Insurgent forces have been responsible for assassinations, abductions and indiscriminate terror attacks, while women suspected of supporting armed opposition groups have been killed, torture or raped by security forces. Even women related to male activists are at risk. South Asia is often referred internationally as the most 'dangerous' place in the world, with two antagonistic neighbors - India and Pakistan in confrontation with each other over the issue of Kashmir.. Kashmir is not the cause but rather the symptom of the tensed Indo-Pak relation. Far from being a dispute over territory, Kashmir is a 'space of desire' over which Pakistani and Indian nationalism collide with each other - both claiming it to be an integral part of their territory. It has resulted in 3 wars and numerable proxy wars along the Line of Control (LOC). Women in Kashmir, women living along the Indo- Pak border suffer direct/indirect physical and psychological violence of dislocation, fragmentation of family, loss of the men folk, double burden of survival and care of the family.¹⁰⁹

Besides, war and militarism have reinforced macho culture and sexist roles with severe consequence for women in both the countries. The diversion of scarce economic resources away from the social sector has further contributed in impoverishing poor women and increasing their

¹⁰⁸ Wilde, Vicki and Marijke Mooij. Participatory Gender Analysis for Community-level Disaster Response Planning. WFP: Nairobi, 2-12 June 1998.

¹⁰⁹ Goswami, R., Sreekala, M. G. & Goswami M. Women in armed conflict situation in India: Baseline Report, North East Network.

burden. For instance within India, in situations of ongoing conflict, such as the one prevailing in the North East region of India, the gross violations of civil and political rights that prevail in general, because of the political situation are often used as justification to disregard the violations of women's rights. These are either consequent upon discrimination against women that is sanctioned by the community or not addressed by the state. For the last three decades or so the region has witnessed various forms of unrest, conflict and violence. The conflicts in the various constituent units of the NER have different origins and goals, though rooted in the general lack of development. Instances of rape and domestic violence on women are on the rise and women have very little choice in the area of reproductive health.¹¹⁰

Forced displacement from the repeated threats and attacks on local communities of armed conflict and political violence is also a gendered experience. Women find the process of displacement itself more traumatic than men, they show greater flexibility in their adaptation to new environments and in the development of survival strategies. Men tend to expect assistance from formal institutions, and their skills are often not transferable.

Women have special medical needs in war and conflict situations, such as extra nutritional requirements and food during pregnancy and breast-feeding. What happens to the girls/women victims of sexual violence during war is that it naturally increases the risk of sexually transmitted diseases, particularly HIV. Similarly, the risk increases of unwanted pregnancies. The economic impact of armed conflict manifests itself in gender-specific ways. Women's burdens in times of war are especially heavy, largely because their usual functions within the household become more difficult to carry out, often due to the absence of male relatives. If women are forced to become the sole provider for their families, the absence of an adequate infrastructure often leaves women unable to feed their children or find paid work. Thus

¹¹⁰ Ibid

women face several problems during war and conflicts like rape, sexual exploitation, physical violence, trafficking, displacement, economic hardship and health problems.

Women are at the forefront of peace efforts around the world. Women have been prominent in the peace building process although their role has not always been based on gender. Women NGOs many of them started by feminists had become politically active with the Women's Action Forum (WAF) that started in 1981, have also been active in building bridges that contribute to greater understanding and push for peace. Women appear to have more holistic approach towards peace.¹¹¹

One very crucial point is that women's participation in the peace process should not be viewed only in the context of women as the victims of war and conflict, but as the proactive roles they play in the process of peace negotiations, peace building and post conflict activities following the peace agreements. Women, both individually and collectively, have made very important contributions in managing and resolving conflicts. Their contributions are often overlooked since they are non-traditional or they are outside the formal issues of the conflict. When women participate in peace negotiations and in structuring and crafting a peace agreement, they keep the future of their societies, their communities, in mind. They think of how their children and grandchildren will live in their country, how they will benefit from the peace agreement.¹¹² They have the greatest interest of society in mind. Whereas, historically in post-conflict situations, men are interested in ensuring that, following the peace agreement, they will retain authority and power in the government or the cabinet.

Women have much to contribute to resolving conflict and peace building. They hold communities together in times of conflict as care-takers/providers, counselors and negotiators.

¹¹¹ Charlotte Lindsey. Women Facing War. ICRC. 2001

¹¹² Page M., Whitman T. & Anderson, C. Strategies for Policymakers: bringing women into peace negotiations (Institute for Inclusive Security, 2009)

Therefore, the inclusion of women's perspectives in peace efforts is critical to ensuring that the needs of local populations are understood in planning of peace operations and met in implementation. One of the most invisible groups to date in interventions in conflict and peace are women ex-combatants. Increasing numbers of women are joining armed groups as combatants and supporters. On returning to their communities they were stripped of the autonomy, political role, and leadership they had gained as combatants. Precise numbers of women combatants therefore need to be established to make visible their needs and demands in peace negotiations and reconstruction processes.¹¹³

At all stages of peace support efforts, there are important gender aspects such as prior to the conflict, during the conflict, after the conflict. Prior to the conflict Peace and conflict research discusses early warning signals, which are comprised of the risk factors indicating the imminent break out of armed conflicts. One of these may be extreme oppression of the female section of the population and also other sections of the population.¹¹⁴ A significantly uneven distribution of power resources increases the risk of a struggle for control over resources. Controls over resources, like the exercise of power, are gendered, where women generally have considerably less power and influence than men. Conflicts that flare up tend to worsen the balance of power resources existing between women and men.

Although conflict situations tend to reinforce existing gender stereotypes, new gender roles also emerge. Women, for example, often take over the main responsibility for the household so that men are free to fight. This means that they have to struggle on their own to

¹¹³ Ibid

¹¹⁴ International Alert. 'Women's political participation in countries emerging from conflict in the Great Lakes Region of Africa', Report of the Consultation Workshop, Kampala, Uganda, 28–30 August 2007 (International Alert, 2007)

obtain resources that are often inaccessible while conflicts are going on. This increases women's vulnerability and the risk of falling victim to blackmail, or trafficking.¹¹⁵

Some research has also shown more positive effects of this re-structuring of society, where women frequently obtain more power in the civilian sphere during the conflict. The outcome seems to depend on the type of conflict and the way in which society was organized prior to it. Because of these differences between conflict areas, it is essential that an expert gender analysis be conducted so that peace-keeping personnel can be properly prepared.

¹¹⁶Another aspects are the roles played by women during a conflict. With the emergence of an armed conflict, access to weapons increases, often throughout the entire population. Women are made use of, or participate on their own initiative, in smuggling weapons, using, for example, pregnancy as a cover. The presence of weapons among the civilian population and the difficulties of detecting weapons smuggled by women hamper peace support efforts and increase the risk of new violent conflicts flaring up. Women can also be more vulnerable since the roles they play are often not among those protected by international law.

One effect of war is greater criminality and acts of violence among the civilian population as a result of increased access to weapons and the lack of traditional institutions to maintain law and order. Studies have shown both an increase in domestic violence at the post-conflict stage and also an increase in domestic violence involving weapons. The needs and rights of widows to dead husbands' land and property, etc. are not, as a rule, regulated by law, which is why women often lose all their property to the deceased husband's relatives. This leads to particular hardship for women, since it reduces their ability to gain access to the necessities

¹¹⁵ International Alert. 'Women's political participation in countries emerging from conflict in the Great Lakes Region of Africa', Report of the Consultation Workshop, Kampala, Uganda, 28–30 August 2007 (International Alert, 2007)

¹¹⁶ Ibid

required to maintain a household. It also often leads to social expulsion and poverty for these women and their children. Forced displacement of women leads to a change in roles and relations, which can be both empowering and challenging. It is important to provide accompaniment to returning and resettling populations to support the continuation of positive social change and to include both men and women.¹¹⁷

The numerous new roles shouldered by women in conflict situations, entailing reproductive, productive and social responsibility, are a heavy burden and often delegated to daughters who are therefore not able to continue at school. This naturally increases the imbalance between the genders, even after the end of the conflict. What is defined as peace from a gender perspective can differ from a traditional definition. For women, peace is not only the cessation of armed conflict, since gender discrimination is still going on.¹¹⁸ Women and girls are exploited as sexual slaves in almost all dimensions of war and conflict situations, in refugee camps, by the police, the armed forces among others. All forms of gender-related violence must therefore be criminalized and the reporting of rape and sexual exploitation of women associated with peace support personnel must be improved and the perpetrators sentenced. It should therefore be analyzed on the basis of the social and economic changes brought about by the conflict.

Women play a multitude of roles during situations of conflict. As far more men participate as combatants in armed conflict than women, the burden of household maintenance, agriculture, industry and health care falls predominantly on women.¹¹⁹ As social structures erode, women

¹¹⁷ Mazurana, D. & McKay, S. *Women and peacebuilding* (Montreal: International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, 1999)

¹¹⁸ Hakena, K. *Peace in Bougainville and the Work of the Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency* (2001) <http://wri-irg.org/nonviolence/nvse08-en.htm>

¹¹⁹ International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), *Women in Armed Conflict*, January 7, 2003. http://www.iansa.org/women/documents/women_armed_conflict.pdf

face particular challenges caring for children in refugee and internally displaced persons (IDP) camps and operating as single heads of households in traditionally male-dominated societies.¹²⁰ Since the end of WWII, women have assumed a greater role in conflict and join the armed forces more frequently, both voluntarily and involuntarily, participating as combatants, as evident in Sri Lanka, Eritrea, Zimbabwe and El Salvador,¹²¹ and also as nurses, cooks, sex workers and caregivers.¹²² Despite their more direct involvement in armed conflict, as a result of women's traditional gender roles and power relations between women and men, women frequently experience war as both victims and participants.¹²³ Sexual and gender-based violence frequently occurs regardless of women's indirect or direct involvement, and has acute consequences, particularly as sexual violence has come to be used as a systemic method of modern warfare. Numerous motivations associated with women's practical and symbolic roles within their community can be attributed to the use of sexual violence.

Due to their symbolic association with honour and their practical role as caregivers, women are often raped to humiliate the men with whom they are associated, to weaken traditional family structures and to terrorize the community. In societies where ethnicity is patrilineal, 'enemy' women are forcibly impregnated and made to bear children as an instrument of cultural genocide.¹²⁴ Women and girls are commonly abducted and forced into marriage or used as sexual slaves to service troops, and are often intentionally infected with HIV AIDS. Sexual and gender-based violence also act as tools of social control, wherein rape is used to

¹²⁰ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *Women Facing War*, 2001. <http://www.deWatteville.com>, Nathalie. *Addressing Gender Issues in Demobilization and Reintegration Programs*, World Bank 2002.

<http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/DDR/WattevilleAfrica.pdf> [icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/p0798](http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/p0798)

¹²¹ Ibid

¹²² Farr, Vanessa . *The Importance of a Gender Perspective to Successful Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Processes*, *Women, Men, Peace and Security*, Volume 4, 2003: 24

¹²³ International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), *Women in Armed Conflict*, January 7, 2003.

http://www.iansa.org/women/documents/women_armed_conflict.pdf

¹²⁴ Ibid

punish or dissuade women from becoming politically active, and armed men returning from conflict contribute to elevated levels of domestic violence when the conflict subsides and they struggle to readjust to civilian life.

2.6 Conclusion

Women and men play different roles as social actors and also have different needs and interests. In the three phases of conflict (before, during and after) women can play different roles and work proactively to secure peace. The various conflict phases often overlap, which makes peacemaking measures very complex. Very often too, the activities of women span various phases. Conflicts and wars do not proceed in a clear linear direction. In the pre-conflict phase the latent and structural causes of conflicts already exist: they include lack of participation in political life, suppression, discrimination and exclusion of all kinds, violation of human rights, little access to land and resources, and the absence of security.¹²⁵

A full understanding of the role of women as actors during war and conflict and as victims of war is essential to ensure full participation of women at all levels of decision making and implementation in peace processes.

The chapter thus concludes that, of the three main themes of resolution 1325, the demand for integrating gender-sensitive perspectives in all peace promotion projects and programmes offers the most immediate opportunities for action to peace actors. Taking gender-specific differences into account in a practical manner at all stages of a programme is very demanding, however. For instance, gender-sensitive conflict analysis must not be guided by stereotypical expectations that exclusively ascribe to women the role of victims. At the same time, it should be taken into consideration that the interest in gender mainstreaming varies not only between states,

¹²⁵ Ibid

but also within states. It comes as no surprise, then, that the implementation of this aspect of resolution 1325 is extremely disparate.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ Raven-Roberts, Angela (2005): Gender Mainstreaming in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Talking the Talk, Tripping over the Walk. In: Mazurana, Dyan/Raven-Roberts, Angela/Parpart, Jane (ed.): Gender, Conflict, and Peacekeeping. Lanham: Rowman&Littlefield Publishers, 50

CHAPTER THREE

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN CONFLICT

MANAGEMENT IN SIERRA LEONE AND SOUTH SUDAN

3.1 Introduction

Women's participation in negotiating delegations are often quite low compared to their male counterparts. At the peace negotiating table, where crucial decisions are made about post-conflict recovery and governance, women are noticeably underrepresented.¹²⁷ Some of the most noteworthy instances of women's participation in peace negotiations occurred before the Security Council adopted this resolution on 31 October 2000. In the Republic of El Salvador in the 1990s, women were present at nearly all the post- accord negotiating tables. One technical table, the Reinsertion Commission, was composed of six women and one man. In the end, women made up one third of the beneficiaries of land redistribution and reintegration packages, which corresponded roughly with the percentage of female members of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), either as combatants or as collaborators.¹²⁸ In the Republic of South Africa in the mid-1990s, the Women's National Commission demanded that 50 per cent of participants in the Multi-Party negotiating process should be women and indeed succeeded in establishing that one out of every two representatives per party had to be a woman, or the seat would remain vacant. Approximately three million women across the country participated in focus groups as well as the discussions, and a thirty per cent female quota was adopted for the

¹²⁷ International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), Women in Armed Conflict, January 7, 2003.
http://www.iansa.org/women/documents/women_armed_conflict.pdf

¹²⁸ Luciak, Ilja A., January 2004, 'Gender Equality in the Salvadoran Transition,' in Latin American Perspectives 26, No. 2, 1999, p. 45, in Pampell Conaway, Camille, and Martínez, Salomé, 'Adding Value: Women's Contributions to Reintegration and Reconstruction in El Salvador,' Hunt Alternatives Fund, Washington DC, available online: http://www.huntalternatives.org/download/14_adding_value_women_s_contributions_to_reintegration_and_reconstruction_in_el_salvador.pdf.

upcoming elections.¹²⁹ In Northern Ireland, women locked a seat at the peace table in 1997 by forming a women's cross-party political grouping and also winning some seats in the election. The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition successfully built bridges between Catholics and Protestants and promoted reconciliation and reintegration of political prisoners. In the Republic of Guatemala for instance, women significantly influenced the talks that led to the 1996 peace accord, in spite of the fact that only two women were included in the negotiating teams of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity and the Government of Guatemala.

Civil society participation, including by women's groups, was strongly supported by the United Nations and the Group of Friends that sponsored the talks. Jean Arnault, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guatemala and mediator of the negotiations, endorsed the formal tabling of women's concerns and recommendations for the parties' consideration. Despite the underrepresentation of women at the peace table, the agreement contained a number of important provisions regarding gender equality.¹³⁰ Several months before the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), Asha Hagi Elmi formed the women's Sixth Clan in the Somali Republic to lobby for participation in peace talks in Arta, Djibouti, because the five main Somali clans had all been given a seat at the table but had excluded women. Meanwhile in Burundi, also in 2000 prior to the passage of resolution 1325, while the 19 parties to the conflict were in the midst of another round of negotiations in Arusha (Tanzania), UNIFEM (now part of UN WOMEN) convened the All-Party Women's Peace Conference, attended by two women representing each of the parties to the conflict and the seven women who had access to the plenary sessions of the peace talks as observers. The women presented their list of recommendations to the facilitator of the negotiations, Nelson Mandela, and more than half of

¹²⁹ age, Michelle, Whitman, Tobie, Anderson, Cecilia, October 2009, 'Bringing Women Into Peace Negotiations', Institute for Inclusive Security, Strategies for Policymakers No. 2, Washington DC, pp 13–16

¹³⁰ Ibid: 5–8

these recommendations were incorporated into the peace agreement.¹³¹ Since October 2000, only marginal progress has been made with regard to the number of women in formal peace processes or the design and conduct of peace talks in ways that would give greater voice to women, particularly from civil society. Over the same period, a limited number of provisions addressing women's human rights have been incorporated into peace agreements. This is in spite of growing participation of women in politics and the security sector, greater awareness about the differentiated impact of war on women and girls and the role they can play in conflict resolution, and evidence that peace negotiations characterized by high civil society involvement are less likely to result in resumed warfare.¹³² This part of the research project will look at the conflict management roles of women in three phases as highlighted in the previous chapter; these are the pre-conflict, conflict and post conflict roles.

3.2 The Case of Sierra Leone

The war in Sierra Leone is widely regarded as an offshoot of the state collapse and war that ravaged its neighbor, Liberia. Established as a settlement for the freed slaves by the British, the coastal areas and its adjoining lands became a British colony in 1808, which made its inhabitants British subjects. In 1896, after the British influence had spread to the hinterland, the area that was later to be known as Sierra Leone became a British Protectorate with consequences that set the polarization of the society in motion. The bifurcation of the society manifested in the sense that those living in the colony (the coastal areas) were classified as British subjects while people living in the interior were regarded as British protected persons.¹³³ Decolonization started in

¹³¹ NIFEM (now part of UN WOMEN), October 2005, *Securing the Peace: Guiding the International Community Towards Women's Effective Participation Throughout Peace Processes*, UNIFEM, New York

¹³² Wanis-St. John, Anthony, Kew, Darren, 2008, 'Civil Society and Peace Negotiations: Confronting Exclusion,' in *International Negotiation* 13, pp 11–36

¹³³ Alie, A.D. Joe (1990), *A New History of Sierra Leone*, Oxford: Macmillan Publishers Ltd.

earnest with the revision of the Stevenson constitution by the Governor, Sir George Beresford-Stooke, in 1951. Not too long afterwards, Sierra Leone became an independent state within the British Commonwealth on 27 April 1961, while the mantle of leadership fell on Sir Milton Margai, a Mende, who became the Premier. Three years later, Margai's death heated up the polity as the country was widely envenomed with a serious succession crisis due to his inability to name a successor before his death. The leadership vacuum created by the demise of Margai and the ensuing political crisis compelled the Governor General of Sierra Leone to appoint the late Premier's half-brother, Albert Margai, as the new Prime Minister. Apart from the fact that the appointment of the new Prime Minister brought ethnicity to the fore as oppositions to Margai's ethnic group, the Mende, skyrocketed, Albert Margai's misrule attracted bitter oppositions to his administration.¹³⁴ Examples of his maladministration include the dismissal from the party, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), of key supporters considered as threats to his authority, and his attempt to restructure the SLPP and make Sierra Leone a one party state.

Consequently, SLPP became fissured along ethnic lines and weakened, a sorry state that made the party lose the 1967 general elections to the All Peoples Congress (APC) under the leadership of Siaka Stevens. Siaka Stevens' leadership was cut short by a military coup led by Brigadier David Lasana. In the aftermath of a counter coup that ousted Brigadier Lasana, the deposed Prime Minister, Siaka Stevens, was reinstated by the National Interim Government (NIG) formed by the Anti-Corruption Revolutionary Movement with the grand objective of speeding up the return to civil rule.¹³⁵ For the next twenty-five years, Sierra Leone was under one party rule characterized by the over centralization of state machinery, rural isolation and neglect, ethnic politics and politics of systematic exclusion, corruption and abuse of power,

¹³⁴ Ibid

¹³⁵ Peacebuilding Commission, Great Strides Made in Sierra Leone's Emergence from Conflict. Second Session, 12 October 2006. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/News/Press/doc/2006/pbc6.doc.htm> (Date accessed 17 June 2009)

neglect and misuse of youth. All these conjoined to plunge the country into civil war in 1991, led by Foday Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) with the strong backing of Taylor's NPFL.¹³⁶

The period between 1994 and 1995 witnessed a great momentum in women's agitation for peace in Sierra Leone. Through the untiring efforts of women like Bangura, Lavalie, and others, the Women's Movement for Peace organized a march for peace in the country's two biggest cities of Freetown and Bo in February 1995.¹³⁷ A month earlier, Mrs. Lavalie led a peaceful demonstration organized by the Eastern Region Women's Movement for Peace. Women's agitation for peace climaxed in March 1995 when the organization, Women's Movement for Peace, organized a press conference in which a letter sent to the RUF leader, Foday Sankoh, was read calling for the end to the senseless war. At the conference, the Public Relations Officer of the organization, Mrs. Isha Dyfan said: "women have a specific role in conflict resolution and our concern here is to bring the war to a speedy end with independence and neutrality being our main focus." Supporting Dyfan, Fatmata Kamara added: "since the public is in full support of a peaceful resolution of the conflict, we are going to keep harping on this until the warring factions come to the negotiating table." Women's quest for peace climaxed in the aftermath of the January 1996 coup d'état that ousted Valentine Strasser's National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) government. Julius Maada Bio who succeeded Strasser lobbied for, the shifting of the date of the general elections.¹³⁸ The junta's efforts to circumvent the process became fruitless as women vehemently opposed the move and voted against such

¹³⁶ Badmus Isiaka Alani (2009b), "Even the Stones are Burning: Explaining the Ethnic Dimensions of the Civil War in Cote d'Ivoire", *Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 18, no. 2.

¹³⁷ Ibid

¹³⁸ UNOCI. Yamoussoukro: Let's give tradition a try, the women say. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unoci/year_peace_f/forum_yamoussokro_en.pdf (Date accessed: 25 August 2009)

postponement in the second National Consultative Conference convened by the Junta (Bintumani II).¹³⁹ At Bintumani II, women delegates reached a consensus that was made public: “We support that negotiations for peace as well as elections must together as previously agreed. We thus demand that the election, go ahead on 26 February 1996 as was agreed at the National Consultative Conference moreover approved by the NPRC Government the political parties, civil society as well as the Interim National Electoral Commission.”¹⁴⁰ It is interesting to note that women’s active participation did not end with the advent of democracy as the post-military Sierra Leone witnessed the rise of the multiplicity of women’s organization such as Women in Action, Women in Need, Women Accord 97, and others.

These organizations gave a high profile to women leaders of civil society and more women were chosen to head such civil society organisations. When the military sacked the democratically elected government of Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, women did not relent in their efforts to challenge this illegality and confronted the Armed Forced Revolutionary Council (AFRC). During these tense periods, women organised mass rallies, and civil disobedience that virtually paralysed the country and made life difficult for the junta. The deposed first lady, Mrs. Patricia Kabbah, appealed strongly to the Sierra Leone women not to give up their struggle for democracy.¹⁴¹ As part of their commitment to democracy, the coup d’état of 25May 1997 saw the exodus of women into exile from where they coordinated opposition to the military regime. For example, Zainab Bangura mobilised civil society from neighbouring Guinea while her Campaign for Good Governance office in Conakry became the meeting place for all civil society

¹³⁹ Ogunmola 'Dele and Isiaka Alani Badmus (2009), “Cote d’Ivoire: Understanding and Solving Ethno-political Civil Conflicts”, *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, vol. 13, no. 1, Spring.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*

¹⁴¹ Badmus Isiaka Alani (2009a), *Managing Arms in Peace Processes: ECOWAS and the West African Civil Conflict*, Porto, Portugal: Centre for African Studies, University of Porto

groups to discuss their strategies and coordinate their activities. Through Radio Democracy (F.M 98.1) regular contacts were made with those activists at home.¹⁴²

Women, through the Women's National Salvation Front, confronted the Junta and their numerous atrocities were exposed on Radio Democracy. Anti-Junta discussions were aired on Radio Democracy which, undoubtedly, keep the civil society united and increased the tempo of their opposition to military rule. All these efforts by women bore fruits as they encouraged ECOWAS to intervene; an intervention that happily resulted in the return of democracy in March 1998. These determinant roles played by women in bringing peace back to the country confirm the women's expected roles in conflict resolution as contained in the Kigali Declaration that: "recognizes women's traditional peacemaking roles and their rights to equal involvement in all peace initiatives, including early warning mechanisms and swift responses at national, regional, and international levels."¹⁴³

3.3 The case of South Sudan

The Republic of South Sudan gained independence on 9th of July 2011¹⁴⁴. This was following a referendum held in January the same year when 98% voted in favor of a separation from Sudan. The situation in Sudan has been characterized by centre- periphery tensions since independence 1956 as a result of a separation into north and south during British rule when the northern elite were given the political power, marginalizing the south. The country has since suffered from nearly constant civil war, the deadliest being between the North and the South in 1956-1972 and

¹⁴² Caprioli, M. and M.A. Boyer (2001), "Gendered Violence and International Crisis", *Journal of conflict Resolution*, vol. 45, no. 4 (503-514)

¹⁴³ Ibid

¹⁴⁴ CIA, January 2012a. *The World Fact Book: South Sudan*. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/od.html> (Accessed 10 February 2012)

1983-2005, and more recently in the north-western states of Darfur.¹⁴⁵ Although statistics vary, according to CIA, the second war resulted in over two million deaths and about four million people being displaced, further affecting all the neighboring states, which are hosting over half a million Sudanese refugees¹⁴⁶. Southern grievances formed around the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) led by John Garang.¹⁴⁷

Under the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), on-off negotiations were held between the government and the SPLA/M between 1994 and 2001, however with little progress. The North-South conflict involved many factional groups, issues and interests and numerous resolution initiatives were taken to solve it.¹⁴⁸ It was not until January 2005 that the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) under the Naivasha Accords officially ended the North-South war that was the longest lasting armed conflict in Africa.¹⁴⁹ This agreement was the culmination of several Peace Negotiations, Declarations, Covenants, Homeland Calls, Charters and other agreements. The CPA granted the South a six-year period of autonomy and incorporated the SPLA/M into a Government of National Unity (GNU). This period followed by the abovementioned referendum in January 2011, resulting in South Sudan's independence.

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¹⁴⁵ Ibid

¹⁴⁶ CIA, January 2012b. The World Fact Book: Sudan. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/su.html> (Accessed 10 February 2012)

¹⁴⁷ International Crisis Group. December 2010. Sudan Conflict History. [online] Available at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/horn-of-africa/sudan.aspx> (Accessed 10 February 2012)

¹⁴⁸ Ogunsanya, K., 2007. Women Transforming Conflicts in Africa: Descriptive Studies from Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Sudan. Project Report. Occasional Paper Series, 2 (3). Durban: ACCORD Available at: <http://www.accord.org.za/publications/occasional-papers/494-women-transforming-conicts-in-africa> (Accessed 5 August 2012)

¹⁴⁹ International Crisis Group, 2010 op cit.

1956 as a result of a separation into north and south during British rule when the northern elite were given the political power, marginalizing the south.¹⁵⁰ The country has since suffered from nearly constant civil war, the deadliest being between the North and the South in 1956-1972 and 1983-2005, and more recently in the north-western states of Darfur.¹⁵¹ Although statistics vary, according to CIA, the second war resulted in over two million deaths and about four million people being displaced, further affecting all the neighboring states, which are hosting over half a million Sudanese refugees.¹⁵² Southern grievances formed around the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) led by John Garang. Under the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), on-off negotiations were held between the government and the SPLA/M between 1994 and 2001, however with little progress.

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Women in Conflict Management in South Sudan participating in politics and public affairs have historically not been regarded as a woman's role in Sudan although women have begun to access

¹⁵⁰ Ibid

¹⁵¹ Ibid

¹⁵² CIA, January 2012b. The World Fact Book: Sudan.

¹⁵³ Ogunanya, K., 2007. Women Transforming Conflicts in Africa: Descriptive Studies from Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Sudan.

¹⁵⁴ CIA, January 2012a. The World Fact Book: South Sudan.

these areas during the second half of the 20th century.¹⁵⁵ The strong patriarchal dominance has prevented the account of female leadership from being fully recalled.¹⁵⁶ Women have, nevertheless, held positions as religious leaders, clan leaders as well as political leaders in the past. Traditionally, women are also reported to have been non-partisan medics on battlefields and mediators behind the lines. The aim of this part of the study is therefore to highlight the ways women have participated in peacebuilding during the liberation struggle despite the many obstacles brought up in the previous part of this chapter. Regarding how these efforts have been acknowledged in the Sudanese peace process will help to further understand the poor implementation of SCR 1325 in South Sudan.

The liberation struggle provided several opportunities for women. Itto,¹⁵⁷ among others, points out that the late John Garang, former leader of the SPLM/A, publicly recognized women as the ‘marginalized of the marginalized’ and that he also, long before the peace negotiations, used affirmative action (quota and training) aiming at creating a critical mass of women capable of influencing policies and decisions.¹⁵⁸ Women therefore often gained both educational and job opportunities by joining the SPLA/M. During the liberation struggle, women took on new roles and traditionally male responsibilities and became increasingly independent which affected the gender roles in households, in the community as well as at the political level.¹⁵⁹ John Garang also sought to formally incorporate women into the resistance struggle through the Women’s

¹⁵⁵ Edward, J.K., 2011. Women and political participation in South Sudan. Sudan Tribune. 7 September. Available at: <http://www.sudantribune.com/Women-and-political-participation,40086> [Accessed 9 May 2012]

¹⁵⁶ Aldehaib, A., 2010. Sudan’s Comprehensive peace Agreement viewed through the eyes of the Women of South Sudan. Fellows Programme Occasional Paper 3. Wynberg, South Africa: Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. Available at: <http://www.ijr.org.za/publications/IJRsudan.php> [Accessed 13 February 2012]

¹⁵⁷ Itto, A., 2006. Guests at the table? The role of women in peace processes. Accord No 18 Available at: http://www.c-r.org/sites/c-r.org/files/Accord18_19Guestsatthetable_2006_ENG.pdf [Accessed 16 May 2012]

¹⁵⁸ Ibid :58

¹⁵⁹ Ibid

Battalion, formed in 1984.¹⁶⁰ The second civil war (1983- 2005) and the foundation of the SPLA/M therefore gave way to a significant military participation of women when many females joined the movement¹⁶¹. Women were also officially represented through the SPLM/A's Secretariat for Women, Gender and Child Welfare as well as through the Department for Women's Affairs, which held workshops and conferences on women's rights and empowerment from 1994 and throughout the conflict. Women's activists undertook a lot of this work. Faria however writes that despite the fact that women were active in many ways in the resistance movement in South Sudan, that they were often excluded from key positions of military and political power and marginalized within the formal structures of the SPLM.¹⁶²

Partly due to their marginalization in formal negotiations, women have most commonly demonstrated their political activism through peace-work in civil society groups. They were heavily relied upon to support families and communities during both civil wars, a work that became formalized via associations, cooperatives and women's groups at the 'grassroots' in SPLM and, at a more centralized level, through the Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association that included women, although in a restricted way.¹⁶³

Women also played a key role in peacemaking efforts within Southern Sudan.¹⁶⁴ During times of ethnic violence within the SPLM in the 1990s, women were predominately involved in peace-building initiatives on a grassroots level. A significant moment for civil society was a women's conference for civic groups in 1994 with over 700 attending female leaders and

¹⁶⁰ Faria, C., 2011. Gendering War and Peace in South Sudan. The Elision and Emergence of Women. The Association of Concerned Africa Scholars (ACAS). Bulletin no.86: 'The Sudans: Which way?' November, pp.20-29.

¹⁶¹ Arabi, A., 2011. 'In power without power': Women in politics and leadership positions in South Sudan. In: F. Bubenzer and O. Stern, ed. 2011. Hope, Pain & Patience. The lives of women in South Sudan. Auckland Park, South Africa: Fanele. Ch. 8

¹⁶² Faria, C., 2011. Gendering War and Peace in South Sudan. The Elision and Emergence of Women.

¹⁶³ Ibid

¹⁶⁴ Ramsbotham, O. et. al., 2011. Contemporary conflict resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Polity

members of grassroots organizations.¹⁶⁵ This is regarded as one of the first times that military institutions recognized the role of civil society and it was a valuable networking opportunity for civic society. Since then, several women's organizations and other civil society groups with women in leadership positions have taken shape and many representatives have, during the past decade, participated in international conferences concerning women's empowerment and inclusion in peace negotiations and political decision making. Women's activist networks such as Sudanese Women's Voice for Peace, New Sudan Women's Federation and New Sudan Women's Association lobbied worldwide for an ending of the Sudanese conflict. Over the years, many South Sudanese women have developed significant peacebuilding skills from their roles as spiritual and political leaders as well as from their experiences of exile and displacement.

Despite the lack of formal learning discussed in the previous part of this chapter, many women in South Sudan have great skills keeping communities together and upholding local culture, which may prove vital to sustainable peace. It is however argued that although women's role in the liberation struggle was significant, their efforts have been commonly unacknowledged¹⁶⁶. This is clear when looking closer at how women were recognized during the CPA negotiations. Southern Sudanese women's involvement in formal peace negotiations is almost negligible despite years of advocating for inclusion. Itto¹⁶⁷ was a member of the SPLM's delegation to the Naivasha talks (that led to the signing of the CPA) and a minister in the GNU when she wrote the article referred to here. She argues that Southern Sudanese women play a central role in the society, in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Women have taken leading roles in resolving inter-ethnic conflicts, creating forums leading to many grassroots peace

¹⁶⁵ Ibid

¹⁶⁶ Faria, C., 2011. Gendering War and Peace in South Sudan. The Elision and Emergence of Women. Op cit

¹⁶⁷ Itto, A., 2006. Guests at the table? The role of women in peace processes. Accord No 18 Available at: http://www.c-r.org/sites/c-r.org/files/Accord18_19Guestsatthetable_2006_ENG.pdf [Accessed 16 May 2012]

accords and lobbied for peace worldwide through several organizations. Itto holds the view that these roles, along with other ways women have participated in the liberation struggles as combatants, supporters and caregivers, qualified women to join the peace negotiations and take an active part in the implementation of the CPA. They should have been encouraged to participate and have their perspectives taken seriously but instead, Itto argues, women's roles have been underestimated or ignored during negotiations, perhaps due to the misconception of women as passive victims of war¹⁶⁸.

SCR 1325's emphasized need to involve and support local women's peace initiatives when negotiating and implementing peace agreements was consequently not taken in account. Despite the fact that several women's organizations were registered observers with the IGAD and presented technical papers in the Machako talks in 2002 they were formally sidelined.¹⁶⁹ The SPLM/A leadership nominated a few women leaders to the Machako negotiations; however it did not facilitate a strong participation. Itto¹⁷⁰ described that the women were oftenly co-opted to such delegations at short notice with a very less chance to consult amongst themselves and others as well as being able to develop a women's peace agenda within that short time notice; they were expected to contribute to the entire party position which was from the beginning gender-blind to begin with; and they were always the minority, ill-preparedness for debates seasoned with politicians who ridiculed or intimidated anyone who dared to spend much time on gender issues, were recipe for failure. Itto¹⁷¹ adds that even when these women were consulted about gender issues or even directly included in the peace negotiations; it was only an outward gesture to display democracy and gender inclusiveness: the perspectives of these women and their

¹⁶⁸ ¹⁶⁸ Itto, A., 2006. Guests at the table? The role of women in peace processes. op cit

¹⁶⁹ Abusharaf, R.M, 2009. Transforming displaced women in Sudan: Politics and the body in a squatter settlement. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

¹⁷⁰ Itto, A., 2006. Guests at the table? The role of women in peace processes. Op cit

¹⁷¹ Ibid

experiences in peacebuilding as well as negotiation were not recognized or fully utilized. In 2002, only six women delegates from the SPLM/A negotiated with the north but they were later taken off the official list with no explanation. This led to organized demonstrations and meetings where women issued their statements. However, during the CPA negotiations in Naivasha, women were still not allowed to the main table despite international awareness about including women in peacebuilding, the Sudanese commitment to the Beijing Platform of Action, policy recommendations of IGAD and a clause in the SPLM/A's constitution promoting affirmative action.¹⁷²

From the SPLM/A's side only two women participated and then only as observers and nominal negotiators¹⁷³. When the Sudanese Government prevented women to board a plane taking them to Naivasha women from the North and South joined to protest against their exclusion. The women's organizations were forced to present their papers with recommendations to the parties by pushing them under the closed doors of the negotiation room. The CPA was hence, despite serious lobbying, negotiated with a minimal of women's representation and ultimately, women's concerns were not properly incorporated in the negotiations leading to the agreement. During the negotiations, the role of women was based on viewing them just as passive victims of war, and not active players in politics as well as their societies.¹⁷⁴ Yet even their needs as victims of war were not properly addressed.

Despite taking place five years after the signing of SCR 1325, it is clear that the resolution's call on all actors to adopt a gender perspective when negotiating peace agreements

¹⁷²Tønnesson, L. and Roald, A.S., 2007. Discrimination in the Name of Religious Freedom: The Rights of Women and Non-Muslims after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan. Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute. Available at: <http://www.cmi.no/publications/file/2704-discrimination-in-the-name-of-religious-freedom.pdf> [Accessed 23 March 2012]

¹⁷³ Aldehaib, A., 2010. Sudan's Comprehensive peace Agreement viewed through the eyes of the Women of South Sudan. Op cit

¹⁷⁴ Ringera, K. L., 2007. Excluded voices: Grassroots women and peacebuilding in southern Sudan. PhD. University of Denver.

was not adhered to during the CPA negotiations, which were in fact excluding all other political parties other than the SPLM/A and the National Congress Party as well as civil society organizations, including women's organizations.¹⁷⁵ The CPA negotiations neglected other constituencies as well as the fact that a just and sustainable peace, based on good governance, justice, equity, with democracy, requires an environment where the citizens have the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making and development processes. The main focus was that of negative peace and structural injustices was not properly addressed. This lack of gender identity as a category of analysis is making the CPA a gender blind agreement as pointed out by many.¹⁷⁶ The CPA at first glance appeared equitable because it was written in terms of an abstract gender-neutral citizen but its narrow understanding of democracy is however argued to be based on masculine norms, and its implementation relying on men. The power sharing method used for the creation of the transitional Government of Southern Sudan and various commissions developed to implement the agreement included only political parties, with few women sitting on these commissions, and with no involvement of the civil society organizations. In fact, it was not until the political parties were pressured via the gender symposium in Oslo that women were included in these commissions and by 2005 six to seven women sat on the Constitutional Review Committee¹⁷⁷.

Even though the CPA is criticized for excluding women, the peace agreement and independence it is also said to have provided some opportunities for gender equality. Independence was by all interviewees asked, expressed as something positive for women, with progress is now taking place, however slowly. An opening for women is the now independent

¹⁷⁵ Aldehaib, A., 2010. Sudan's Comprehensive peace Agreement viewed through the eyes of the Women of South Sudan. Op cit

¹⁷⁶ Ibid

¹⁷⁷ Faria, C., 2011. Gendering War and Peace in South Sudan. The Elision and Emergence of Women. Op cit

South Sudanese Government's expressed commitments to gender equality and women's participation in the constitution.¹⁷⁸ Endorsed at independence in 2011, the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan is an amended version of the Interim constitution from 2005. This law is declaring that women shall be accorded full and equal dignity of the person with men and have the right to participate equally with men in public life.¹⁷⁹ Yet, the constitution is problematic since it is also recognizing customary laws that often discriminate against women. However, to help realize the commitments to gender equality in the constitution, the government has established a Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs with a mandate to mainstream gender in government institutions and establish women's empowerment initiatives.¹⁸⁰

Another often cited breakthrough for women's participation in politics is the 25 % quota for women in government, invented by the Government of South Sudan after the signing of the CPA, which gave way to an increase of women in politics during the interim period 2005-2011.¹⁸¹ Article 16 of the Transitional Constitution is now declaring that all levels of Government shall promote women participation in the public life and their representation in the legislative as well as executive organs by at least twenty-five per cent as an affirmative action to redress imbalances created by history, customs, and traditions. Although a quota system is sometimes argued to be an effective way to increase women's political participation, it is also problematic.¹⁸² While quotas address the gender imbalance in decision-making they do not

¹⁷⁸ Ali, N.M., 2011. Gender and Statebuilding in South Sudan. Special Report 298. Washington: United States Institute for Peace. Available at: <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/SR298.pdf> [Accessed 24 January 2012]

¹⁷⁹ The 2011 Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan article 16, an amended version of the Interim constitution from 2005, article 16

¹⁸⁰ Arabi, A., 2011. 'In power without power': Women in politics and leadership positions in South Sudan. In: F. Bubenzer and O. Stern, ed. 2011. Hope, Pain & Patience. The lives of women in South Sudan. Auckland Park, South Africa: Fanele. Ch. 8

¹⁸¹ Ibid

¹⁸² Arabi, A., 2011. 'In power without power': Women in politics and leadership positions in South Sudan

guarantee a change in perceptions of women's abilities since the practice often lacks support from political actors and may well meet opposition from communities that have strong patriarchal traditions.¹⁸³ The quota does therefore not necessarily guarantee real political power and it is even argued that underlying discriminatory norms and practices may be strengthened unless related challenges such as traditional beliefs and women's access to education are addressed.

3.4 Conclusion

As displayed in the cases of South Sudan and Sierra Leone, it can be noted is that women are often already active in community peace building but their political skills are often not recognized and therefore not made use of in formal arenas¹⁸⁴. Women are often involved in relationship building and conflict resolution activities that precede formal negotiations and their issues of concern involve political, social, civil, economic and judicial matters that don't always reach the negotiation table.¹⁸⁵ Embracing these issues is nevertheless important since peace negotiations are not only about ending a conflict but also "an opportunity to contribute to the foundations of a reconstructed society based on justice, rights and equality"¹⁸⁶. To promote and ensure peacebuilding in these countries, Potter¹⁸⁷ has argued that peace negotiations and agreements would be richer and more firmly rooted in the societies with a greater participation of women and issues important to them. That women's conflict management skills (before, during and after conflict), from civil society should be embraced and further cultivated is also important given Porter's argument that peace supported at grassroots level is more likely to be

¹⁸³ Ibid: 198

¹⁸⁴ Potter, A., 2008. Women, Gender and Peacemaking in Civil Wars. In: J. Darby and R. Mac Ginty, ed. 2008. Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Peace Processes and Post-War Reconstruction. 2nd ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. Ch.8.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid

¹⁸⁶ Ibid : 250

¹⁸⁷ . Darby and R. Mac Ginty, ed. 2008. Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Peace Processes and Post-War Reconstruction. 2nd ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. Ch.8.

sustainable.¹⁸⁸ The two case study examples and others from around the world show how women can build a foundation for and catalyze peace negotiations as well as complement official peace-building¹⁸⁹. Women can bring different perspectives by raising issues otherwise ignored and also foster reconciliation and set examples to move societies forward. In countries emerging from conflict, supporting women's participation in decision making can serve as a shift away from the status quo that catalyzed the conflict.

¹⁸⁸ Porter, E., 2003. Women, Political Decision-Making, and Peace-Building. *Global Change, Peace & Security*, 15 (3), pp.245-262.

¹⁸⁹ UNIFEM, October 2005a. *Securing the Peace: Guiding the International Community towards Women's Effective Participation throughout Peace Processes*. [online] Available at: http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/Securing_the_Peace.pdf [Accessed 18 January 2012]

CHAPTER FOUR

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The immediate objectives of the research paper has been examining the achievements of women in conflict management, as well as raising awareness of women's needs and situation in Africa; of raising awareness of the implementation of the UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 in African context with the example of the two comparative case studies: Sierra Leone and South Sudan. The objective of promoting gender mainstreaming in conflict management in the African states as is displayed by women's peace organizations and other stakeholders could also be seen to being achieved continuously during the study as women participated a lot in the peace processes especially in the grassroots level.¹⁹⁰ Only time can measure the success in achieving the more long-term objectives of ensuring that the African women are included in conflict prevention and resolution, in peace-making processes and given decision-making positions in their respective governments, in regional and international organizations.

Africa is indeed a region more often defined through its conflicts and violence than through its level of co-operation. It is perhaps one of the most afflicted regions in Africa. Man-made disasters have created a gloomy image of the region making the Horn of Africa synonymous with strife and wars that cause a wide scale of destruction. These conditions have paralyzed peace, justice, equality, observation of basic human rights, democracy, stability and progressive development in most the of the African countries

¹⁹⁰ De Waal, A. (ed.) (2002) *Demilitarising the Mind: African Agendas for Peace and Security*. Trenton, N.J.: Justice Africa/ Africa World Press.

4.2 The Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in the Horn of Africa

Adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) in October 2000 marked the first time that gender issues, and more specifically women's concerns, were placed on the peace and security agenda of the United Nations. This was the culmination of years of collaborative work between civil society and select policy actors. It was an important first step in addressing the multi-dimensional challenges that confront women in different contexts particularly in conflict-affected situations. The Resolution's focus on conflict and peace building was a valuable entry point given the magnitude of the problems posed for girls and women by conflict and insecurity globally. The particular attention of UNSCR 1325 to a number of inter-related issues was considered path breaking in many quarters not least amongst women's groups, worldwide. Four of these issues are worth highlighting in any assessment of African women's agenda in the field of peace and security.¹⁹¹

The first is that of women's representation at the highest decision-making levels in the systems and structures that deal with conflict resolution and management at national, regional and international levels. In this regard, the decision that the UN Secretary-General should appoint more women as Special Envoys and Representatives was a valuable step toward ensuring that the organization embeds this principle in practice. Second and related to this is the provision for the expansion of women's role in field-based operations. Third is the demand for the inclusion of measures to support local women's peace initiatives and home-grown processes of conflict resolution in the agenda of actors responsible for negotiating and implementing peace

¹⁹¹ Johnson, A. G. (2005) *The Gender Knot: Unravelling Our Patriarchal Legacy*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press

agreements.¹⁹² Fourth and last is the treatment of women in situations of armed conflict including protection from gender-based violence by armed groups and ensuring that gender considerations are core to Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration programs. UNSCR 1325 does not explicitly address structural change but the results that it seeks require a fundamental shift in the prevailing systems. Recognizing this in the application of 1325 would go a long way in ensuring its relevance across various contexts. At first glance a focus on these sets of issues appears to limit implementation of this resolution to only a narrow range of situations – those affected by armed conflict – which also serve as potential areas of least resistance for international intervention. Upon closer examination however, these issues have application far beyond conflict and war-affected settings. In Africa, the potential relevance of UNSCR 1325 is manifested in several ways. It sets standards for addressing immediate symptoms or consequences of conflict; it also opens up a path for dealing with the structural issues, which created the symptoms in the first instance.¹⁹³ Any effort, for example, to ensure women's representation at the highest decision-making levels within mechanisms designed for conflict resolution, must effectively engage the factors or systems that prevent women from advancing to these levels.

Similarly, efforts to ensure that armed groups guarantee the protection of women as well as girls from sexual violence must assume a fair measure of transformation. In the euphoria that surrounded the adoption of the UNSCR 1325, little attention was paid to whether and how its implementation might be ensured across national and regional boundaries, particularly in regions such as Africa, where its application is most critical. This Resolution has since been strengthened

¹⁹² United Nations (2010) Women Count for Peace: the 2010 Open Days on Women, Peace and Security1325+10. Available at http://www.undp.org/cpr/documents/OD_Report_Version_9_WEB.pdf

¹⁹³ UN Security Council, Resolution 1820 (2008) adopted by the Security Council at its 5916th meeting, on 19 June 2008

by other UN Security Council Resolutions – 1820, 1888 and 1889. While UNSCR 1820, which was adopted in June 2008, reaffirms 1325, it more directly places the issue of sexual violence on the agenda of the UN Security Council.¹⁹⁴ Adopted in September 2009, UNSCR 1888 follows up on the issue of sexual violence and makes specific requests in this regard including the appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary- General to coordinate UN efforts to address sexual violence. On 5 October 2009, UNSCR 1889 was adopted. It shifted attention back to the central role of UNSCR 1325 by requesting better reporting and resources to support gender equality; and the development of indicators to track the implementation of UNSCR 1325.¹⁹⁵ The extent to which these additional Resolutions can potentially impact the application of UNSCR 1325 negatively or positively has been the subject of much debate. It is important to indicate that UNSCR 1889 is a potentially enabling tool for UNSCR 1325. The tenth year anniversary of the adoption of UNSCR 1325 offers an opportunity to critically examine what impact, if any UNSCR has had on Africa and what progress has been recorded for African women as a result of this resolution.¹⁹⁶

4.2.1 The Challenge of Application in Africa

Seeking to assess the relevance of UNSCR 1325 to Africa, it is important to understand the African context in which this resolution is to be implemented. That environment is characterized by a number of factors, which are directly related to the structural gaps that UNSCR 1325 was designed to address, implicitly. These factors prevail in both situations of armed conflict and those not directly affected by armed conflict. Across Africa as in other regions, the issues at the

¹⁹⁴ Ibid

¹⁹⁵ United Nations (2010) Women Count for Peace: the 2010 Open Days on Women, Peace and Security1325+10. Available at http://www.undp.org/cpr/documents/OD_Report_Version_9_WEB.pdf

¹⁹⁶ Rehn, E and Sirleaf, E. J. (2002) Women, War and Peace: The Independent Experts' Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role I Peace-building. New York: UNIFEM

core of UNSCR 1325 are embedded in structural factors, which exist in peacetime and merely become magnified during periods of armed conflict.¹⁹⁷ The foundations of the exclusion of women from high level decision-making and key institutional mechanisms and processes for human advancement; sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in wartime; and gender blind approaches to peace building in post-war settings are laid during peace-time and are located within social interactions. The treatment of women in peace or war, including violence against women, has its basis in the prescribed norms about what it means to be a man or woman, which is underpinned by power inequality between men and women.

A society's belief systems, cultural norms and socialization processes, ultimately inform the type of power hierarchies that guide social interactions, particularly gender relations. The four issues extracted from UNSCR 1325 are invariably an expression of these power hierarchies. It is not surprising therefore that in many societies this places women in positions of disadvantage in addition to the suffering they endure in times of war and relative peace. In these largely patriarchal societies, it is commonplace to find some if not all of a whole range of discriminatory practices against women. These might include, for example, dowry-related death, sexual abuse of female children, marital rape, female genital mutilation (FGM) and other harmful traditional practices – all of which occur as acts of gender based violence in communities in normal peacetime. This is in addition to physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within communities.¹⁹⁸ Also included are rape of women, sexual abuse, harassment and intimidation at work and trafficking in women and forced prostitution, as well as violence condoned or perpetrated by the state or even its agents. While these practices are not the

¹⁹⁷ UN Security Council, Resolution 1820 (2008) adopted by the Security Council at its 5916th meeting, on 19 June 2008

¹⁹⁸ United Nations Security Council (2000) Resolution 1325 (2000) Adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting, on 31 October 2000

preserve of African societies, the continent has a healthy share of these issues. They are part of the normal order of society. Armed conflict magnifies these problems. After all, it is to be expected that those who see girls and women as inferior to boys and men and accord them low priority in society during ‘normal’ times would not suddenly elevate them to a higher status in times of war.¹⁹⁹ Rather, in a climate of armed conflict in which the rules of war have been abandoned and anything goes, this inferior sex is fair game and experience has shown how they have been easily preyed upon in situations of armed conflict from Bosnia to Congo.

4.3 Why Gender Perspective Matters in the Management of Persistent Conflict

The persistent violent conflicts that have been raging in the region have destroyed the rudimentary industries, social and physical infrastructures, such as roads, port facilities, schools, hospitals, clinics, irrigation infrastructures, farms, pasture lands, livestock, crops, water wells, etc. These wars have also diminished dramatically or in the worst case scenario eliminated local and inter-communal and cross-border exchanges of goods and services. Owing to the arid and semi-arid nature of the environment in the region, livelihood systems have always been dependent on multiplicity of economic activities and diversities of income sources. These have either disappeared completely or have shrunk due to insecurity. Because of the incessant violent conflicts that have been afflicting the region of Africa has distinguished itself as being one of the major sources of IDPs and refugees.²⁰⁰ Most of the latter flee to the neighboring countries, which are unable to meet even the basic needs of their own citizens. These damaging effects are universal regardless of the nature of the war in question. It does not matter whether it is intra-state or inter-state war.

¹⁹⁹ United Nations (1997) Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations System, E/1997/L.30, 14 July

²⁰⁰ Grossman, D. (2009) *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*. New York: Back Bay Books Little, Brown and Company

The violent conflicts, especially the identity-based intrastate wars have been sowing divisive seeds of disharmony, social disintegration and mutual animosity and have consequently turned different faith and ethnic groups against each other. These divisive tensions and violent conflicts by engendering bonding rather than bridging social capital have destroyed the common purpose that previously held the different groups together. This does not however mean that lack of survival opportunity or poverty is the cause of violent conflict in the region. Nothing can be more wrong than such a claim.²⁰¹ In Africa, poverty or lack of income-generating opportunities instead of causing violent conflict provide the conditions that allow the emergence and entrenchment of ethnic and religious entrepreneurs who use ethnicity and faith as a rallying cry to mobilize followers in pursuit of self rather than collective ethnic or faith groups' interests.

In Africa, the single most important drivers of violent conflict and destruction have been ethnic and religious entrepreneurs who cajole and hoodwink the disenfranchised youth to join them. Ironically, the only country in the whole continent that is supposed to be homogenous in terms of ethnicity, religion and language – Somalia – is the case in point. The violent intra-state civil war instigated and fuelled by the boundless greed and ruthlessness of the clan and faith-based entrepreneurs has torn apart the values and norms that held Somali society together in the past. It is important to understand, however, that the social and political effects of wars in the region have not been identical. For example, the Thirty Years' War of national liberation struggle in Eritrea fought against a common enemy stimulated the development of bridging social capital interconnecting Eritreans across the social cleavages of religion, ethnicity, class

²⁰¹ Abusharaf, R. M. (2006) "Competing Masculinities: Probing Political Disputes as Acts of Violence against Women from Southern Sudan and Darfur." In Hassan, S. M. and Ray, C. E. (eds.), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan: A Critical Reader*. Ithica: Cornell University Press, pp. 199-212

and sex²⁰². The war fought against a common external enemy produced the glue that held Eritrean society together by producing a set of values and a sense of common purpose which constituted the necessary conditions for solidarity and unity.²⁰³

The interesting question is: what happens when the enemy is defeated? Do those who previously set aside their differences to confront a common external enemy turn against each other or continue to set aside their differences to re-build their economies? This depends on how power and resources are shared among the different groups and on the extent to which the sanctity of the rule of law, human life and principles of human rights are promoted, respected and protected. In the absence of this, there is no guarantee against the former allies and comrade in-arms turning against each other. In the Horn of Africa, violent conflict has stifled every development effort and the negative effect of this on men's ability to provide for their families by playing their bread-winner role and on women's wellbeing has been dramatic. According to the dominant gender ideology in the region, manhood is inextricably linked to the ability of men to play the socially constructed bread-winner role by providing for their families as well as protecting them against any harm perpetrated by third parties. The ability to provide the means of survival and physical protection of one's family is the most significant factor that defines what constitutes manhood in the region. In the Horn of Africa, a man without the ability to provide for and protect his family is an emasculated man and in the cultural context of the Horn such a man is as good as a dead man. It is also important to emphasize that manhood only exists in contrast to womanhood and what distinguishes the two is the ability of the man to provide for and protect

²⁰² Grossman, D. (2009) *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*. New York: Back Bay Books Little, Brown and Company

²⁰³ Ibid

his family.²⁰⁴ According to the dominant perception in the region, once men are unable to play the breadwinning and protecting role, the distinction between manhood and womanhood disappears and metaphorically speaking men become women.

In Africa, men react differently to the danger of being emasculated. Some flee their homes and join IDP camps, others flee across borders and join refugee camps in neighboring countries and a minority joins armed gangs and warlords to commit heinous crimes against women and girls as a means of counteracting the risk of being emasculated. The perpetration of atrocious crimes against women and girls besides providing an easy access to women, food and loot is also a means of asserting manhood. In a situation where the opportunities to engage in traditional or modern economic activities are wiped out by violent conflict, looting becomes the only means of providing perpetrators the opportunities to provide for their families regardless of the immorality of the means by which it is obtained.²⁰⁵ Participation in armed gangs or war lords' militias also enables the perpetrators to protect their families at the cost of others. In such circumstances what was in the previous cultural context considered taboo and abnormal becomes a norm.

The research paper analysis on gender role brings the justification of the involvement of gender factor in conflict management. This has been echoed in previous chapters as to why it is important to take gender mainstreaming in the field of conflict management to another level. Indeed, conflict resolution and peace-building from a gender perspective means changing the system and power dynamics that lead to conflict. Sustainable peace requires fully including women and all segments of society as politically viable citizens. Women's participation in

²⁰⁴ Fukuyama, F. (1998) "Women and the Evolution of World Politics Essay". Foreign Affairs, Sep/Oct 1998. Available at: Grassroots Peacebuilding: The Roles of Women in War and Peace,

²⁰⁵ Marshall, D. R. (2000) Women in War and Peace. Grass roots Peace-building. Peace works No. 34. United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C.

resolving and preventing conflict is not an optional, but rather an essential ingredient of peace-processes.²⁰⁶ So, why then does women's participation and representation in peace and security issues matter? The first answer is *a priori* that of equality: women are half the population, thus they should have a proportionate role in deciding and implementing any plans that affect them. Just as trenchant is the fact that they are disproportionately victims in war and its aftermath, and disproportionately under-represented in public life – quite as much in developed and peaceful countries as those emerging from decades of war. Even here in Turkey there is representation of 14 per cent of women in parliament but the best representation of women in the world is in post-conflict Rwanda, with a representation of 56 per cent.

Notably, 50 per cent of peace agreements fail within their first decade and that research shows that inclusive processes are more credible to the public and have a higher success rate. Given the evident absence of women, this provides a significant avenue for addressing the inclusiveness issue. Finally there is the empirical evidence of women's contributions in peace and security. There has been an enormous amount of work done since UNSCR 1325 was passed in 2000 to document the value that women's participation add, although notably no corresponding work on the specific added value of male participation qua male for which arguments are not demanded by the international community as the basis for their inclusion or exclusion from peace processes.

4.4 Marginalization of Women in Peace Processes in Africa

The study, gathering from the case studies of South Sudan and Sierra Leone notes of the inequality in gender representation especially on the round table talks during negotiation. Indeed

²⁰⁶ United Nations, 2010. Women Count for Peace: The 2010 Open Days on Women, Peace and Security. [online] Available at: http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/WomenCount4Peace_OpenDays_Report_en.pdf [Accessed 18 January 2012]

women are more participatory in the grassroots than in the decision making level. Yet women are greatly affected by conflict as men do and with the change of roles during and after conflict, women take up masculine positions in the societies such as being bread winners. In Africa where civilians in general and women and girls in particular bear the brunt of the suffering, any peace negotiations and agreements that do not take their experiences and perspectives as points of departure and consequently incorporate them into final agreements are a sham and consequently not worth the paper they are written on.²⁰⁷

One of the reasons the region has become the graveyard of failed peace negotiations and agreements is because those who are supposed to be in the driver's seat – women – are kept on the backburner. That may be one of the reasons why the plethora of peace agreements in the region get bloodied before the ink they are written in dries. The same is true of post-conflict development and reconstruction processes. Other things being equal, destruction can provide rare opportunities for a fresh new look and construction of new economies and societies.²⁰⁸ In the region, the common trend has been that instead of seizing the opportunity to create new societies where previous injustices, horizontal and vertical inequalities, power relations and exploitation of the weak by the powerful are relegated to the dustbin of history, the international community in collaboration with governments in such countries have been left to try to piece together, often without success, the shattered constituent elements of the old social and economic structures. Not surprisingly, the old problems, grievances, injustices, gender and other forms of inequalities and oppressions instead of fading re-emerge with greater rigor and revitalization to haunt once again the societies before they have had respite to recover from the trauma and suffering of the

²⁰⁷ Abusharaf, R. M. (2006) "Competing Masculinities: Probing Political Disputes as Acts of Violence against Women from Southern Sudan and Darfur." In Hassan, S. M. and Ray, C. E. (eds.), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan: A Critical Reader*. Ithica: Cornell University Press, pp. 199-212

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*: 210

recent past. Reconstruction is the last thing war-torn societies need. What they desperately need is the creation and construction of new social and economic orders on the ruins of the past. Building rather than re- building and construction afresh rather than reconstruction of the conflict-ridden past is what our war-affected societies need badly. Any action should be preceded by careful and innovative re-conceptualization and questioning of the key concepts and terminologies that are widely used in policy analysis and policy-making. Such concepts include ‘post-conflict societies’, ‘reconstruction’, ‘war-torn’, etc. The ultimate causes of the conflicts in the region have never been resolved in a lasting way in any one of the countries in the region. None of them has hitherto ever been in a post-conflict situation. The region has been ridden by different forms of violent conflicts since the 1950s if not earlier.²⁰⁹ Therefore the use of the concept ‘post-conflict’ is a misnomer at best and deceptive at worst. There has never been a lasting post-conflict situation in the region.

As mentioned earlier, ‘reconstruction’ amounts to reacting the hazardous past without considering the potential danger of inadvertently providing nutrients to the dormant seeds of violent past to germinate and haunt the present and the future. Another uncritically embraced and widely used concept in the conflict-ridden region of the Horn is ‘war-torn’. There is a tendency to consider war as a phenomenon that inevitably tears communities apart. This is not necessarily always the case.²¹⁰ Some wars instead of turning social groups and political organizations against each can provide an impetus for unity and solidarity. Depending on its nature and on how its aftermath is dealt with, war can have a cementing or disintegrating effect on society. War’s gluing effect on society is well-documented in the relevant literature.²¹¹ War

²⁰⁹ Grossman, D. (2009) *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*. op cit.

²¹⁰ Ibid

²¹¹ Abusharaf, R. M. (2006) “Competing Masculinities: Probing Political Disputes as Acts of Violence against Women from Southern Sudan and Darfur.” Op cit.

fought against a common external enemy functions as a glue that holds communities or societies together.²¹² This is because a common enemy has a tendency to engender a set of values and a sense of common purpose among citizens and consequently produces the necessary conditions for solidarity and unity of present and future generations. War provides a sense of meaning and purpose which are absent in modern societies and as a result is a powerful weapon of social change, solidarity and cohesion²¹³. Such creative and innovative approaches can provide rare opportunities for turning the misfortunes into fortune.

The single most important factor that validates men's absolute supremacy within intra-household relations is the socially constructed breadwinner role they are expected to play by their communities regardless of whether they fulfill that role or not. The property rights arrangements in the communities are organized and enforced to enable male household heads to provide for their families by playing their bread winner role. At least at the micro-level, the perceived or actual bread winner status of male heads of households lies at the heart of gender inequality reflected in unequal distribution of power of decision-making regarding allocation of family labour, resources, children's education, etc. It is immaterial whether men actually play these roles. It is enough that they are assigned to play this role by the dominant gender ideology which defines the main tenets of gender-based division of labour in the countries in the region. One of the most evident consequences of war as noted in the first part of the paper is the erosion of the male household head's socially-constructed bread winner role. The loss of bread winner role automatically delegitimizes the power and authority of men in intra-household relations. Not only does this bring to an end men's unaccountable exercise of power in intra-household

²¹² De Waal, A. (ed.) (2002) *Demilitarising the Mind: African Agendas for Peace and Security*. Trenton, N.J.: Justice Africa/ Africa World Press.

²¹³ Moser, C. O.N. and Clark, F. C. (2001) *Victims, Perpetrators or Actors? Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*. London: Zed Books

relations, but also the edifice of the foundation on which the household rests changes and becomes reconfigured both physically and socially. Roles that were previously considered as exclusively masculine are assumed by women. Women suddenly become dominant actors in areas previously considered beyond their reach. This reconfiguration of power relations and divisions of labour undoubtedly increases women's workloads but also empowers and liberates women from dependence on men and from being limited to reproductive household chores. More importantly, these positive externalities (side-effects) of war contribute to the development and consolidation of women's agency. The dominant conventional models of peace negotiations and agreements, instead of building on these unexpected positive externalities or war dividends to re-inforce and further develop and consolidate women's newly acquired bread-winner status and power of decision-making, invariably tend to undermine these achievements inadvertently by helping men to regain their lost bread-winner and household headship roles.²¹⁴

As a result, peace negotiations and agreements end up reconstructing the old power relations which were at the heart of the violence perpetrated against women and girls. Women's agency is not recognized in violent conflicts and consequently, they are perceived as being irrelevant to peace processes and development. They are rather perceived as victims and consequently as objects of humanitarian assistance. This male-centric perspective perceives men as the sole actors in violent conflict and consequently, when the shooting stops and the need for peace, rehabilitation and construction begins, only men are called to the negotiating table.²¹⁵ As a result, the authors of violence become the sole actors with the power to shape or influence the future of their societies. This approach, rather than addressing the ultimate and proximate causes

²¹⁴ Abusharaf, R. M. (2006) "Competing Masculinities: Probing Political Disputes as Acts of Violence against Women from Southern Sudan and Darfur." In Hassan, S. M. and Ray, C. E. (eds.), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan: A Critical Reader*. Ithica: Cornell University Press, pp. 199-212

²¹⁵ Ibid

of gender-based and other forms of violence, has invariably led the societies in Africa into a blind alley reflected in incessant violent conflicts, massive displacement, bloodshed and abject poverty. Only a paradigm shift that builds on the positive externalities of war reflected in the reconfiguration of intra-household power relations and gender roles, as well as re-conceptualizing masculinity and femininity, will bring about recognition of women's agency in the peace process and development.²¹⁶ Not only do conventional peace processes disregard the positive externalities of war mentioned earlier in the peace negotiations and agreements, but they are also premised on fundamentally misconceived assumptions, including perceiving women as being compassionate, peaceful, nurturing and caring. The latter are nothing but a reflection of sexist gendered values. As seen before, women are capable and often do participate in violent conflicts. When women fight for peace and peaceful conflict resolution, it is not because they are innately endowed with peaceful genetic traits, but rather because they have chosen to do so. The exclusion and marginalization of women in peace processes and peace agreements, as well as the recurrence of violent conflicts and atrocities, disproportionately affecting civilians, especially women and girls in spite of the plethora of marathon peace negotiations and agreements, have been alarming the international community, with the United Nations at the forefront. It was in response to this appalling situation that the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on 31 October 2000.²¹⁷

²¹⁶ Abusharaf, R. M. (2006) "Competing Masculinities: Probing Political Disputes as Acts of Violence against Women from Southern Sudan and Darfur." In Hassan, S. M. and Ray, C. E. (eds.), *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance in Sudan: A Critical Reader*. Ithica: Cornell University Press, pp. 199-212

²¹⁷ Rehn, E and Sirleaf, E. J. *Women, War and Peace: The Independent Experts' Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role I Peace-building*. Op cit

4.5 Challenges to Gendered Participation in Conflict Management

Involving women and gender considerations in peace processes is clearly, not easier said than done. The international normative frameworks have led to a radical sea change in language and bureaucratic arrangements amongst the international community but little effect has yet been seen on the ground, as many governments, armed groups, or even civil society organizations in many countries think about the role of women in the processes they are engaged in. Culture and religion inevitably create complicated cross currents.²¹⁸

Women's presence as negotiators, mediators and peace agreement signatories in formal peace processes remains negligible (less than 10 per cent, none, and less than 3 per cent respectively)²¹⁹ and their place in important post-conflict institutions such as commissions on truth and reconciliation, reparations, electoral and constitutional reform is only guaranteed where activism and quotas are in effective operation. In Egypt, where women's important role in the uprising of the Arab Spring is generally acknowledged, there were no women on the interim constitutional drafting committee formed in 2011. For instance, at the recent second Bonn Conference on Afghanistan in December 2011 there was a single female on the civil society delegation and an impressive 33 per cent of the government delegation was women.

However, the women still expressed concern that they may not be able to meaningfully influence discussions and that, in particular, they feared that a potential re-opening of closed door talks with the Taliban could pose a threat to the fragile and uneven gains made for women's rights in Afghanistan in the last decade. However, at peacebuilding and reconciliation work at

²¹⁸ NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. Founded in 2000, the Working Group advocates for the full implementation of resolution 1325. www.womenpeacesecurity.org/ (accessed 7 April 2009)

²¹⁹ Ibid

the community level (the so-called second and third tracks of peacebuilding) women are extraordinarily active.²²⁰

It seems that there are still pockets of resistance to high-level female participation in the peacemaking world, both internationally and at national level, and difficulty in connecting grass roots level peace work with the higher or more formal levels of peace dialogue. Culture is always a popular argument, but given the nature of women's constructive activism in such places as Afghanistan or Yemen (now underlined by the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize awards to Yemeni Tawakkol Karman and the two Liberians, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Leymah Gbowee),²²¹ this seems less and less powerful. The issue now is not that culture should be accepted as a barrier, but more precisely how to ensure that the women of any given culture have reasonable access to key decision making processes in their context. There is a real concern that the imposition of perceived Western agendas may serve to further harden existing hardliner positions, and also that it puts women in a difficult position when they wish to be both patriotic, or true to a particular grouping, but also pursue a women's empowerment agenda. Again, the key issue here is to listen to what a range of women in that country have to say, and to heed their advice about how to approach the issue effectively, which may not be head-on, but is also unlikely to be completely hands-off.

At the national level, there is rarely an absence of women's networks and organizations (even if they are not working directly on peace and security issues), which are ready to support and push senior women into relevant positions. However, those supporting and facilitating peacebuilding efforts need to link with local women actors and support them to develop

²²⁰ O. Amsbotham, et. al., 2011. *Contemporary conflict resolution: the prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Polity

²²¹ Stone, L., 2011. "We were all soldiers": Female combatants in South Sudan's civil war. In: F. Bubenzer and O. Stern, ed. 2011. *Hope, Pain & Patience. The lives of women in South Sudan*. Auckland Park, South Africa: Fanele. Ch. 2

appropriate tactics to advocate locally and nationally about the value of including and listening to them.²²²

4.6 Conclusion

These abilities and capacities, and the important fact that groups of women are rarely characterized as spoilers (while this is, of course, possible), all suggest that women's involvement would broaden the peace builders range of tools and tactics to reach a positive outcome, depending on the space and leverage that they truly have with the conflict parties and other stakeholders. The SC Resolution has improved international bureaucracies but it has not changed or altered the situation on the ground as much. Clearly, women play very positive roles in securing and maintaining peace in societies. This therefore proves as the study has shown that the gender roles particularly those of women need to be taken to a higher level of their active participation not only at the 'grassroots' level, but also active participation at the 'negotiating table'- the decision making level.

²²² Inter-Agency Standing Committee Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action. (The Sub-working Group brings together representatives of United Nations organisations and NGOs and supports the integration to gender issues into all elements of humanitarian action) : www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/content/subsidi/tf_gender/default.asp?bodyID=1&publish=7 (accessed 7 April 2009)

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The study has discussed and examined gender roles and mainstreaming in conflict management. The outcome has been the prove that indeed gendered participation is in existence and key in the peace processes, particularly in the African context. In order to implement policies that enhance gender mainstreaming in conflict management, governments, including donors, troop and police contributing countries, and international organization play important roles in facilitating women's participation in peace processes, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, including by removing legislative and other barriers for women's participation and by providing technical and financial support to women's organizations and leaders. In post-conflict societies this support is critical as institutions are redefined, restructured or newly created and new laws and regulations are developed.

This is so because women particularly, be it at the grassroots level or at the 'round table' negotiation, play a key role in ending persistent conflicts through, advocacy, campaigns and other conflict resolving mechanisms, as well as transformative ways that lead to sustainable peace.

More notably, the UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) has galvanized efforts of countries to address the gender dimensions of armed conflict and enhance women's participation in peace processes. A growing number of countries have developed national action plans to implement resolution 1325, including: Austria, Côte d'Ivoire, Belgium, Ghana, Jordan, Liberia, the Philippines and Sierra Leone are in the process of developing and implementing national action plans. Other countries, such as Croatia and Fiji have included the implementation of

resolution 1325 into their national plans of action on gender equality. Countries have used national action plans as a tool to identify priority areas for action. In Côte d'Ivoire, for example, the following areas have been identified: protection of women as well as girls from sexual violence, the inclusion of gender perspectives into the policies and development programmes, the reinforcing of women's access to basic social infrastructures along with their participation in reconstruction and also reintegration processes, plus the strengthening the participation of women in political decision-making.

5.2 Key Finding

While there is growing support for women's equal participation in peace processes, progress in women's access to such processes, in particular formal peace negotiations, has been limited. In 2003, an expert group meeting was organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women in Ottawa, Canada to discuss obstacles, lessons learned and good practices in the negotiation, content and implementation of peace agreements. This is useful in proving the need for women's participation in persistent conflicts that have seen one failed peace agreement after another. Only incremental progress in the level of attention to gender perspectives as a cross-cutting concern in peace processes had been achieved. The absence of women from formal processes and peace negotiations continue to result in insufficient attention to along with reflection of the concerns of women in peace agreements. Important issues, like the protection as well as the promotion of women's human rights, particularly women's economic and social rights, may be omitted. Some governments have indeed taken important initiatives to address the absence of women in formal peace processes. The Israeli Women's Equal Rights Law, for example, was amended in the spirit of resolution 1325, mandating that the Israeli government includes women in any group appointed to peace-building negotiations in addition to those of conflict resolution. This is a

good example that can be exemplified in persistent conflicts such as the Darfur conflict and others in Africa.

Measures to ensure attention to women's rights and gender equality issues in truth and reconciliation commissions have also been taken. The International Centre for Transitional Justice and other organizations have produced useful materials along with sp Post-conflict situations can provide unique opportunities to introduce a more inclusive political framework to advance women's political participation. The international community has been working with women's organizations and national governments in conflict regions, to support post-conflict constitutional, electoral and legislative reform processes and to build the institutional capacity of national institutions, including national machineries for gender equality, in post-conflict areas. In As a result, the new constitutions and policies have included language on gender equality and a quota for women in the lower house of parliament. Particular strategies to address the issues of gender equality across all operations of the truth commissions have also been set forth. However, as noted in the research project, the gender participation needs to be taken to a higher degree in the decision making level where women are more included in the round table discussions during negotiations.

5.3 Recommendations

The following are ideas as such recommendations to move forward in implementing gender mainstreaming in conflict management. These are a few but important tactics and strategies, which could be useful to implement in terms of improving women's representation and the use of gendered perspectives in peace and security issues. The first is the issue of role modeling, for those that wish to 'preach' women's inclusion to others, practice it itself. Salim (noted earlier in the South Sudan case) did this in the talks leading to the Darfur Peace Agreement in 2006. This

shows what is possible, that commitment to international norms is real, and gives confidence and fodder to women on the ground to make their own arguments.

When the Secretary-General visited Libya in November 2011, he and his delegation met with the National Transitional Council which at that time had one woman member. He gently chided the NTCs Head, Mustafa Abdul Jalil, for the lack of women on his council. In an equally good ‘humored’ manner, Jalil agreed that Libya could and would do better, but, to amusement on all sides, he turned the argument back to the Secretary-General, pointing out that he himself had no senior women on his delegation.

The study recommends the use of opportunities like international donor or reconstruction conferences or needs assessments to bring in women and women’s groups in specific roles. This can also help connect them with outside support that will bolster their work and influence inside their context. However, be sensitive that the outside support does not endanger their security or block off their agenda internally. As an example of good practice in this regard, the Institute for Inclusive Security and UN Women co-organized a Gender Symposium on the margins of the South Sudan International Engagement Conference in Washington D.C. in December 2011 where recommendations were developed to feed directly into the conference.

In addition, the recruitment and empowered a gender adviser/team to any peace mechanism, who has peace process expertise and relevant country expertise, is highly recommended. The gender adviser (or, ideally a pair of local and international advisers) is now a common feature on the staff of peacemaking and peacekeeping missions. They need to be knowledgeable on issues particularly relevant to the given context, such as DDR or election monitoring, and should be in a position to provide gender analysis and actor/issue mapping for the missions conflict and power analysis; to facilitate contacts with local women and civil society

to solicit their views and develop options on the issues in question; and to help monitor ongoing processes. They (women participators) should be located as close as possible to the head of mission and speak the main local language.

One of the most important recommendations is the making of gender analysis to be part of the mediation teams' conflict analysis. This analysis gives depth and dimension to existing mapping of the conflict and may reveal further options, possible interlocutors and a deeper understanding of the political and cultural context. This helps in knowledge-based acknowledgement of the importance of gender inclusion in the peace process as well as the other gender sensitive solutions in the process to sustainable peace.

The other is the very important role of women in conflict resolution roundtable meeting. This can be done by applying diplomatic and advocacy pressure. The pressure should be placed on institutions of government and specific conflict-related bodies such as truth and justice commissions to hire, promote and support more women to enter and rise up in their ranks. This was successful in promoting the involvement of women in all levels and activities of the Timor L'este Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Advocacy through regional organizations or local civil society may be more effective and acceptable than direct pressure from the mediator or their team.

Another recommendation is to identify and support a local champion or champions. They need to be people who can avoid the arguments of cultural imperialism and who have the convening power to bring heterogeneous groups into a single, constructive platform (the role of Graça Machel in Kenya in 2008 is a case in point). There is however need for sensitivity to the fact that all women are not the same as each other. In consultations and seeking contacts, be aware of the usual potential differences (including rural/urban, class, religion and ethnicity)

between people. While women may organize politically as women their views may vary depending on their background, relationships and interests; they may also choose to privilege different identities of their multiple identities at different times, at times their religious identity, or party political identity may be more important to them than their gender identity; but they are likely to be more sensitive to their gender identity than men because of their experience of marginalization on the basis of that identity.

In order to build capacity and experience and to find effective strategies to work towards women's participation and gendered perspectives in ways which will not cause problematic backlash or accusations of Westernized agendas, the study recommends the use of peer to peer exchange with women's organizations from similar or related cultures/religions. In addition, encourage national interlocutors to do the same. The UN Secretary-General is now requiring his senior officials to report regularly to him on this, a practice which could also be replicated in missions. This can be done in parallel to specific mediation processes or talks if there are no openings there. Ensure consultation with women's organizations involves all the issues they think are relevant to the peace process. Do not only focus on issues that are traditionally seen as relevant to women – allow the women to set the agenda. It is also important to bring in women's voices and views using different mechanisms where getting women into a negotiation room is difficult. This can be done through the solicitation of their views in consultations, or the production of position papers. In many conflicts women have set up their own peace tables or developed memoranda/ agendas/recommendations outlining their peace process.

Despite the progress that has been made over the decades in gender participation in conflict management, there are remaining gaps that the study has noted. Though, progress has been achieved at the global policy level and important initiatives have been taken at regional and

national levels, many remains to be done to translate global commitments into practice. The gaps include the general respect for the equal rights of women, the support for their equal role in peace processes and peace building and for global condemnation of all acts of violence against women. Despite this, millions of girls and women in conflict as well as post-conflict situations are subjected to gross inequalities and violence as well as discrimination.

Although the role and contribution of women to peace processes have been recognized globally, obstacles to their participation in formal peacemaking and peacebuilding processes and decision-making in reconstruction and reform processes remain in practice. In 2008, the UNIFEM estimated that women constituted less than 10 percent of members in formal negotiating delegations, on average, and fewer than two percent of the signatories to peace agreements. Women's activism at the grassroots level is still often not recognized in more formal peace and political processes. For example, the roles played by women in establishing communication channels between warring parties, in restoring and maintaining peace, in rebuilding communities and in working to overcome the physical and psychological trauma of conflict have not been given adequate attention, particularly in developing states, such as African states. The case studies in this research paper therefore show that women's participation in Africa, as shown in South Sudan and Sierra Leone conclude that recognizing and supporting the role and capacities of women in preventing and mitigating conflict remains an afterthought.

The challenges of establishing mechanisms and channels for bringing the priorities and recommendations of informal women's groups and networks into more formal processes and removing barriers for women's representation at all levels of decision-making, remain. Women's participation in formal negotiation and decision-making processes has been directly opposed in some situations. In addition, women face many more general challenges to their

participation in public life as well as decision-making. These include among others, harassment, intimidation and violence, time and mobility constraints, responsibilities in the home, including care obligations, illiteracy and limited access to education and training, limited access to information, economic dependency and lack of adequate financial resources, customs and traditions. Stereotypes continue to limit or narrowly define women's role in public life and decision-making. For the resolution and, or transformation of persistent conflicts in Africa, the equality of gender in participation in conflict management is important and need to be greatly emphasized and implemented through advocacies, policies and constitutive acts.

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