

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN PEACE BUILDING: CONFLICT, COMMUNITY AND CARE

Edited by Mirjam van Reizen



Women's Leadership in Peace Building

Women's Leadership in Peace Building: Conflict, Community and Care

**International Colloquium on Women in
Peace-building
From Monrovia (2009) to Harare (2014)**



Edited by:

Mirjam van Reisen,



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FOREWORD



Due to the magnificent vibrancy and positive spirit of Liberians, my country has been rebuilt since the civil war, which had destroyed it and in which many Liberians were killed or made destitute. The great country that Liberia is, has now been in peace for over a decade. It had just begun to pick up its economic recovery, with the enterprising spirit of my fellow countrymen. Sadly, we are now facing another magnificent challenge, which is rocking the fabric of our society: the ebola epidemic.

This fast-spreading disease is ravaging the communities, not only of Liberia, but also of its neighbours, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. Our women, the natural care-takers within our families and communities are at the frontline of this mammoth battle. The danger that this health crisis poses to the peace in our communities is now recognized in the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2177 (2014) “Urging Immediate Action, End to Isolation of Affected States”. I urge the international community to stand by my country, by our neighbours and by all countries equally challenged.

As human beings, we are not fighting to die, but to live. We invoke the spirit of communities, of all men, women and children of Liberia, of Africa and of the world to stand together. If we care about our communities we can resolve conflict, overcome the hardest challenges and rebuild our peace. We know that when God brings us to it, he will help us through it.

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
President of Liberia

INTRODUCTION



Mirjam van Reisen

I.

A war on a virus.

The Ebola virus is taking its deathly toll, spreading along vulnerable communities and taking governments unprepared, killing health workers, mothers and wives, attending to dying patients, while they are trying to stop the spread of the virus. A virus, killing women, men, children, sparing no-one. A threat to one person is a threat to all.

A virus, causing conflict between authorities, who are trying to define the measures to take to contain the spread of the disease. A people in fear, revolting, breaking through the military established closed quarantined areas, to collect their dying and loved ones. Statistics of inadequate numbers of body-bags. A Health Ministry weighing up the risks of large-scale use of certain medicines. Airlines closing their services. Neighbouring countries closing their borders. This is Liberia today, Liberia, which has led the way on women's leadership in peace-building in Africa and in the world. Once a country of freedom, a country that proudly built its independence on (the struggle to liberate itself) from slavery. Liberia, is now left in dire isolation.

A deadly virus. This is the only certainty we have. Death can overtake our efforts at any time and destroy our vulnerable common world.

II.

The old philosophies teach us that existence requires non-existence. This leads us to the deep human truth that existence depends on otherness. This

is the essence of the understanding of the African philosophy of Ubuntu: I exist because you do. This brings us back to the only certain knowledge that we have: in isolation of other matter, of other people, we cannot exist and our existence has no meaning. Hence, the profound self-interest is the need to recognize the other in his or her otherness. We all depend on it. In recognising the other and in being recognized by the other, I belong and therefore I exist.

This book testifies to the bonds of families, communities, elderly parents, husbands, wives, partners, sisters, brothers, friends or neighbours. Bonds are sustained in a shared common world, nearby, or over long distances, in which we care. In her article, Catherine Schook highlights the unseen female informal care providers, a working force that has thinned out but is ever greater in demand worldwide. These are brought out in stories, such as those narrated by Schook, and in the pictures by medical doctor, Janneke van Dijk, based in Harare. They give us a glimpse of how identities of children, parents and elderly, develop and change in a globalised world, with the need for care as a constant reminder of the bonds between them. Even when people are living in worlds apart, they care, sustaining elderly parents and vulnerable family members. As part of this caring bond, different perspectives, responsibilities and concerns are shared. Even when people are living physically in one place and virtually in another, they do, as described by Geresu Tufa in this volume. Worries between refugees and people at home are shared by internet, chatrooms and mobile phones, and money is exchanged through MoneyGram or Western Union, creating new common places for people physically living in different countries and even continents. Women look after their family in their country of residence, as well as for their families back at home, with responsibilities shouldered on them to find solutions for the many problems communicated in real time.

Grace Kwinjeh describes how refugees may find that they “jumped out of the frying pan into the fire.” She illustrates the challenges of diaspora women and men from Zimbabwe. The importance of inclusion in a common world is brought out in this article. Refugees often feel insufficiently recognised and may feel excluded from the political affairs at home. She also explores the situation of women who end up in the diaspora, working as care-workers or nurses in the UK. They become engaged in activities of professional care, which may have profound repercussions on relations within families. Antony Otieno Ong’ayo discusses another aspect of international links of care. He focuses on the challenges of global ageing in terms of care for the elderly. He discusses how emerging labour migration leaves care gaps in communities of origin of the care-workers.

This common place is a world, where one belongs, not because of sameness, but because of difference. The common world can only exist because each occupant is situated in a different place and lives with a

different perspective from anyone else in the common space. Because people are different they can give one another something, they can be a gift to one another. Gertjan van Stam discusses how Ubuntu as an African worldview treats peace and women's leadership in it. He emphasises that peace-building requires the recognition of local communities, and women who nurture bonds in local communities: "Without a woman, there is no home." Peace-building is the creation of a common home, a space of belonging for everyone, premised on the importance of recognising 'otherness' as the basis of a common world.

The natural condition of life is necessarily based in otherness. Otherness makes the one valuable for the other, but otherness also means a constant potential for conflict. Peace is therefore not the absence of conflict, but the recognition of conflict as an essential component of the common world we occupy. It is changing the potential in an opportunity to belong together.

Ineke Buskens focuses on women's leadership in peace-building. This requires a process of women freeing themselves from the conditions, which may constrain their contribution, as they may be trapped in a patriarchal society. She discusses the importance of creating understanding and confidence of what women can contribute through leadership so that it enhances a natural orientation to promote cooperation and assert those attributes of providing direction based on care. Milly Buchanan, Liberian diplomat and artist, depicts this strength of women in her art.

III.

Where possible, families eat together. The knowledge of belonging to a world where food is given, produced and harvested, has linked humanity to the nurturing aspect of creation in the image of the mother, who feeds and cares for her children, the dependency of a creation based in the material world that sustains us. This is what, in old societies and modern cities, sharing of a meal may do: link us in this common bond, revive the understanding that we need to sustain the common with the limited means available. So that we will not forget that our existence depends on the other. That we need to feed ourselves as well as the other, that life itself depends on nurture and care.

In her contribution, Primrose Nakazibwe researches the relationship between peace and food. Women in rural communities know that peace on empty stomachs is not possible. She describes how old traditions, associated with food, help peace-building within communities. She argues that these traditions may still have a meaningful application today.

IV.

“Shit happens.” Sekai Holland is the former Minister of National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration in Zimbabwe. Courageously, she took leadership for peace-building under President Mugabe, despite having been severely tortured and left to die by thugs operating under government orders, aiming to spread fear.

“Forgive me the rude language” she says with a chuckle, to then repeat: “Shit happens.” She takes a long reflective pause. “But you see, we have created civil ways of dealing with it. We have constructed toilets, sewers and other infrastructure to remove it and to prevent it from spreading disease.” She looks around the room. “Conflict is like shit. It is an essential part of life, but it needs to be channelled, to be removed to a place where it can decompose so that it cannot infect and spread. Decomposed it can be a fertile basis for growth.”

In a conversation with Sekai Holland on the achievements of the Zimbabwe peace process, she describes the institutions set up for peace-building. Traditional healing practices may help bring persecutor and victims together and are crucial for a transformation of society away from cyclical violence: “An eye for an eye makes Zimbabwe blind.” Women have an important part to play in providing leadership in communities, to allow healing and to create security for all members of the community. By demanding peace, women all over the world, have forced fighting to stop, calling upon their authority and critical role in the family, in the community and society at large.

Betty Ogwara discusses the difficult situation in South Sudan, and the importance of women’s presence in peace-building and the relevance and need of their political inclusion. Post conflict situations can provide openings for women’s increased participation, but is by no means guaranteed. The increased participation of women in governance does not just benefit women, but society in general. Susan Sellars-Shrestra and Leena Rikkila-Tamang analyse the contribution of women in the transformations from a feudal society to a parliamentary democracy in Nepal, and the challenges that still remain. Stella Maranga discusses the negotiations to increase political participation of women in Kenya, the gains made and the difficulties encountered.

The recognition of the other can awaken aspirations to be as the other. Gender-analysis depends on the recognition of difference between the sexes and the contributions they make to society: men are simply not women. They have to be recognized not in how they should be or what they should do, but in what they are and what they do. Many contributors in this book point to the capacities of women in mediation, in diplomacy, in negotiations between warring factions, in information gathering and communication, in

decision-making and leadership. Women appear as good peace-builders, military strategists and security analysts. Women emerge confident and competent.

V.

Many chapters in this book discuss the unspeakable reality of Gender-Based Sexual Violence used as a weapon in conflict and war, or used just randomly, as part of a violence embodied in conditions of patriarchal domination. The women's body becomes the place where war is carried out.

After rape, young girls and women are shunned by communities, left to deal with the consequences, without support. The medical attention needed is lacking, and the complications, such as fistula, resulting from the violence are often left unattended, creating continued suffering, isolation and shame. Yet, even pregnant from rape, women still give birth, raise the child, even care and love their child born under such circumstances. The power of a caring community, the will to care is there.

Clementia Neema Murembe analyses the situation of Gender Based Violence in the home and how women have found strategies to protect themselves and coping with it. Indeed, even a Good Samaritan sometimes cannot be trusted and may use and abuse a child, as reflected in the sad story, told by Chikomborero

Mafuriranwa, illustrating the vulnerability of care, the potential of abuse in care, and the weaknesses of a caring community.

The severity of the trauma that women endure, and the impact on their lives is described in several contributions to this book. Much greater attention needs to be given to the long-term impact of such trauma and resources are needed for mental health care to support women who have been traumatized. Pamela Mbabazi discusses women's leadership in peace-building strategies in communities in East Africa. It is critical that women have access to support in medical, mental and spiritual healing. The importance of healing, and also the challenges associated with it, are set out in the contribution by Ruth Ojiambo Ochieng and Sandra Tumwesigye based on extensive experience. Ngeudieu compares secular and faith-based initiatives to support women in post conflict communities in North Uganda. Agnes Dinkelman describes her experience with communities and security forces, such as the police and military, to empower women to demand measures that support their own security.

Mirjam van Reisen and Selam Kidane discuss the dramatic situation of human trafficking in Sinai and how African women are tortured and violated. One of the mothers, given birth to her child while in chains, named her baby Redemption. Selam Kidane describes the importance of hope. Hope, the new beginning, the new creation of life, under unspeakable circumstances, women stubbornly continue to live, give life, nurse and care.

VI.

Looking at hope, Erik Borgman investigates what the story of the Good Samaritan means for *caritas* in today's globally connected and technologically advanced world, at a deep level associated with the worldview of Ubuntu, arguing that the concept of *caritas* is directed towards a community of people aware of the fact that we depend on one another and that we are responsible for each other's wellbeing. Mirjam van Reisen addresses how notions of the social world influence the common agenda's agreed at international level and how women, such as the first Dutch female Minister, Marga Klompé, who translated her experience of war in advocating for universal mechanisms to help deal with conflict. Van Reisen critically analyses how a global programme for universal eradication of poverty combined with approaches of peace-building can be conceptualised.

Gerard van Oortmerssen explores how an ever rapidly evolving technology may or may not serve people in participating meaningfully in society, the unknown challenges and uncontrollable nature of these developments and the conflicts emerging from it and how women participate in this. Local groups, combating violence against women, use social media to seek protection and this also may help in raising public awareness and mobilize international support. Access to social media is a particularly effective way to reach youth and mobilise them in campaigns against gender-based violence.

This book includes several inspiring chapters of young women, who provide leadership to demand greater inclusion of people living on the margins of society. Vicky Wambura examines how the lack of opportunities for young people lead to crime and how the harsh conditions in the Kenyan prison system fail to provide the support needed for inmates to build an alternative future. Robyn Stocker addresses the challenges of young women in Brixton, London, who live as creative music artists but are exploited trying to make a living, without even being paid a minimum living wage by some service industries.

The thought that perhaps we can control our own creation, and our own death, the ever-increasing development of science and technology, has led our thinking to confide in a new god; man as its own creator. We thought this god would lead us to independence and security. Free from everything and everyone. In fact, it has connected humanity much closer across continents and rooted us deeper in the universe. Globalisation has decreased our dependency on food or medicine produced in our own immediate environment, but increased our dependency on people on the other side of the world, and on the fruit of their labour. It has enlarged the family to a common space of connectivity, dependence and community that is now truly global. This has also increased the risks of conflict associated with global

dependency on resources, as some of the chapters illustrate. International competition over key economic resources will play out in Africa, argues André Zaïman. Conflicts rooted in religious extremism and linked to international terrorism can spread globally too and both Obadiah Mailafia and Manzar Zaidi show how extremism and jihadism result in increased tensions in their respective regions in the West African Sahel and the Pakistani South East Asia region. Both authors argue how this poses serious challenges to progress in gender equality and may threaten the participation of women in public and in the common world. Both argue that this is to be a priority for the international community to address.

VII.

In 2009, Liberia celebrated its peace. The International Colloquium rooted in the UN Security Council Declaration 1325 based on the African experience and on the notion that peace-building starts at home, in communities. Liberia invited the world's political leaders and opened a large market-place so that all women of Liberia could attend the festivities. As the first female President of Africa, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, who authored with Elisabeth Rehn in 2002 the book "Women, War and Peace", showed Africa leading the way on women's leadership in peace-building. The "International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security" adopted the Monrovia Declaration. Our globalised common world needs shared aspirations and commitments to help guide our collective existence.

This book brings together reflections in the context of the International Colloquium in Liberia of 2009. Authors met at various occasions. An expert meeting held in October 2014 in Naivasha, Kenya, under the auspices of UNWomen, looked at the inclusion of peace-building and women's leadership in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Five years after the Liberia Colloquium a meeting was organised by the Association of Women's Clubs in Zimbabwe to look at the results of peace-building in this country. This meeting was followed by the International Colloquium held in Leiden at the Africa Works! Conference. This meeting emphasized the positive contribution Africa makes to the international social and economic development for well-being of the world's citizens. It explored common priorities for the Post-2015 Development Agenda, in the area of peace-building.

The negotiations on the Post-2015 Agenda express a global and public understanding that this world is a common place, where resources need to be shared and negotiated as a basis for continuous peace-building. Peace – seen through the negotiation of different interests, is a vital foundation for the maintenance of the common good. As is argued by several contributors, UN SCR 1325 is a crucial framework for the Post 2015 Agenda and it should be

integrated together with the emphasis on vulnerable countries, such as Liberia, brought together in the New Deal. Financing arrangements and budgets of these three frameworks should be integrated to give government the best scope to bring together crucial areas of government: in health, education, trauma support and women's empowerment. The importance of an integrated coherent support is poignantly shown by the Ebola virus, as it has wiped away the efforts of years of investment.

This book argues in different ways that women's leadership in homes, in small communities, in government or at global level, is essential for processes aiming to strengthen the potential for peace. In the first part of this Volume the contribution of African tradition and philosophy to peace-building are explored. In the second part the experience gained in conflict-resolution and peace-building enhancing women's leadership is examined. The third part of this book discusses the contribution women make to governance and the obstacles they encounter in participating in leadership at national governance level. The fourth part identifies global developments and how they interact with peace in the international arena. The fifth and final part gives the floor to the women and men who are practitioners in peace-building in small and in big ways. Their stories relate in a different way, what has been examined in this book.

VIII.

We thank those that made it possible to publish this book and to organise the meetings that prepared for it, especially the Dutch development organisation, Cordaid, the European Commission as well as UNWomen and Oxfam Novib. We thank our colleagues from Africa Works! providing us with a space to celebrate the International Colloquium. We recognise the partnership with the Midlands State University, Liberia University, Mbarara University and Tilburg University to create the academic foundation to deepen peace-education and women's leadership education.

IX.

The threat of the further spreading of the deadly ebola virus seems sometimes to inspire attempts to quarantine the whole country. As if we can ever say that anything is only 'their problem'. No problem, no people confronted with a problem can be isolated in our globalized world. The ebola crisis requires therefore a concerted international response that lifts Liberia's isolation in combating the virus. The world must stand in solidarity and spare no means to solve this emergency in one of the world's poorest countries. This book calls on international agencies, bilateral development partners and the private sector to assist Liberia, and its neighbouring

countries Sierra Leone and Guinea, in their attempt deal with the virus and the danger it embodies.

H.E. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has marked the international understanding of how local women are at the core of peace-building. She has given us access to a new understanding of Africa, as the continent from which a worldview emerges that gives hope, and that may help the entire world to cope with conflict inherent to the many globalised challenges. President Sirleaf has demonstrated women to be outstanding capable leaders and strategists, and above all has shown the potential of women as peace-builders at all levels.

The achievements of President Sirleaf have been recognised by many awards; we have published the speeches held at Tilburg University where she received an honorary doctorate in 2012 to honour her contribution to women's leadership in peace-building.

We pay tribute to the legacy of the Liberia Colloquium in the spirit of the Monrovia Declaration, five years later. It is important to mark the ongoing importance and relevance of the International Colloquium and express the wish that the Monrovia Declaration will provide a basis for a strong inclusion of women's leadership in peace building in the Post-2015 Development Framework.

**PART I – WOMEN’S
LEADERSHIP IN
COMMUNITY PEACE
BUILDING IN AFRICA**

CHAPTER 1. TO OFFER A GLASS OF MILLET-MILK IS TO OFFER YOU MY PEACE: THE RELATIONAL RELEVANCE OF FOOD IN ORGANIZING COMMUNITY PEACE



Primrose Nakazibwe

Introduction

This chapter seeks to address the way in which food has been used as a tool or symbol of community-peace in Ankore. Ankore region, as it is known today, was among the main kingdoms that were amalgamated to become Uganda. The other name for the region is “Karo karungi” meaning the “beautiful land” that makes the people who live in it proud of its geographical features and acts as the source for their livelihood (Kirindi, 2008). The land that the residents refer to as the ‘land of milk and honey’ was known to be land of food where each and every person had enough to eat and share with others. In this region referring to a person as a “Mushaija” (meaning a man) literally included other attributes including not telling lies, not stealing and causing no trouble to others. But most importantly, a “Mushaija” was not expected to ‘eat alone’ and was supposed to entertain his clansmen (Mushanga, 2011). This expression of a man in the Ankore setting revealed the importance of food in defining a peaceful community. Food was central in ensuring community peace through building peaceful relationships among members of the community. Since community peace building was predominantly social and structural, food played a big role in

the social elements of peace.

Community peace is a participatory bottom-up approach, which was founded on the premise that people are the best resource for building and sustaining peace (Waldman, 2008:5). Community peace building is entrenched in community-based approaches that put people at the centre of the development discourse (people-centred development). These approaches have been upgraded to include community peace approaches used by many societies for a very long period of time. Community-based peace-building interventions always seek to change relationships through cooperating with a wide range of actors within and from outside the community which links to broader peace strategies (Haider, 2009:5). Thus, trust, safety, and social cohesion within and between communities are the core aims of community peace-building. These strengthen social and cultural capacities to resolve disputes and conflict and to promote inter-ethnic and inter-group interaction and dialogue (Waldman, 2008:5). It should be noted that community peace, both in traditional and contemporary contexts, aims at preventing conflict through the promotion of community values of peace and tolerance as ideal behaviours among its members.

Many studies that have attempted to address the linkage between food and peace have concentrated much on the role of conflict in exacerbating food insecurity (Robertson, 2012:2; Simmons, 2013), thus ignoring the role of food in creating peaceful relationships in communities. This chapter reviews the thinking and practice around the ability of food (its production and consumption practices) in organizing community peace. Traditionally, food has always been at the centre of peace processes (conflict prevention, management and resolution) and has been used as a way to maintain harmony in the society. This has been particularly so in rural areas, where the main livelihood was derived from food production. The core values of traditional food production: sharing, cooperation and respect for others are consistent with the values of peace. Producing food as a group in a community helps empower those involved – both women and men - through enhanced resiliency, self-esteem and connections with others, which are key for maintaining peace within the community. This study assesses the role of food in building peaceful relationships in Uganda: a case of Ankore. This is done by assessing both the traditional and modern approaches of peace building in Ankore and identifying how these can be adopted today to safeguard community peace.

This ethnographic study was carried out in Mbarara District, which lies at the heart of the Ankore region in western Uganda. The district consists of Kashari and Rwampara Counties and one Municipality [Mbarara Municipality]. It borders Ibanda and Kiruhura Districts in the north, Kiruhura and Ishingiro Districts in the East, Shema District in the west and Isingiro and Ntungamo Districts in the south (Mbarara District Planning

Unit, 2011). The district is mainly comprised of the Banyankore tribe who constituted Ankore Kingdom (a social and political kingdom before the coming of the colonialists). The Banyankore speak Runyankore, a Bantu language, although with education many of them also speak English as well, particularly those living in urban communities. The Banyankore are divided into two small ethnic groups namely the Bahima and the Bairu. The Bairu were mainly farmers who traditionally grew millet and occupied the western region; the Bahima (pastoralists) occupied the eastern region of the district. Traditionally the relationship between the Bahima and Bairu was a master-servant relationship with the former ruling the latter in the traditional kingship. Food was a central aspect in the relationship between the two groups. Karugire noted “the economic activities of both Bairu and Bahima were complementary and were based on interdependence through mutual exchange” (Karugire, 1971:22). The Bahima and Bairu traded amongst themselves and the main items of exchange were millet and beer for the Bairu and milk and butter for the Bahima. Millet was also used as an item for the payment of taxes to the local leaders before and after the coming of colonialists in the kingdom. The discussion in this chapter draws examples from the two economic systems adopted by the two ethnic groups in Ankore. A detailed interview with two focus groups (which constituted both men and women) as well as five individual interviews with key informants (including religious, opinion and local leaders) provided the information used in this chapter. The participants’ own voices reveal how communities in Ankore used food as a tool for peace. The words of the people are important because they offer facts and reveal their perspectives on the researched issues (Hymes, 1964:375).

Food For Peace

...Giving someone a good bull which would produce good cows was used to gain friendship and bring us together for team work and to strengthen relationship. When someone fell in love with a beautiful girl, he would give beautiful cows as dowry. ... We used to hold meetings in the milking area after milking. We would call for meetings and advice one another during these meetings (Kirindi, 2008:7).

Traditionally, food was produced for personal use and also used as a symbol of peace among the members of the community. This involved growing food together as a community and also supporting each other in individual farms. One’s relationship with the community would be tested in the way he or she participates in the production of crops such as millet where a lot of labour was required. It was a sign of individualism for one to grow such crops without seeking the support from the community, for which labour was supposed to be reciprocated. All the activities of millet production were supposed to be done communally. Every category of people knew their role

in the production of millet and there was no overlapping of those roles, which observed respect and hierarchy of the individual in the society. Produce was shared among the families in the same community as a way of supporting each other in times of need. Today women, more especially those living in rural areas, have used food production to keep or seek peace with others through group production and sharing the produce with others. The respondents in this study explained the different peaceful gestures associated with traditional millet production in Ankore.

One of the respondents interviewed in this study indicated that:

... in Ankore, traditionally, we grew millet to be able to give to friends and neighbours when they have festivals but also in times of need, say during prolonged dry spells or droughts. We call it 'Otahirira Obugyenye (food support given to others when they have a function). When you don't give out to others in times of need, then you are not worth a friend or neighbour. During a funeral, when the news of death comes around, the first action one must take is to look for food to take to the bereaved family. Even today, families that buy food during such hard times are questioned!! Their relationships with others are doubted and this means that the community must intervene to find out what is the problem. If it was found that the family in question does not associate with others, they were supposed to pay a fine (goats or beer) as a way of accepting them back in the community.

Another respondent also said that:

... Millet porridge (entackweka) is a traditional recreational drink, which must be served during ceremonies like 'Kuhingira' (a traditional giveaway ceremony where the parents of the girl give the groom gifts (emihingiro) to help him start a family) as a sign that the visitors are welcome. If someone came to visit you and you don't serve them with this porridge then it means they are not welcome. During marriages, it is not served until the two families agree to the bond of marriage for their children. It is served as gestures that that the two families are joined by the marriage and that each of the two families will thereafter serve each other the drink on each visit.

Another male respondent explained that:

... No woman with good relations with her in-laws would eat millet without sharing it with her in-laws. Actually, it was an obligation for a wife to keep good relations with her mother-in-law, who traditionally was supposed to do the first harvest from the daughter in law's garden to establish if the millet was ready for harvest. In situations where the father-in-law was still alive, he was supposed to eat the first meal of harvested millet by the daughter-in-law. This meant that the daughter-in-law had to keep a healthy relationship with her in-laws to avoid rejection of her food. Even today, it is a good sign for us as men for our wives to relate well with our families. But when you see a woman taking all the harvest without reserving some for her in-laws, then you just know that there is trouble. [Pauses] By the way, it also keeps respect between wife and husband, because even when I am not at home, I don't

expect my wife to eat all the millet harvested without keeping some for 'Nyineka' (head of a home). Eeeehhhh!! Or else she tells me who has taken over my position!! (Laughter!).

According to one of the key informants:

...In Ankore, food such as millet and milk was used to settle fines by those whose behaviours were considered unacceptable to the rest of the community. If a child conflicted with his parents, as a punishment, he/she would be required to pay a fine of either millet for the case of Bairu or a cow for the Bahima. Among the Bairu, food items were emphasized so that they are eaten and not kept to maintain the grudge. The food was eaten by the group so that the people involved forget the conflict and move on.

From these excerpts, it is clear that peace building was not a duty of an individual alone, but the whole community. Food was used as a tool for conflict resolution as well as a tool for peaceful co-existence in the society. This was a responsibility for every individual to ensure that they produced enough food so that in situations where the need for food arose, they would be able to comply. This not only contributed to food security but also created peace in the community as conflicts resulting from food insecurity such as theft were controlled. Food for peace also created obligations on individuals as society placed expectations on them regarding food production and sharing, which brought forth values for peaceful communities.

Role of food in the creation of peaceful communities

Food production, processing and consumption played a key role in building peaceful relationships among people living in the same community. Production, whether done individually or in groups, demonstrated the relational engagements of individuals in their communities. Farming, whether by male or female, was done with community involvement in one way or another, which meant that failure to get support sent a different message to the rest of the community.

The Banyankore used food as a medium of exchange to acquire resources that they would not have otherwise. The Banyankore used millet beer to get land from their kings (Omugabe) who were the custodians of land on behalf of the people. According to Mwanahabwa (2006:3), in order for an individual to get land from the king, one would give a gourd of beer in return for land. This showed that food was important to all regardless of whether one owned land or not. This fostered peace in the community. For example, food items such as millet were also used to pay for 'protection' in the form of what was known as 'okutoija' from their leaders.

Millet and milk were used as symbols in rituals such as the traditional ceremonies of blood brotherhood (Omukago), which was a symbol for peace

among men in a particular society. Among the Bahima, Omukago would be established by simply giving each other a calf (the best calf in the kraal) to cement such a relationship. When the colonialists first came to Ankore, they underwent the practice as a way of keeping peace with the local leaders in the Kingdom. When Captian Fredrick Lugard (the first British colonial agent) came to Ankore, he underwent the custom of blood brotherhood with several chiefs, the most prominent being the representative of King Ntare (Mwanahebwa, 2006:9). The rationale of the practice was to ensure that the two parties undertaking the ritual would not fight against each other again since it bonded the two parties into brotherhood. Death was the punishment for violation of this oath.

An elderly respondent narrated that:

In most cases the practice was done out of will of two individuals whose friendship had reached a point of being brothers. Because these were not blood brothers by birth, they opted to instead just eat the blood as a way of compensating for unborn blood links. Sometimes, after the conflicting parties reached an agreement, the mediators subjected them to this bond as a way of keeping a long time or sometimes lifetime brotherhood. The ethnic divide between the Bahima and Bairu were also checked through this symbolized union, which was accepted by the two groups. The practice of brotherhood among the Banyankore involved men usually of different clans coming together to share their blood (cut from each man) which they mixed with local tree species, millet (Bairu) or milk (Bahima) and swallowed.

The bonds created by the two parties involved, involved other family members, lasting for generations. Some of these bonds reached a limit of forbidding family members from marrying each other as they were thought to be blood sisters and brothers. The conflicting families would even exchange their children to grow up in the two different families. Thus food became the core of such peaceful symbols and in this context also applied as symbols of ethnic identity.

The Banyankore used their own local dialect to express the importance of food in ensuring better relationships amongst themselves and also support each other in times of scarcity. They supported each other during times of hunger instead of fighting and causing trouble between each other. People depended on food to keep good relationships between themselves more especially when need arose. An old Ankore proverb of “akaibo kaza owanyamugarura” meant that a basket goes to someone who can refill it. Even when one would be begging, one had to demonstrate that they are capable of giving themselves, before being given. According to Mwanahebwa (2006:3), “In case of famine, one took a small basket of millet and beans to distant relatives. In turn one would be given large baskets of food to take home”.

The Banyankore used millet or milk to facilitate a peaceful process

through which unmarried men found spouses. The traditional marriage known as ‘Okuteera Oruhoko’ involved use of millet between the Bairu or milk between the Bahima to initiate marriage. The practice used young men who had been rejected by girls to force them into the Bahima to get marriage-partners without the consent of girls. “Okuteera oruhoko” was done by smearing millet flour on the face of the girl whom the boy has admired or been suggested for marriage. The boy waited for an opportunity to find the girl grinding millet and then he used some of the flour from the basket and smeared it on her face. Then the man ran away which pushed the relatives of the girl to make arrangements for her marriage. The Bahima used milk instead of millet to sprinkle on the girls face during milking. Such boys were charged a double bride price and it was never returned even when the girl divorced.

Food and justice systems

In many African societies food was used as an item of compensation and reconciliation in order to restore peace among the offended parties. If one would be found guilty, she/he would be asked to give food to the offended to settle the conflict and to reconcile with the mediators involved. In Ankore, the food items were supposed to be perishable so that the offended person has no option but to eat it or share it with others so that the case is ended. Thus food was a key item in restorative justice within the community. The offender was supposed to bring enough food so sometimes friends and relatives contributed, so that all the members of the community could take part in celebrating the achieved justice and peace. Thus, the mediator and the neighbours as witnesses all partook in the celebration of the resolved conflict. The aspect of sharing a meal and drinking Milk (for Bahima) or Millet Beer (for Bairu) was very important as a way of concluding reconciliation processes and relaxing the minds and hearts of the conflicting parties.

One of the respondents for this study indicated that:

for us as Banyankore, that was a sincere and an inward humble way of asking for pardon, mercy, forgiveness and repentance from the offender and acceptance from the offended in order to facilitate reconciliation and co-existence (Key Informants interview).

Food items such as animals and birds were also key in the traditional convents of peace known as “Okukaraba” (Mushanga, 2011). One of the elderly key respondents explained that:

When a person committed an offence which was regarded to cause ritual danger, such as killing accidentally another person, to avoid a bad omen on the family and even the entire clan, a ritual cleansing ceremony was organized in which the culprit and the family would be involved to ensure

that the future generation did not suffer the consequences of the act. This ritual was done by slaughtering a sheep or chicken in the middle of the cross roads (aha ntangatangiro y'emihanda), for reasons that the bad omen associated with the offense would remain stranded in middle of the cross roads and would not follow anyone after the ceremony, or on a special species of tree known as a 'ekyiko' (known to house all bad omen) and each member of the group would wash their hands in the blood collected from the animals while reciting the oath that whatever was done would not be repeated and the offended party would never long for revenge. This event was only organized when the two parties involved had agreed to forgive one another. Abuse of the covenant was associated to death.

The traditional legendary stories that were told also depicted the importance of food as a tool for implementing justice and resolving conflict. The mythical story of Kairu, Kakama and Kahima as told by one of the key respondents demonstrated how the Ruhanga (the creator) used pots of milk to create the stratification of the different classes among the Banyankore, which were intended to create a peaceful environment among the brothers (Doornbos, 1978:20). The story runs as:

Ruhanga was the God of the Banyankore who came from the skies to earth with his three sons; Kairu, Kakama and Kahima. Fearing that his return to heaven may end up bringing conflict amongst his sons, Ruhanga decided to give them a test, which would simplify his hard decision of choosing the heir to the throne. The king decided to use milk to carry out his test. He gave each of his sons a pot full of milk to keep on their laps throughout the night. As sleep took its toll on the youngest (Kakama), he spilled his milk and had to ask his brother to help him refill his pot. The two brothers filled his pot again. Shortly after, the elder brother also slept and spilled his milk and his brothers could not help him out and by morning he had an empty pot. By morning, Kakama the youngest had passed the test, followed by Kahima the second youngest and Kairu the oldest came last. The elder brothers (Kairu and Kahima) were left to serve their younger brother Kakama. Kairu was declared a servant of the two brothers and Kakama become a herdsman for his young brother (Key Informant, 2014).

Food and peace building in modern times

Talking to people about peace today means so many things beyond absence of conflict. The description of peace by Martin Luther King that "peace is not absence of tension, but presence of justice" (Karen, 1990:3) has given a new understanding of peace to include many things. Those working on peace studies no longer focus on the simplistic view of peace as the product of the end of war but have included the notion of its positive content which looks at the need for justice in relations between societies and the acknowledgement all people are of equal worth (Rodriguez and Natukunda-Tagboa, 2005). Thus looking at peace from a political perspective has

become a narrow view to those seeking to understand peace from an individual perspective. During one of the focus group discussions, one of the female respondents questioned the relevance of national political peace when she argued that:

Peace which does not bring food to the table does not make sense to an ordinary person. Peace should stem from within the household where we live and should be felt in our hearts. I feel more peaceful when my family eat and sleep, than sleeping on hungry stomach because there is peace in the country!! I feel more peaceful when I can dictate things around my life and that is why people here associate gaining weight to peaceful leaving. But how can you gain weight without eating!! To me, food is peace!!

The arguments raised by this female respondent not only draws us to the new meaning of peace in society today, but also brings on board the discussion of peace from a holistic perspective. This involves looking at the person as a whole including his or her public and private life. The private part of a peaceful person rotates around their welfare, which in many cases depends on the person's livelihood. During one of the focus group discussions, another respondent raised a question that stirred debate on the relevancy of peace on individual welfare. She asked: "has anybody ever eaten peace?" To her peace was something she could only associate with a satisfied person. She noted that: "you can only feel peace when you have eaten and absence of food not only disturbs the body, but also steals away the peaceful mind".

Reaching and maintaining peace involves recognition and valuing relationships among people that foster long-term co-operation through the creation of institutions as useful resource for conflict resolution in the community. Food production has been key in creating such relationships among different people in rural areas today. One of the key informants noted that "the current trends of community peace are embedded in farmer groups which are created by members of particular communities". These groups of farmers have been created to boost agricultural production and also play a key role in ensuring that communities live in harmony with each other. Members are encouraged to join the groups for both social and economic reasons. These groups have provided delineated structures, roles, and rules within which group members operate (Colletta and Cullen, 2000:19). The farmer groups are based at various levels from the village to the district.

They have been able to encompass individuals left out of development initiatives for a long time such as women and people of low social caste. These groups have been able to include women giving opportunities to participate in the group's activities, including around leadership. They provide avenues for women's empowerment, through increased involvement in decision making both at household and community levels. A new

perspective gaining recognition asserts that the empowerment of women is the only way to achieve lasting peace (Rodriguez and Natukunda-Tagboa, 2005). Group food production has played a key role in empowering rural women in Uganda, which has had a positive impact on reducing conflicts, especially at the household level. Women have been able to speak to each other about the conflicts in their households and have found support from other women to deal with them. They have also been able to raise money to address their relatives or sometimes their own husbands with respect to any injustices surrounding them. One of the female respondents noted that:

Being in this group has given me a new meaning of the notion of peace. I know for sure now that peace means freedom from many things. A poor person can never have peace and can never say farewell to conflicts. I feel more peaceful now because I am free from violence, I can access basic needs without any hassle; I command mutual respect from my family members and community. I have total command of my body and spirit.

Women have taken a lead in mobilizing community based farmers groups that contribute greatly to community peace building. Women community production groups have been promoting food security, a key element in community peace building as a state without food is a state of conflict. These groups have mobilised women against community-based violence as they give women a new face before the community. They provides solutions to causes of domestic violence related to production and income management. Women have used these groups to find mechanism to deal with conflicting situations in their households, as well as with conflict with members of the community.

Women have been able to contribute to community peace through ensuring that there is enough nutritious food in their homes, which creates happy homes. Husbands gain some economic freedom by managing surplus production. This not only facilitates individual peace, but also community peace. One of the respondents explained that; “a peaceful community is made by food and women are food”. There was consensus among the respondents that a community without women cannot eat and a hungry mind is the genesis of conflict. Another respondent said that;

during the era of Amin (President of Uganda from 1971-1979), there were general tensions in the country and a lot of insecurity. The government instituted compulsory cotton production for each and every home, which was supervised by the local chiefs (Mayumba kumi). Men thus transferred all their production time to cotton production leaving food production to women. The women supported their homes by ensuring that there was a constant food supply which controlled the conflict from reaching the household level.

Conclusions

Migration and other social and economic challenges remain major limitations in adopting the traditional methods of justice. Drawing from the contributions made by the MatoOput (which means drinking the herb of the Oput tree) and nyoo tong gweno (which means stepping on an egg over opobo twig) which was re-adopted by the Acholi, in Gulu, Northern Uganda after the Kony insurgency and the Gacaca System in Rwanda after the 1994 genocide, it is clear that traditional justice systems are still relevant in administering justice to create peaceful communities, particularly in rural areas,

Food supports endogenous approaches of building community peace. In Ankore, the “Okukaraba” approach was useful in creating peaceful living among the people of Ankore. Wherever these traditional practices have been used, such communities have enjoyed peace and avoided conflicts. The traditional approaches to justice contribute to the healing of the community and parties involved and also build social trust.

The Banyankore say, “eka yenjara tebura nduru” (meaning a family besieged with hunger is always in quarrels and fights). This is an indication that food is the source of peace in a family and once it is lacking it is every body’s concern. The absence of food in Ankore is blamed on a woman who is expected to ration food to ensure that her family has a full supply of food throughout the year. This places the duty of ensuring a peaceful home in the hands of the woman. The story of the Banyankore of the mother who cooked stones for her family demonstrates the woman’s strategy to keep a peaceful home even in situations of food crisis. The story goes that; “once in a while during a famine in the history of Ankore, a mother who had nothing to give her children decided to cook stones to keep her hungry children hopeful that food was about to come. They dozed off one by one, thinking that their mother would wake them up as soon as food was ready” (key informant). She was able to keep her home calm despite the fact that the members of the family were hungry. This helped her to sort herself out later in the morning as the Ankore proverb says that ‘agwayosha, guhuha empoza’ (meaning that a postponed case gives you time for an alternative solution). Thus the role of women in peace building, particularly at household level cannot be doubted as they undertake their role of food providers.

Women as managers of food at household level ensured that their families did not end up in crisis and thus ensure that they were consulted on every decision made in regard to food use. Men would therefore, not make any decisions without consulting their wives whom they referred to as ‘nyina bwenge’ (meaning the mother of wisdom). This dependency on women for answers in relation to family management was translated into other aspects of life including conflict resolution. It was a common practice for a man

faced with a challenge of mediating conflicting situation to ask for some time to 'sleep over' the problem. This meant that men needed to get time to consult their wives whose confidence could only be established in her ability to keep her family together using food.

The wife in any home had a final say on the whether the visitor would get a glass of millet/milk as a gesture of peace at the household level. Much as husbands owned homes, the duty of expression of peaceful gestures remained in the hands of the woman. She would decide to offer 'her' millet to the people she was pleased to give otherwise, the man would not want to shame himself and would find an excuse to see off the visitor. Thus a peaceful home was managed by a woman and food was the power she used to perform this role. Much as many things have changed in modern homes, this role has not changed and instead has moved from home to public places where secretaries or office messengers, jobs that are usually done by women, took up this role in public places like offices. Thus the role of women in peace building should not be undermined and efforts invested in empowering women to ensure food security should also extend to the notion of community peace building. Those who have perceived women as victims of conflict have not realized that women are also victims of peace. They need to be involved in the peace making processing to which they contribute greatly through their innovations in food security and household management. Thus, their capacities and contribution to food security should be drawn upon in community peace building.

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CHAPTER 2. WOMEN'S PROTECTION AND MECHANISMS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN ANKORE FAMILIES



Clementia Neema Murembe

Introduction

Gender discrimination and the subordinate position of women to men has not only attracted worldwide attention but also influenced policies and guidelines, to empower and improve gender relations at international, national, local and family levels. (European Commission 2012; UNDP 2012) While this study focuses on women's empowerment and gender relations in decision-making in Ankore families, gender inequality is a global problem. Women's empowerment therefore, is advocated as a crucial intervention strategy for transforming worldwide gender inequality and discrimination. (UN 1979, 2013)

The Ugandan government has adopted inclusion of women into political and policy decision-making positions to enhance gender equality. (Tamil 1993, 2003) Gender-sensitive strategies like amendments in land policy were included in the national planning programmes in the 1995 Ugandan Constitution and the 1997 Local Government Act (Republic of Uganda 2010; 2011) granting women CSOs and NGOs such as Fida-U an autonomous working environment. (Tripp 2001; Tripp et al 2009) Fida-U is a non-governmental association that is privately run by women lawyers who intervene in family problems through advocacy and interpretation of the law. Government institutions specifically constituted for the protection of

women's rights (such as the Family Protection Unit in the police, Family Courts and Probation Offices at district level), were all put in place. The Government institutionalised local councils as local courts to bring law and justice close to the people. (Mushemeza 2009)

Despite strategies put in place to empower women, gender inequalities in decision-making are still evident at household level. Women's decision-making power in family resource use, control and ownership capacity, are still relatively low compared to men. This chapter examines whether the existing strategies and institutions have improved gender relations at household level in Ankore families. Women's empowerment is evaluated from the participants' perspectives of married women's social wellbeing in terms of their protection and success in family conflict resolution. The focus is on married women's awareness, use of established institutions, gender parity and women's protection in Ankore family relations. The evaluation of women's empowerment is based on a survey of 240 married people, 20 separated women, 50 elderly and institutional leaders' key informants and 11 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) of married men and women who shared their own personal opinions and experiences.

Causes and mechanism to resolve family conflicts in traditional Ankore families

There is a saying in Ankore: "people that live together cannot avoid quarrelling", meaning that family relations where husband, wife and their relatives co-exist, conflicts are bound to happen. Marital and family conflicts occur in practically all families, but with differences in context, magnitude, frequency and the intervention mechanisms for resolving them. Marital and family conflicts are understood and expressed in different words or phrases, referring to different situations occurring in the day-to-day life of the people in Ankore. These include:

- obuteikirizana (disagreements),
- oburyaane (conflicts),
- okurwanagana (fights),
- omuhondano (non-compromising),
- oburemeezi (difficult relations)
- okugumizana omumaka (Creation of difficult environment for each other).

These situations involve couples' frequent quarrels, fights, withdrawal, silence, victimisation and abuse of their children. The result is transferred anger, evasion of family obligations, desertion of the family, refusal to eat

and denial of sex. Some of these conflicts can be resolved internally by the couples themselves, while others require an intervention of mediators like parents, relatives, friends, neighbours, religious leaders or courts of law. In situations of extreme conflict, or failure of the couple or mediators to resolve the problems, some people opt for separation or divorce. Traditional causes of family conflicts in Ankore, (problems such as lack of basic needs, childlessness, hereditary diseases and wife-beating), are identified and discussed. Escalating poverty, financial constraints, dependency syndromes, time constraints, work-related stress and differences of religion, tribes and education, were identified as new challenges facing family relations today. Some of these problems are explained in detail below:

Lack of basic needs of life or cases of irresponsibility

The respondents in this study confirmed what has been cited by various authors (European Commission 2012; Butamanya 1992; Mubangizi 1963) that the mode of life in pre-colonial traditional Ankore families was relatively egalitarian, more or less dependent upon nature. The population was still very small compared with the available resources hence the basic needs of life, such as shelter, food or clothing (made out of skins and bark cloths) were available locally. The number of items per person depended on the wealth of the family. However, over time, these basic needs have been changing in quality and quantity. Traditionally marital conflicts resulting from lack of basic needs were relatively few and in cases where husbands failed to provide clothing and proper shelter for their families, other family members or friends intervened to help out. This would be the result of the wife reporting it to her relatives, principally her in-laws and particularly the mother-in law). The natal home of the wife only came in to support the family in question when the husband's family was unable. However, such situations were avoided as it brought shame to the husband and his family. The interventions from family and friends included giving food and other household needs as well as disciplining and fining of the husband by fellow kinsmen as a corrective measure against him. The fines would include a goat and/or a pot of local beer, depending on the gravity of the matter. For fear of stronger measures, such as being beaten or ex-communicated from family membership, he would abide by and cater to his family's needs. In scenarios where the husband had physical or psychological ill health, the 'extended' family members would take on the responsibility to provide and protect the wife and the children. The role of family members or friends in Ankore was thus very important in marital conflict resolution, hence the Ankore proverb 'abeinekiramura tibeitana', (those who have advisers cannot fail to be corrected or those with interveners cannot kill each other).

Childlessness

In Ankore families a childless marriage was not recognised as marriage in the traditional setting and it was unbearable for a man to acknowledge and be known as impotent and childless. On the other hand, a woman would live with barrenness but she could look after her husbands' children from other women. It was acceptable for a man to divorce a childless wife, especially if she had other problems with the family members. The participants emphasised that problems hindering procreation called for the concerted attention of the family, to avoid the most feared after-effects of someone dying childless (*enfanabujune*). (It was believed that if someone died childless, his or her spirit would haunt those left behind). In situations where the family of the impotent man did not have male relatives to produce children with his wife, it was acceptable for a woman to divorce her husband and for the *enjugano* (bride price) to be returned, so allowing her to get some other man. Some of the traditional mechanisms that were applied to solve childlessness and to save the marriage included the use of diviners or traditional healers, marrying another wife, or allowing the wife to produce with her in-laws enabling the couple to get children. Although the mechanism of wife sharing by brothers or relatives was said to be disappearing among the elites in urban areas, it is still maintained among rural families, especially among unschooled and pastoralist-bahima families. The participants argued that wife-sharing mechanisms not only left the impotent husband and wife psychologically and physically happy but also kept family secrets, which kept the family relationship stable.

Comparing traditional mechanisms to the modern handling of childlessness, the elderly key informants explained that modern society today regards childless women as '*Ebiifeera*' (worthlessness or useless persons). They explained that unlike the traditional approach of secretiveness to sexual problems, modern society handles such problems inappropriately in the public forum. They said that it is not only improper but also unhelpful for a woman to publicly reveal sexually related issues to non-partisan members. They argued that barrenness or impotence should never be openly revealed, as the public doesn't have solutions for childlessness and the resulting conflicts. There were culturally acceptable means of knowing secret problems and addressing them privately. Family members could detect the likelihood of conjugal problems affecting their newly married family members and find solutions within the family. A Runyankore proverb that 'the eye of an elder is decisive' explains how elders had the skills to observe and interpret signals of a problem without asking or being told by the concerned person. Hence, the problem would be dealt with even without the whole family knowing, for instance, the wife-sharing mechanism.

Hereditary diseases or habits

Chronic diseases are costly, have an impact on a family's happiness and a source of family conflict. To avoid such problems precautionary secret and open investigations were carried out prior to and in the process of choosing a marriage partner. The emphasis on the matter was expressed by use of the Runyankore proverb translated as 'the one who intends to marry or to be married should always make precautionary investigations and consultations about the person and the family they wish to marry or get married to'. Families with hereditary diseases tended to marry each other. In recent times, however, the principle of consultations before marriage has been dishonoured and ignored, primarily among the elite and co-habiting spouses. Although there would be no guarantee of knowing and avoiding every disease and behavioural practice, traditional enquiries were said to have minimized the spread of certain diseases and habits in families that did not have them previously. The hereditary diseases that were said to be avoided include epilepsy, cancer, leprosy, elephantiasis, propensity to madness, suicidal tendencies, night dancing, witchcraft practices, cannibalism, barrenness, separation or divorce tendencies. Due to the fact that such hereditary problems disrupted family relations, avoiding them was a great mechanism for protecting family members and relations.

Problems of drunkenness

Prior to formal employment and the advent of the money economy brought by the colonial government in Uganda, drunkenness was not a problem in Ankore. Alcohol products were prepared at home and freely taken by family members and neighbouring families in the evenings; for example 'amaarwa' (alcohol beverage made out of sorghum and millet). A few isolated cases of drunken men who fought with their wives were noted. Such men were given sanctions such as being denied free social drink. The social sanctions of isolation by the family and community members used to protect the wife and children against mistreatment by their drunken husbands. The gender perspectives in the traditions of social drinking indicated that women were expected to drink moderately in their homes or their immediate neighbourhood. Whilst the drunkenness of a man would be tolerated, that of a woman would disrupt marital and family relations and could lead to marriage breakup.

Wife beating

Wife beating was common among the Bairu and Bahima, it being condoned in Ankore traditional families. Women were not allowed to scream or fight back during such fights. To keep such fights private not to cause more anger

from the husbands. One of the female key informants explained that: “when a wife would be beaten, she would not fight back or flee yelling outside the homestead; instead she was expected to run to the inner-room or back yard, where she would either be thoroughly beaten or be left free. The advice was that a woman should never scream, run away or fight back her husband”.

Although wife-beating was presented as a habit, sometimes it happened as a consequence of some other problems existing in the home which could include unwelcoming wives, neglecting in-laws, mistrust and suspiciousness, arrogance of wives, a nagging personality, poor hygiene, sexual dissatisfaction, rumour-mongering, and witchcraft. Today more causes of fights among the couple were listed to include drunkenness, extra-marital affairs, inferiority or superiority complex and disagreements about the use and control of family resources. To sustain family relations in such situations Ankore family values dictate that women should be tolerant and compromising so as to remain in their marriages. In a few instances, a wife would decide to fight her husband to defend herself and if she proved a match, or even stronger than the husband, the practice of wife-battering either reduced or stopped. When the children (mostly boys) of a recurrently beaten mother grew up, they would intervene to protect their mother. In such circumstances, the child could be punished for the unbecoming act of beating up the parent. It was reported that wife beating has now reduced in modern society. Several reasons for this include the rule of law that criminalize open fights, increased levels of education, the impact on social status, and protection of their public image,.

Traditional strategies to combat and protect women against domestic violence

This section presents the indigenous mechanisms of combating domestic violence against women and promoting better family relations in Ankore. These mechanisms included temporary separation and involvement of kinsmen, traditional arbitration, beating up the brother-in law, silence and consultation of diviners and herbalists. All these are discussed in detail below.

Temporary separation and kinsmen involvement

When wife beating became extreme, the wife needed to seek the intervention of her natal family or community by leaving her marital home temporarily. This is known as ‘okwangana’ (wife protesting the way she is being treated). There were also scenarios where husbands forced their wives to go back to their natal family - known as ‘okubinga omukazi’ (dismissing the wife). However, this was differentiated from okushenda (divorce and return of bride price) that usually came as the last resort. Temporary separation would

facilitate the healing process of reconciliation. Absence from each other was a moment for self-reflection, for the couple to realise the worthiness of being together in the home, hitherto taken for granted. Separation itself would naturally heal the relationship and there would be no need for arbitration procedures. It would give parents and concerned relatives on both sides an opportunity to examine the couple's problems and enough time to address them amicably. Temporary separation was a learning experience for the couple on how to better handle their differences and appreciate importance of each other.

Traditional arbitration and process

After staying for a while at her natal home, the traditional arbitration meeting (composed of natal and marital parents, relatives and trusted community members, especially the elders) would be convened. Each party would be given a chance to present the issues responsible for their misunderstanding. The guiding principle during the 'eishazi' (traditional arbitration meeting) was to listen and observe emotions carefully, in order to interpret the given information, which in most cases remains implicit. From the traditional Ankore perspective, the intention was not to suppress or hide evidence in order to win or lose the presented case. There was effort to ensure the couple did not lose their tempers and say what should have been left unsaid, to safeguard their integrity and family secrets. The sanctions imposed on the offender integrated counselling and reconciliation. The Ankore arbitration process encouraged dialogue between the conflicting parties while other family and society members listened, allowing the aggrieved partners to air their differences as they narrated their plight. In most instances the verdict made through such reconciliation mechanisms of family meetings and intervention, was accepted and family relations restored. It was mentioned that, although the mechanism is still in use, conflicting spouses nowadays generally tend not to adhere to the reconciliation process and resolutions made by family members.

Beating by the brother-in-law

Beating up of the husband by a brother-in-law, though rarely used, was acceptable and used by some of the people in Ankore as a way of punishing a cruel man. This was often used in situations where other mechanisms had failed. The relatives of the woman would consider it demeaning to her for the husband to continue mistreating their sister even after caution. The brother(s)-in-law would trap the husband of their sister either on the way into the drinking place or when he came to negotiate for the usual reconciliations, and there beat him thoroughly. Although its contribution to protection of family relations was confirmed, the respondents reported that

further wife beating tended to persist. This practice is slowly dying out due to widespread rule of law against fights for revenge.

Silence

Silence was expected of a married woman as a tool, a sign of compromise, to avoid wrath and violent confrontations from her husband. The respondents explained that, normally, husbands became impatient of, and intolerant to, argumentative wives especially when they were stressed, infuriated or under the influence of alcohol. Hence, they expected such women to be quiet. It was therefore argued that “a wise” woman normally sensed those moods and avoided being irksome to the already-disturbed husband. There is a famous story known to most people in Ankore, which was repeatedly shared by married woman interviewees, which illustrates the value attached to silence as a mechanism to avoid or minimise marital and family conflicts. It was explained that this story is usually told to advise nagging women who may not know why they are always being beaten by their husbands. An English version of the story is below.

One day a woman decided to consult a diviner to control her husband's hot temper and restore peace at home. She informed the medicine man that her husband comes home quarrelling and is very furious with everyone; and that whenever she tries to question him, the beating starts immediately. From the composure and manner of speaking, the medicine man suspected the ‘pesky’ behaviour of the woman. He gave her coloured water, as medicine, in a container. She was to take a mouthful and keep it in her mouth for a while whenever her husband came home, which she did. Because she could not talk with water in her mouth she did not get trouble with her husband for the whole week. When she updated the diviner on the progress of the treatment, the medicine man gave her more doses of coloured water for over a month and by the end of it a new improved relationship had been formed in the family.

Rather than the water, other study participants spoke of a herbal weed leaf which was meant to be stored under her tongue. When the woman went to thank the medicine man later, he became parental and revealed to her that there was no medicine involved but the leaf under her tongue or water in the mouth controlled her speech. However, some forms of silence were deemed to have resulted in worsening marital and family conflicts, especially when it was interpreted as being arrogant or demeaning to a husband. Actually, the elite and urban participants expressed silence as a sign of defeatism and acceptance of subordinate position.

Consultation of diviners and herbalists

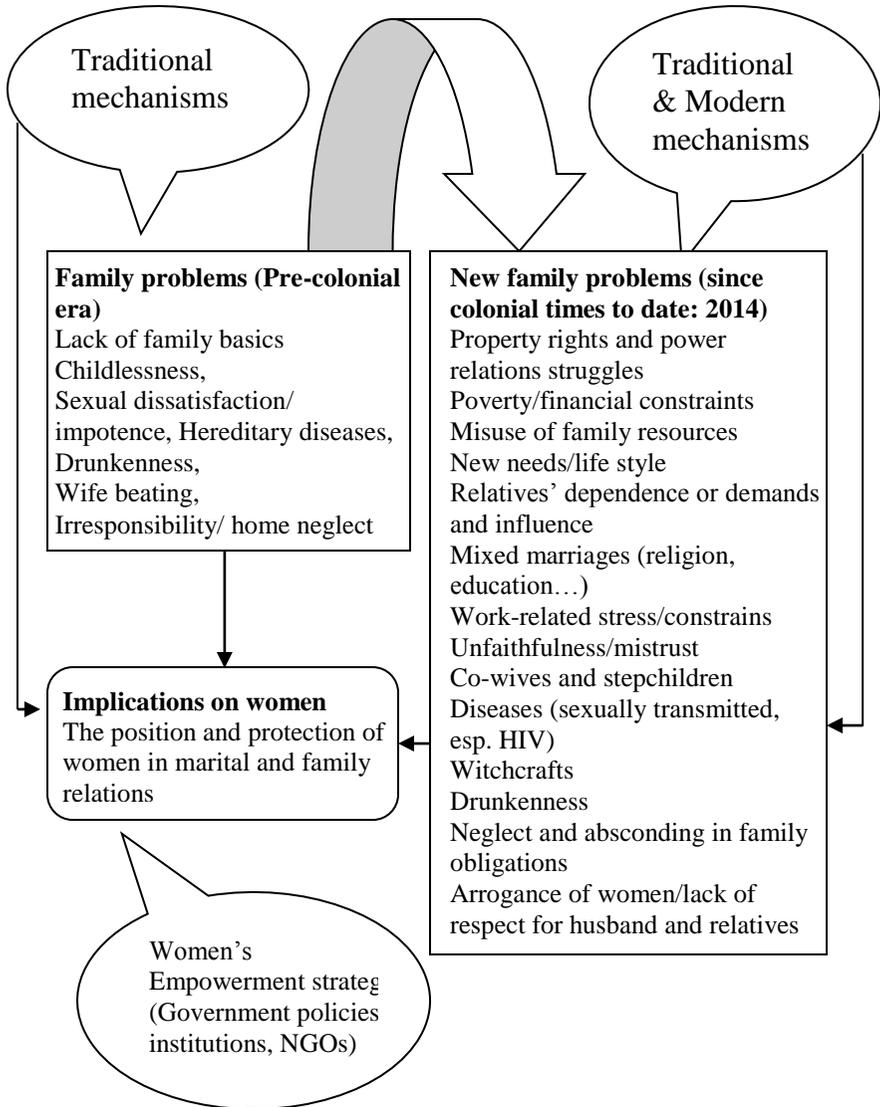
Although consultation of diviners and herbalists is associated with paganism, (Mubangizi 1963) the respondents in this study maintained that every single event that happened to an individual or community was never ignored and assumed to be alright. Although Christianity in Africa criticised traditional beliefs and practices as satanic, the practice of consulting diviners has continued where it has been deemed necessary. (Kasenene 1993) Traditionally any unusual event had to be understood, especially with the help of 'omuhangwa' (a person who is thought to have gifts of interpreting events and if need be, offer solutions to rectify the situation before hand). (Karwemera 1994; Kasenene 1993) So families also consulted these diviners to establish why a particular family experienced such misfortunes as their daughters and sons have unstable marriages. The herbalist would then provide medicine or other traditional remedies to guard against the bad spirits that would be responsible for breaking families.

Divorce

It was both unfortunate and disgraceful when divorce took place in Ankore, not only for the married woman but also for her family. When divorce happened frequently among the girls of particular families, it would be used as a measure of their daughters' stability in their marital and family relations. Consequently, in the enquiry process of searching for a wife, the trait of 'failing to make homes' would be used against the other girls, casting doubt on their credibility and stability in marriage. Considering the value attached to marriage in the Ankore families, married women endured bitter relations to safeguard against such remarks and consequences. However, some of the respondents explained that, rather than insisting on irreconcilable partners staying together, the traditions of Ankore provided for dissolution of fatal marriage relations. Ankore family traditions opted for divorce (okutaana or okushenda) as the way out, so that a couple could escape a hostile and risky relationship. It was emphasized that divorce was the only way to nullify the existing legal customary marriage and set the woman free for re-marriage, although a man could marry other wives without any hindrances.

It should be noted however that, as material needs in Ankore families kept increasing and changing over of time, family problems as well as conflicts and mechanisms for resolving them were also transformed. There has been a transition from traditional approaches in conflict resolution to more modern approaches. However, due to changes in the nature of family problems and trust in some of the traditional approaches, people in Ankore still generally use both traditional and conventional legal mechanisms to resolve conflicts in families. Figure 1 illustrates the situational analysis of changes in marital and family problems in Ankore family relations.

Figure 1. Analysis of changes in marital and family problems, applied mechanisms and implications on position of women



Source: Designed from collected field data (Neema, 2014)

Figure 1 shows a spread out of traditional problems and resolution mechanisms into the current families' situation. Consequently, figure 1 indicates that traditional conflict resolution mechanisms as well as new mechanisms are in use, and apparently, more often than not, the two systems operate in contradiction of each other, as will be discussed. According to the

participants, in that situation there are various outcomes to and implications of both systems on the protection of women in family relations.

Current problems, mechanisms and implications on women in family relations

This section analyses the new problems associated with families that result in conflicts and how the new mechanisms of rule of law and their outcomes impact on the protection of women in Ankore family relations. The new problems identified and discussed in this section include poverty and financial constraints, affluence and its challenges, struggle and control over family resources, workloads and conjugal obligations, drunkenness and poor communication system and gaps.

Poverty and financial constraints

Poverty or the inability to satisfy increasing family needs was identified as a main cause of conflict with the family. The increasing financial demand from the needs of family and relatives strains husbands. This usually results in quarrels adversely affecting relations within the family. Husbands' relatives tend to blame their daughters-in-law for being responsible for the limited support they get from their sons. The relatives' demands create financial constraints on family resources and consequently the couple's relationship. The basic needs and other necessities of life such as education costs, medical care and standards of living in homes are becoming increasingly hard to obtain and sustain. A family beset by poverty is never free of quarrels and conflicts.

Affluence and its challenges

Issues of money and the quest for affluence have created conflict, especially in relation to its use, control and ownership. Abundance, especially in the hands of husbands, has led to luxury drinking with casual friends or having extra-marital affairs. Such behaviour potentially leads to other problems relating to health (such as sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS), infidelity, financial costs, rivalry of co-wives and stepchildren which have often cause marital and family conflicts. On the one hand, in cases where a wife has a better-paying job and has more money than her husband, inferiority complexes of husbands or superiority complexes of women have also caused marital and family conflict. Respondents explained that in male headed households the change in responsibilities where women do much to provide for the household needs undermines husbands who feel placed in a secondary role. Women have improved their economic power through taking jobs outside the home and taking on much of the welfare cost of the household.

On the other hand, men are finding it increasingly difficult to get better paying jobs to meet all the financial obligation of their families. This situation results in dependency on the woman's income. These two scenarios have caused conflict in families that adhere to the mentality that the men should have higher incomes and total control of women's income. It also came out clearly that respondents believed it would be better in the home if a man had a higher income than his wife. They argue that when the man earns more he keeps the headship position giving him psychological and physiological satisfaction, thus enabling married women to peacefully keep the home.

Power struggle and control of family resources

Male control over family properties, including their wives (as part of a husband's property), causes conflict in Ankore homes. Power struggles in the home are exacerbated by misinterpretations of the western approach to women's emancipation, which is locally understood to mean uplifting the status of women over men in the competitive development agendas. Women's empowerment is seen as 'copying and pasting' foreign practices without discerning what is suitable or acceptable in Ankore family relations. Consequently, it attracts opposition and resistance from husbands. Men respond to women's empowerment by manipulation, exploitation, withdrawing contributions to family requirements or drinking, among other habits. These result in more conflicts.

Workload Burdens and conjugal obligations

It is hard to balance the demands of income-generating activities with domestic work and conjugal obligations. The majority of married women said that they have hired full-time housemaids to do most of the domestic work. Husbands expressed disappointment at the increasing number of married women who are not only resigning from domestic work and leaving it to the house maids but are also sacrificing their conjugal obligations in pursuit of income-generating activities (money-making). The married women also explained that being out-of-home for longer hours brought challenges of entrusting their homes to the housemaids, and declining sexual desire, due to busy work schedules and tiredness. With multiple responsibilities, most women revealed that they are usually too torn apart and worn out to attend to their husbands and family obligations.

Drunkeness

Traditionally, drinking was for social gatherings in the evenings, but today drinks can be obtained any time of the day. Drunkeness was reported to be increasing and problematic in marital and family relations. For instance, a

drunken husband comes back late at night and makes inconvenient sexual demands, no matter what the wife's health condition may be. He also demands hot food past midnight, or warm water for bathing, even when there are no facilities in the home to ensure such services at that time. Participants noted that drunkard men usually do not want to bath and clean their mouth before going to bed. Furthermore, it was mentioned that, sometimes, women who complain about their husband's hygiene meet violence or are forced out of the house for assuming too much 'power' in the home. It was explained that drinking acts lead to other family problems, especially poverty, misappropriation of family resources, failure to meet family needs, lack of guidance for children, open domestic violence and unfaithfulness, the last of which makes the couple susceptible to health risks, especially HIV/AIDS.

Poor communication systems and gaps

Although 90% of participants identified the need for clear communication and a flow of information as being important in marital and family relations, it was noted there is a tendency amongst married couples to hide information from one another. The participants explained that lack of communication results in rumours, mistrust and conflict. It was reasoned that because informants feel that they have to report some sort of information, they sometimes tell lies, which always exacerbates family problems.

Mechanisms currently used in family conflict resolutions

This section presents mechanisms that couples currently apply in resolving family conflict and also provides a critique of the traditional mechanisms that were used.

Resilient traditional methods

Within Ankore culture parents, especially the father-in-law, are respected as the head of the family or clan. It is therefore the responsibility of family heads to convene meetings to resolve conflict within their families. Bypassing such protocol, especially in families having a strong network and cohesion, is interpreted as undermining family relations. This usually results in criticism of the behaviour of the married woman, regardless of whether or not she is wronged by the husband. Married women that live far away in urban places explained that they tend to consult friends or workmates for resolving their family problems due to the absence of their parents or kinsmen. Traditional mechanisms are used as a way of cooling the temper of their partners in order to amicably overcome their differences. They are

mostly used by women. Women who seek other mechanisms were criticised for forgetting the traditions of silence, compromising their views and transferring socio-economic and politically attained status into marital homes to demean their husbands.

Some men also compromise their views and interests to avoid open conflicts. For instance, elderly key informants, referred to the cultural advice given to men in the proverb 'when a man is perturbed, he should resort to his smoking pipe'. The message behind it was that the pipe was a diversion from the angered husband's mind to prevent him taking inappropriate action. The informants explained that one cannot talk seriously with something in the mouth. Besides tobacco being a sedative would eventually soothe the mind to reduce the anger. Currently, while some men may still smoke, others may take a walk away from home, stay longer at the place of work or have a social drink with friends till late in the night to find the wife already asleep or having forgotten. The compromising traditional approach for husbands and wives is in line with the silence strategy Parpart & Kabeer (2010).

Legal institutions and mechanisms of family conflicts resolution

Some married women, particularly those living in urban areas, had used legal courts of law to resolve domestic conflicts. A few rural women also mentioned that they used the legal system (police, the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) or the Probation Office), having realised that parents and relatives are either the cause of their family problems or are unable to objectively assist in resolving their problems. Women use courts of law when traditional mechanisms become subjective and doubtful, or when such procedures have been exhausted without ending the conflict. Although the extent to which the legal offices are used in addressing marital and family conflicts was small among the sampled respondents, some couples find them helpful as alternative mechanisms for family conflict management. Nevertheless, elderly key informants expressed reservations and resentment towards married women who resort to legal institutions.

Since the constitutional provision for the protection of women's rights, and the use of the legal court system to achieve this goal, is not connected to traditional family values and customs, this has had regrettable consequences for women who sought redress through legal institutions. The process of reaching verdicts by courts of law to protect married women does not consider the underlying risks they face under customary law, such as being exposed to brutal violence and loss of marriage. There is an increasing number of cases of domestic violence reported in the region, although the

rate of those brought to a conclusion is very low. Records at the Rwizi-South Western Regional office for 2012 revealed that out of the 369 cases reported to different police stations in the region, 366 were still under investigation and only 3 cases were forwarded to court (Regional office records, 2013).

Recommended mechanisms

Both traditional and Western legal methods have been shown to have weaknesses, yet family conflicts are an accepted part of human existence. While there were differences between participants attitudes towards using traditional of legal mechanisms, they still tended to recommend the same alternatives for dealing with home conflicts) They recommended that married people should live a responsible life and share family obligations as much as they can without force or waiting for external intervention. Others mentioned family discussions and agreement in decision-making as options. It was noted that in the family meetings and discussion, there is also self-counselling and reflections, although others suggested a need to consult or train counsellors in the field of family therapy.

Through 'people initiatives', study participants mentioned that village-institutions and self-help organisations to which they belonged not only played a role in relation to income-generating activities and social support but also for reconciliation purposes. These groups work independently of local council systems and offer each other counselling. They also offer reconciliation sessions to conflicting spouses whose problems affect the participation of their membership. One chairperson of a self-help organisation revealed that they had successfully resolved some 25 family disputes since the initiation of their group in 2006, having realised that courts of law and relatives were causing division.

Conclusions

The colonial administration adopted new systems of western legal mechanisms to address social and family problems concurrently with the traditional mechanisms that were in place, irrespective of cultural differences, and this has remained so to date. The study findings indicate there are weaknesses in both the traditional rule of people and western legal systems of rule of law. The study participants noted that as material demands increased for basic needs in Ankore families, the problems and mechanisms of conflicts resolutions have altered. Although there is resilience in traditional systems for conflict resolution, the social transformation has changed the issues confronting families from traditional problems to more economy-related ones. The study deduces that there is no single mechanism that successfully works in improving marital and family relations. Although high-profile married spouses tend not to use legal courts and traditional

mechanisms, the other women in rural areas mostly use any of the existing mechanisms that seem to offer solutions for their protection.

From the comparative analysis of traditional and western legal approaches of family conflict resolution, the study notes that Ankore families have an inbuilt traditional system of resolving family conflicts which is adhered to by family members. There is resilience in the indigenous mechanisms of consulting parents, relatives, friends and trusted married people in community for family conflict management. Married couples who live or work outside their home environment still use indigenous mechanisms of marital and family conflicts resolution. Traditional practices are still used but do not fit easily with the rule of law. Traditional family conflict resolution mechanisms are based on the rule and will of the people and are built on societal values, which generally leaves conflicting partners willing to accept the verdict reached. Such outcomes and agreed consensus resolutions are said to have protected women in their marital and family relations more than those resulting from the rule of law in the adopted western legal system.

The contradictions in the operation of traditional approaches with those of the western legal system undermine and weaken each other. The resistance of indigenous traditional systems to which people in Ankore still seem to be strongly attached undermines legal mechanisms. Being an imported and imposed foreign system, the legal system is not fully understood, accepted or seen as appropriate for respecting the secrecy and privacy attached to family relations. As such my study notes that in most cases, the legal guidelines have remained well intentioned and documented, without helping the intended beneficiaries, the women subjected to gender-based violence. At the same time, traditional mechanisms, including the local council systems, are undermined by the legal system, and are equally incompetent in addressing contemporary issue, leaving married women dissatisfied with the process of family conflict resolution. Participants in the study noted that both legal and traditional systems are inefficient and ineffective in the protection of married women in family relations. Finally, my study concludes that neither the existing legal institutions nor the traditional mechanisms have necessarily enabled married women to attain equality with men, nor have they granted them protection in Ankore family relations.

Table 1. Comparative analysis of indigenous and Western legal mechanisms of family conflict resolution

Characteristics	Traditional Approach [TA]	Western Approach [WA]	Participants' opinions
Mediators and their qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family members form a council/<i>eisbaazi</i>. Clan leaders/<i>ekika</i>, Community respected elders and neighbors of both sexes, Diviners, healers and herbalists, No formal training Use of experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained professionals Lawyers Police Judges and magistrates Local Councils (mostly not trained) Religious leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mediators and the conflicting family members in TA know each other unlike in the WA where they are strangers to each other. There is a sense of trust in TA and mistrust or fears in WA. Family members in TA are sometimes the causes of conflicts; they have become subjective and thus lose neutrality in finding solutions. WA is usually corruptible.
Venue and attire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sit in a house or compound of Rivaling couples Parents of the husband or of the wife Casual wears 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sit at established courts of law Room is reserved for arbitration Official court attires or vestments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Familiar environment in TA is conducive for family discussions Official attire and room in WA makes the setting judgmental and artificial
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal hearing from conflicting partners who sit among mediating relatives or community members Each case is uniquely handled No record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflicting people have their own place in the courtroom. Recorded rules and policies required as references to solve current cases. Records or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflicting parties in TA remain part of the families which gives them hope and sense of security, unlike condemned isolation in WA. Tension of recording what is being said, yet that reference can be changed or easily manipulated in WA. No idea of whether

	<p>keeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback/re solution given there and then • Use of local, familiar and understood language • No interpreter • Personal presentation and ownership of cases • No fee is required • 	<p>writings are made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback given later after studying written notes. • Several journeys to the courts are usually required • Use of English and interpreter, though sometimes use of local language in LC courts. • Cases argued by lawyers. • High court fee is always required together with transport costs • Takes longer time to get verdict 	<p>they are writing what you are saying. In TA, each case is handled uniquely on its own, through listening and observation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice delayed is justice denied in WA which may take years. • English/interpreters rouse mistrust and misrepresentation on resolutions made. • Hired lawyers deprive ownership of the case by concerned parties in WA. • Local council courts are composed of husbands' relatives or colleagues who tend to cover up the truth • WA are financially and timely costly • Most women lack money for costs associated. • There is high corruption rate in the WA
Penalties	<p>Affordable items of sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goats/sheep • Meal sharing Drinks • No court fee is paid 	<p>Depending on the magnitude of the problem and decision of the court</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money • Imprisonment • Beating and manual work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TA asks for affordable local items, relevant for healing relations. • Strenuous penalties in WA widen the relations further and attract revenge. Penalties are not connected to the wrongs done for which the person is being punished. Besides, public labour does not benefit the conflicting family members

Source: Designed by the researcher (2012) with information from conducted interviewees and FGDs

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CHAPTER 3. UBUNTU AND PEACE: WITHOUT A MOTHER, THERE IS NO HOME



Gertjan van Stam

Introduction

“Our culture guides us in how to behave so we can survive in our land. The culture from Europeans helps them how to survive in their land. We cannot depend on a foreign culture to teach us how to survive in our land, we must use our own culture.”¹

The quotation above gives a clear-cut rationale of the value of the contemporary African understanding of current challenges. The African understanding that ‘when mother is not kumusha (in the village), there is no home’ prompts us to search for a Mother in the ‘home of peace’. For this search, we review the concurrency of Ubuntu, peace and women. The first two components and their interaction are relatively buoyant with a literature base. However, literature on the interaction of Ubuntu and women seems to be remarkably scarce. Conversations on women and Ubuntu also seem limited, discouraging the opportunity to discuss possible consequences of their interaction in other fields such as peace.

From my personal observations of being in Africa since 1987 and living full time since 2000, I am proposing that

1 Interaction in Harare, Zimbabwe, July 2014

'without Ubuntu there is no peace in Africa.'

This chapter looks into the understanding and meaning of Ubuntu:

- How does Ubuntu give rise to peace becoming present?
- How does Ubuntu provide instruments for reconciliation?
- Does Ubuntu help define the role of women and men in these processes?

Peace Challenges

Peace is not the absence of conflict. Wherever people gather, differences exist. However, the challenge of peace practitioners is to find ways in which communities can resolve such differences without physical violence (Burton, as mentioned in (Cortright, 2008, 7)).

I analyse Ubuntu through a review of behaviour and literature. My observations are framed within a post-colonial critique. Such a critique addresses modernity from a perspective emerging from the Global South (Mignolo, 2000). A post-colonial critique contrasts with a post-modern critique with the latter representing a Eurocentric critique of Eurocentrism. A post-colonial critique strives to give a voice to 'sub-alternity'; the group that is socially, politically, and geographically disenfranchised of hegemonic power, mostly rendered without agency (Grosfoguel, 2011).

A post-colonial critique is necessary; Western philosophy and academia remains steeped in colonialism and imperialism and does very little to incorporate the epistemological and theoretical implications of an epistemic critique coming out of African locations (Mazrui, 2003, Grosfoguel, 2011, Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013b). Most African universities were established during colonial times and continue to derive their epistemology from former colonial masters. Even today, the academy remains a colonised space (Davies et al., 2003, Mignolo, 2000, Stam, 2012).

Most academic knowledge continues to be produced from the viewpoint of the Western man (Grosfoguel, 2011). This complicates our endeavour. Much (most?) literature implicitly relies on a paradigm revering the blessings of global capitalism and the hegemonic world-system, where freedom, liberal democracy and the free market are considered self-explanatory virtues. Academic concepts remain in need of de-colonization, which can be achieved through confrontation with a de-colonial epistemology that overtly assumes a de-colonial geopolitics and body-politics of knowledge as points of departure (Anzaldúa, 1987, Fanon, 1963).

Both the opening quotation and feminist scholars remind us of the value of positionality, context and local culture. As we always speak from a particular location, we are subject to the power structures in that location (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983). Knowledge is always situated (Haraway, 1988).

Contemporary African reality is often depicted as dualistic, where traditional African and Western modes of thought are part of a battle of the mind. Du Bois (1994) recognised the battle of the mind in his studies of African Americans and theorised the existence of a double consciousness. With this term, he referred to the challenges of reconciling African Heritage with European education. The need to recognise this battle of the mind is supported by US-based black feminist scholars who call for inputs from an ‘Afro-centric epistemology’ (Collins, 2000).

The textual expressions of the underlying philosophies tell only a part of the story (Hountondji, 1996, 66). African philosophy literature is not aligned with the history of Western philosophy, nor does it represent the same purpose, meaning or value. It is often apologetic by nature, addressing a non-African audience (Hountondji, 1996). In African conception, the reality consists of the physical, the non-physical and the union of the two (Chimakonam, 2012). Much of the knowledge is stored in orality, not in textuality, often kept by gatekeepers whose livelihood depends on this knowledge. Gatekeepers are people authorised or initiated to know. Knowledge is seldom based upon textual discussions, and is therefore inherently difficult to access and reference from an academic perspective. This representation and content of knowledge challenges a classical (Western) logic and paradigm that regards knowledge to be absolutistic. So African knowledge is relegated, almost per definition, to sub-alternity: thus the need for participatory, trans-disciplinary interaction and studies that take a transcendental approach to reality.

Pan-Africanism

African philosophy, if such could be depicted, does not adhere to the history of Western philosophy. To understand African thought and to untangle the perspective of its philosophy and resulting epistemology is a crucial task for a post-colonial contribution to peace practice. The modern (= Western focused) dominant philosophy is at variance with other philosophies. Fanon saw it to be a body-politics of knowledge (Fanon, 1967). It must be understood that every society has its own way of peace practising, aiming at sustaining the integrity and social fabric of its own particular society.

Thus, ‘peace studies’ are also subject to positionality. They adhere to the power structures from which they emerge (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983). Peace processes and interventions that emerge from a foreign culture harbour foreign meanings and understandings, and, therefore, are not necessarily recognised as a fruitful way of purposeful interaction by all involved (Adebajo, 2011).

Culture – as a provider of a sense of meaning – plays a vital role in engendering peace and social order within communities and nations (Murithi, 2006). From an African point of view and through the lenses of

post-coloniality, there is need to critique the class, sexual, gender, spiritual, linguistic, geographical, and racial hierarchies of the modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system. Western philosophy and sciences tend to de-couple the ethnic/racial/gender/sexual epistemic location from the subject that speaks. Grosfoguel (2011) shows how the resulting myth of universal knowledge conceals the context, the geo-political and body-political epistemic location and the power/knowledge location from where the subject speaks. As we speak about Africa and peace, such peace should be understood and addressed from the African position and its cultural approaches need to be explored and understood.

Methodology

This chapter is based on the long-term, participatory action research of the author, lived out in an African environment. Community interactions include numerous travels through Africa beginning in 1987, and from living full-time in rural Zimbabwe (2000-2003), rural Zambia (2003-2012), and (urban) Zimbabwe since 2013. The observations include all aspects in 'the lived environment,' encompassing all dynamics of life, including conflict. The author understands practising to involve a sequence of thinking, practise, and progress, and discerning of outcomes to involve processes of community engagement, workforce development, and thought leadership (Bets et al., 2012, Stam, 2013a).

In the lived environment, the author positions himself as a curious observer. This involves an attitude of sympathy for any situation, searching for what it feels like for the local actor to behave the way he/she does. This curiosity is exercised with caution, so as to not fall into the trap of contempt, where the rural activities could be regarded as less developed, or – the opposite – practice would be viewed in a romantic reverence.

Phenomenology informs the description and interpretation of the observation. Such an approach does not seek to analyse and measure objective attributes of a phenomenon, but tries to unearth the underlying subjectivity. All aspects of communications inform the research process: for instance, the record of evanescent sound and all non-verbal communication including season, place, sun position, mental state of the people present, the seating arrangement, and somatic information such as gestures and facial expressions (Stam, 2013b). The researcher assumes a critical attitude while assessing field observations, involving – as far as possible – an intentional attitude of impartiality. Inductions involve a holistically and trans-disciplinary weighing of all aspects of realities observed. Derived outcomes add to the knowledge base as a progressing understanding of how realities are understood within the environment.

Textualisation introduces severe challenge. Readers in different cultures will have different views on how to understand a particular textual

representation of the observation. The understanding of the ‘truth of the situation’ is thus a contemplative understanding. Although pragmatic or instrumental outcomes might be deduced, they are most valid for that instant only – as if freezing time – due to constant flux of the community, with shifting world-views, ethics, culture and systems. Such deductions could be valuable as input for sensitisation (Bets et al., 2012).

Ubuntu

Ubuntu is crystallised African philosophy. Ubuntu stands for the ‘essential unity of humanity’ and emphasises the importance of constantly involving empathy, sharing and co-operation in the pursuit of peace (Murithi, 2006). The word Ubuntu is derived from Nguni languages. It is a literal translation for ‘collective personhood and collective morality’ (Mbigi, 1997). Most research on Ubuntu focuses on South Africa. However, the concept exists throughout Africa. One encounters the term Ubuntu all over: for instance in the names ‘Centre Ubuntu, a Laboratoire d’Analyse et d’Action’ in Burundi and ‘Ubuntu Campus’ in Macha, Zambia.

The definition of Ubuntu is not uniform: it encompasses a range of interpersonal interactions and behaviour. Examples are co-operation, relationship, reciprocity, orality, and dialogue (Gade, 2012), or all what Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013a) refers to as positive African values.

Khoza (2005) explains Ubuntu as signifying that ‘an individual’s humanity is expressed through a person’s relationship with others and theirs in turn through recognition of the individual’s humanity’. Ubuntu considers the needs of the group first, believing that in so doing, individual needs and desires will be met. As a result, within Ubuntu, team rewards take precedence over individual rewards.

Mangaliso and Mzamo (2001, 24) defined Ubuntu as: ‘humaneness – a pervasive spirit of caring and community, harmony and hospitality, respect and responsiveness – that individuals and groups display for one another’. They continue to state that ‘Ubuntu is the foundation for the basic values that manifest themselves in the ways African people think and behave towards each other and everyone else they encounter’ (ibid).

Mbigi and Maree (2005) define Ubuntu as the sense of solidarity or brotherhood which arises among people within ‘marginalized’ or ‘disadvantaged’ groups’.

Louw (2002) sees Ubuntu as a response to multi-culturalism. With specific reference to South Africa, he defines Ubuntu as ‘an African or African-inspired version of an effective de-colonising assessment of the other’.

Colson (2006) shows how Ubuntu involves respect for religiosity, agreement, and the necessity of a dialogue of beliefs. Her extensive works among the Tonga in Southern Zambia give insight into the sheer complexity

of the arena of religiosity, and the pivotal role of understanding African religion in its unique worldview, culture, and behaviour.

From these writers it becomes clear that Ubuntu is not set in absolutism, neither does it resort to relativism. My deduction from observation is that Ubuntu is considered being present in the tangible when good moral behaviour is displayed. Ubuntu is an integral part of an Africa paradigm, within which Ubuntu can be recognised as a virtue to be displayed by the living. Within Ubuntu people are expected to behave well: to show Ubuntu. In that thinking, not to behave in such a way is illogical. Without Ubuntu, one cannot be (recognised as) a whole person. In that sense, Ubuntu is considered to be a universal and inclusive trait, which is shown through active behaviour in line with Ubuntu. Acts of oppression, for instance through colonisation, are considered inhuman. Gade (2012, 498) quoted Mfuniselwa John Bhengu to say: "The moment you go outside the boundaries of ubuntu, you actually begin to be labeled as an animal [by the community] 'kintu'² [animal] as opposed to ubuntu. Once you are at this level, even your community, they just reject and repel [you]". All this is to show that a person subscribing to the paradigm involving Ubuntu will have great difficulty understanding people who do not behave with Ubuntu in mind. As Ubuntu is a self-explanatory part of a paradigm, questioning about Ubuntu involves a response involving reflectiveness towards the one asking.

Ubuntu and peace

Ubuntu shows itself in the lived realm, with expressions and transfer of its substance through orality. Due probably to its oral base and its practice mainly within disenfranchised communities, there is not much literature exploring the practical implications of Ubuntu for peace. Furthermore, much of the literature on Ubuntu has been authored by people of European descent (Gade, 2012).

The pivotal value of Ubuntu is validated by being cited in the epilogue to the South African interim Constitution. In this key document, it was stated:

there is a need for understanding but not for vengeance, a need for reparation but not for retaliation, a need for ubuntu but not for victimisation (Government of Republic of South Africa, 1993, after section 250).

Neglecting Ubuntu can be a source of disharmony and strife in the daily-lived, African environment (Mangaliso & Mzamo, 2001).

Ubuntu encapsulates orality as the prime means of communication. In that setting, story telling plays a pivotal role (Colff, 2003, Stam, 2013b). In an

2 The translation of 'kintu' can also be 'thing'

interview, Modise asked Nelson Mandela the following:

Many people regard you as a personification of Ubuntu. What do you understand Ubuntu to be?

Nelson Mandela responded in a storytelling way, typical of communication of meaning in orality: “In the old days, when we were young, a traveller through our country would stop at a village and he didn’t have to ask for food or for water. Once he stops, the people give him food, entertain him. That is one aspect of Ubuntu, but it will have various aspects”³.

Gade (2012) in his research of South Africans of African descent about the question “What is Ubuntu?” found many telling him stories too. In his assessment, he recognized two clusters of answers:

- people defining Ubuntu as a moral quality of a person
- people defining Ubuntu as a phenomenon according to which persons are interconnected (for instance a philosophy, an ethic, African humanism, or a worldview)

Healthy relationships with the other support peace. Ubuntu focuses on being together through on-going contact and interaction with others (Ndaba, 1994, 14). It builds a collective and subjective consciousness typified by an ‘on-goingness of dialogue’ spanning both relationship and distance, while preserving the other in her/his otherness and uniqueness, without letting the person slip into the distance (Louw, 1998). Interest in - and respect for - the historicity of the other person, through mutual exposure of lives lived, especially facilitates a process of building, restoring and growing of an open-ended becoming, an aligned future.

Ubuntu and strife

Ubuntu does not line up with settings enshrining virtues of individuality. It contradicts the Cartesian conception of individuality in which the individual, or self, can be viewed in separation from “the other” (Louw, 1998). In a modernic perspective, both individualism and collectivism are expressions based upon an atomistic, separate, solitary human entity – the individual. Ubuntu, however, defines an individual as a derivative of the community, in terms of relationships with others. In this perspective, an individual is a plural, connected, responding human entity. Therefore, Ubuntu does not align with self-interest focused on self-sufficiency, on private accumulation, or on competitive drive (Sheneberger & Stam, 2011). Ubuntu is not

3 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODQ4WiDsEBQ>

congruent with an economic assumption that puts self-interest as the ultimate determinant of human behaviour. It does not agree with satisfaction from labourers earning as much as possible whilst contributing as little as possible (Mangaliso & Mzamo, 2001). Actually, the consequences of rewarding individuals in the setting of Ubuntu can result in social punishment and sabotage of performance (April & Ephraim, 2006).

Colonialism – the practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another – brought a generalised presentation of Africa through a presentation of essentialistic perspectives. Such a perspective loses sight of intangibles like teachings from linguistic analysis. Kaoma (2010, 212) shows how Bantu languages incorporate the message that humans and non-humans are connected in the realm of *being*. This linguistic connection⁴ paints a picture of how humans and nonhumans are intrinsically interdependent. Thus, when colonialists act, they act outside of Ubuntu itself, negatively impacting African life as a whole by reducing humanity (Kaoma, 2010, 169).

Khoza (2005) sees Ubuntu as crucial for leadership and management. Mangaliso and Mzamo (2001) record how the omission of Ubuntu in management results in strife. They and other scholars like Mbiqi (1997) go so far as to regard the integration of Ubuntu in the practice of leadership and management as crucial for Africa and beyond:

Incorporating Ubuntu principles in management hold the promise of superior approaches to managing organizations. Organizations infused with humaneness, a pervasive spirit of caring and community, harmony and hospitality, respect and responsiveness will enjoy more sustainable competitive advantage (Mangaliso & Mzamo, 2001, 32).

Ubuntu, power and colonialism

From my observations over decennia in Africa – through good times and bad – I have deduced that in Ubuntu, leadership involves a presence that often communicates through codified interactions. Such interactions sustain reciprocity, where a leader can only be leader when honouring his/her relationship with the community. In that sense, in Ubuntu, leadership emerges from the community.

Unfortunately, colonialism imposed leadership from the outside. That leadership took political and economic control over a dependent territory in a dominating relationship, establishing a bridgehead as a centre-of-the-

4 'Ntu' is the universal force, the Original Being, and is part (or manifested) in Muntu (human being), Kintu (thing/animal), Hantu (place and time) and Kuntu (modality) (Janheinz, 1961)

periphery-nation (cP) with the centre-of-the-centre-nation (cC) (Galtung, 1971). Institutionalised in systems, benefits emerge from international relationships in a co-dependent setting, presumably through a harmony of interest benefiting évoluée in cP and those of the centre nations (mainly people in cC). However, none of these benefits are embedded within Ubuntu and are irrelevant to the local and regional community relationships.

Leadership arriving from the outside carry a worldview sustained by coloniality explicitly, not in Ubuntu. Thus, by definition, such leadership is positioned apart of Ubuntu, and those people involved thus hold a position apart from the community. In the community, potential évoluée are well aware of this situation, and when they aim for, and succeed in assuming such position, they know the consequences. When embracing imperialistic management processes and institutionality, along with the material benefits they bring, they position themselves at that time outside of Ubuntu and are likely to be shunned by the community. Such persons becomes part of ‘them’ instead of a part of ‘us’.

Accepting the colonial system of gaining power seems to involve a (sub)conscious decision in which the advantages (e.g. being able to link to financial streams) are weighed against the disadvantages (exclusion from community). As this is painful, and complicates relationships – for instance within the extended family – it is often the case that such leadership sustained in coloniality will be accepted, but the person will relocate outside of the person’s own community.

This process is even more complicated in deep rural areas. Leadership based within coloniality creates, defacto, a centre-of-the-periphery-of-the-periphery (cpP). Naturally, such leadership aspires to a harmony of interest with the centre-of-the-periphery (cP). However, cP is focused on a harmony of interest with cC and a potential relationship with cpP complicates matters significantly. Therefore, a harmony of interest between cP and cpP remains mostly a one-sided longing from cpP. Thus, there is a double rejection of cpP leadership: first a rejection by the Ubuntu-based community, and a second rejection from cP-based peers. Therefore, such leadership appears to be trapped: accepting the indigenous Ubuntu methods could mean losing power, and the rejection by cP represents a glass ceiling preventing integration into the elite in cP. This situation can result in cpP leadership that utilises all means of colonial oppression to remain in power, often with impunity. The community suffers greatly, for leaders stay and remain in place for long periods, possibly for decennia. Such autocratic leadership is mostly found in rural institutions implemented during colonial and post-colonial times. This leadership struggles to contribute in peace processes since they necessarily rely on foreign structures, mostly dominating in nature, without being able to apply Ubuntu practices.

Colonialism effected fundamental changes by establishing an extra

category of leadership based upon external, dominating systems, vested defacto outside of Ubuntu. Coloniality erodes the utilisation of the mechanisms to regulate peace through indigenous means and practices.

Ubuntu, paradigm and components

Summarising various authors and texts on Ubuntu, the following working-description emerges:

Ubuntu is an epistemology emerging from an African paradigm. It is a metaphor, embodying the significance of group solidarity. It encapsulates a key to African values, involving collective personhood and collective morality. Ubuntu spells out the principle of caring for each others' well-being in a spirit of mutual support. Ubuntu shows how people are people through other people, recognising that an individual's humanity is expressed through that person's relationship with others and theirs in turn through a recognition of an individual's humanity. Ubuntu provides for the acknowledgement of the rights and the responsibilities of every citizen in promoting societal and individual well-being.

In short, Ubuntu captures the African essence of what it means to be human.

Ubuntu activated

Khoza (2005) tabulates a whole range of concepts that are part of Ubuntu. The common denominator is the way these concepts aim for unity. The concepts involve words like "interconnection", "integration" and "continuation". Other words incorporate moral overtones like "respect", "dignity" and "reconciliation". "Trust", "sharing", and "participation" feature too. Among the tangible outcomes of Ubuntu is "communal enterprise", where ownership of opportunities, responsibility and challenges are shared as in an extended family system. It prescribes "participatory decision-making" and "consultation" as a value orientation. In all endeavours, Ubuntu prioritises people and relationships over things and views interdependence as superior value to independence.

In Ubuntu, a human being finds genuine human expression in human relationships with other humans. Therefore, apart from the concepts, Ubuntu instils behaviour that is open and available to others. It affirms the other in his/her wholeness of being. Therefore, the collective is glad when others are able and good. Self-assurance is derived from recognising a belonging in a greater whole.

Important for peace, Ubuntu instils an understanding that an individual diminishes when others are humiliated, tortured or oppressed.

Ubuntu and law

In the South African Equality Court, in the case of “Afri-Forum and Another v Malema and Others”, Judge Lamont in his assessment recognised the strength of Ubuntu as being “an important source of law within the context of strained or broken relationships amongst individuals or communities and as an aid for providing remedies which contribute towards more mutually acceptable remedies for the parties in such cases” (Lamont, 2011). In his assessment, leading to designating a certain utterance as hate speech, Lamont deduces from jurisprudence that Ubuntu opposes vengeance. It dictates that a high value be placed on life of a human being and a premium on dignity, compassion, humaneness and respect for the humanity of another. Within Ubuntu, a shift takes place from confrontation to mediation and conciliation, in an environment fuelled by good attitudes and shared concern.

Lamont understands Ubuntu to favour the re-establishment of harmony in the relationship between parties, aiming at the restoration of the dignity of the plaintiff without ruining the defendant, in a restorative rather than retributive justice. Therefore, Ubuntu operates in a direction favouring reconciliation rather than estrangement. This involves sensitising a disputant or a defendant in litigation to the hurtful impact of his actions to the other party and towards changing such conduct, rather than merely punishing the disputant. The outcome of such framing of the guidance from law is: mutual understanding rather than punishment, face-to-face encounters of disputants to facilitate resolving of differences rather than conflict and victory for the most powerful; and civilised dialogue premised on mutual tolerance.

Previously, the Constitutional Court of South Africa noted “It is values like (Ubuntu) that (the Constitution) requires to be promoted. They give meaning and texture to the principles of a society based on freedom and equality” (South Africa: Constitutional Court, 1995, §307).

Women, peace and reconciliation

Within Ubuntu, no gender segregation is made, in the sense that everyone exists by the grace of the other. Therefore, a de-construction of Ubuntu and gender in Western sociological or individualistic terms may not provide an effective frame of analysis. I found that a typical response to my questioning about Ubuntu and gender is:

There is a way in which women are supposed to behave at different stages in their lives. And men as well. There are no questions about analysing gender,

as everybody assumes it. Elders deal with the details of everything.⁵

When approaching the subject of Ubuntu and women from the imagination of masculinity and femininity, then different meanings surface. Such meaning gives instruction on the different roles of women and men in protecting the harmony in society. Feminine and masculine attributes to peacekeeping are defined and revealed in stories, songs and expressions. In those narratives, the power of women as peace-builders is often celebrated, as shown in this example of a myth of the Yoruba in Nigeria on the creation of the earth:

When they were coming to the Earth
Women had no powers from Olodumare
Women asked themselves as to what powers they had
To do all they wanted to do on earth
Men were maltreating the women
Men enslaved them and treated them harshly
Women returned to Olodumare and reported the case
Olodumare was moved with compassion
Olodumare promised them a power greater than that of men
Olodumare gave women power over men
Women were instructed not to use the power indiscriminately
Olodumare endowed women with the power of *aje*⁶

Within Ubuntu, peace exists in situations where harmony is characterised by the presence of virtuous interpersonal relationships in the presence of dignity and order that serves the interest of all. Peace allows for diversity and the local expression of values. It allows the local culture to flourish.

An Ubuntu-based peace process is one of reconciliation. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission is a prime example of how reconciliatory processes defused a potentially explosive situation (Mamdani, 2001), although this process failed to deal with the needs for reconciliation in communities and especially the situation that had evolved for women after the conflict. Most transitional processes have focused on the state, but have forgotten to address the reconciliation within the communities which have been torn apart by conflict. The traditional processes of reconciliation at community level may enhance the participation of women in transition, if they adequately address the issues of justice, reparation and forgiveness. This

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6 According to Oyeronke Olajubu, this part of Yoruba mythology explains the origin of how Olodumare created the Earth, the unintended gender bias that arose, and how eventually the power returned to women (Aderibigbe, 2013, 692)

is especially so where conflict has targeted women and the women's body, and when many of the perpetrators are men, even originating from the local communities themselves, leaving women without a place to return to, unless these crimes are addressed and reconciliation has allowed communities to heal. Van Reisen and Mekonnen (2011), in their study concerning transitional justice in Eritrea and Zimbabwe, explored how traditional justice systems may be instrumental in truth-finding, conflict resolution, reparation, and reconciliation. They substantiate the need for contextual societal specifics to be taken into account.

Murithi (2006) shows that the peace-making process found among Ubuntu societies goes through distinctive phases. These stages encompass an acknowledgement of guilt, showing remorse and repentance, asking for and giving forgiveness, and paying compensation or reparation, as a prelude to reconciliation. These steps are all focused on restoration of relationships as the ultimate target, and "being together" as the aim of Ubuntu, recognising the wrongdoing and need for reparation. Within Ubuntu, it is understood that the perpetrator is also a victim, and that reconciliation must involve perpetrator as well as the victim.

Women who are still rooted in traditional settings potentially have a lot to gain from reconciliation processes that focus on the communities. They can also provide more leadership if the rooting of peace in communities is recognized and institutionalized through locally rooted practices. During a meeting in Harare with a small group of women, the role of women in peace building was discussed. From the transcript printed here below, one can read how much women can feel excluded from peace building. They discuss in this citation the aftermath of the pre-election violence in 2008 in Zimbabwe and refer to the UN resolution 1325 being introduced in Zimbabwe:

After the violence, there was that resolution saying: Let's look at the traditional model that exists, and see how we could incorporate it in peace building. Women, being placed in homes and having that domestic role to look after the family, there was that realisation why don't we involve the women? They are at home, they are responsible for raising the families, why don't we involve them and ensure that they can mould the young men to become peaceful people. They can involve their husbands to influence them not to take part in tensions. That is the model that is being used now. It seems to be very very effective, women are now at the centre of running the family, they are responsible for the upbringing, the socialisation of the children and the family.

It has been thought: let's adopt that model where we women restructure societal thinking. That is the model that is currently being used. Elevate women from that position that they were previously disadvantaged and take

it to something positive that can bring some societal change.⁷

The arsenal of women in peace-building centres around Ubuntu's guidance in the area of giving and receiving forgiveness, however hard and difficult this may seem. The Ubuntu value is efficacious in attaining peaceful homes. In this fashion, women have power within Ubuntu to bringing about harmony and healing as well as transcending the deeply ingrained angers felt by victims of conflict at all levels. Aberibigbe (2013) calls for a reorientation of understanding these roles that give women agency in society, by recognising the rooting society must have in communities and in families:

Thus, the status of the woman to Africans as portrayed in African traditional religion is not dependent on what has developed as male generosity as owner and dispenser of social roles and functions, which place him over and above women. My strong submission is that, ultimately, the status of women should not be viewed as something to be struggled for as a "call out" from oppression and subjugation. It is an innate right, divinely bestowed, and is to be enjoyed by women for the physical and spiritual wellbeing of everyone – the family, the community and the entire society.

Finally, the claimed subjugation of women usually ascribed to African traditional societies cannot be said to have been derived from traditional religion. Any claim that places such subjugation within the dynamics of religion portrays at best an unfortunate misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the position of African religion on the role and status of women. Indeed the subjugation of women can be regarded as a violation of the central principles and values of African religion in its unique worldview on the origin, multiplication and sustenance of the human race. (Aderibigbe, 2013, 699)

Homes, families and communities are the backbone of peaceful societies. Ubuntu is practical. The African saying, "The home belongs to the women. If that woman is not there, there is no home" indicates the existence of a pivotal role of women as the mothers of communities in Ubuntu society. Women have power as guardians of peace, as mediators, negotiators and as strategists, as educators, as communicators and as economists, providers of food and providers of care. If women want peace, they have the power to build homes of peace, communities of peace and societies of peace.

Conclusions

Ubuntu says that we are all guardians of peace. Ubuntu facilitates indigenous processes for conflict resolution and maintenance of peace. Ubuntu

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components do not separate nor reduce each other, and there is no separation of the process from the goal. Ubuntu is dynamic, is exercised through embodiment of its virtues within the lived environment. The interconnectedness of African life lived out through Ubuntu, focuses all interactions on inclusion of the other.

Ubuntu facilitates the authority of women in their capacity to create harmony in communities and societies by emphasising the importance of home and of care taking of each other. This gives her authority to speak out on behalf of families, communities and societies, especially when harmony is undermined.

The restorative processes of transitional justice focus on the state, but lack focus on communities and have mostly failed to properly integrate women. The traditional practices rooted in Ubuntu-epistemology, in creating peace through truth-finding, reparation, asking for forgiveness and reconciliation include the perpetrator and the victim. This may help women especially. These old traditions may help overcome the pain and the subjugation and exclusion experienced as a result of violence. It may above all help women regain confidence and authority that Ubuntu instils the idea of motherhood as the guardian of peace in societies who are expected to care for everyone but so often fail to do so and end up in conflict.

“The home belongs to the woman. If that woman is not there, there is no home” is a statement of the authority women have in making homes. That is the basic understanding of Ubuntu. Everyone belongs, everyone has a home. A peaceful society is a home, a home in which everyone belongs.

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CHAPTER 4. WOMEN HAVE ALWAYS HAD THEIR SPECIAL PLACE IN HISTORY AS PEACE-MAKERS: WOMEN AND PEACE BUILDING IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION



Pamela K. Mbabazi

Introduction

The region of the Great Lakes of Africa (GLR) is undoubtedly conflict prone, but it also harbours countries like Uganda and Rwanda, which have reached quite a high level of resilience to conflict. Although both countries have a long history of internal conflict, they are currently also islands of relative peace, stability and development in a volatile region. Women have always had their special place in history as peacemakers. There are clearly things that have worked in both countries from which we can draw lessons to further promote our societies. It is important that we always take stock of what has worked in our societies and the different sectors and spheres and critically understand what explains relative success in one area, where as there is total failure in the other... so as to ensure sustainable progress. But what exactly have been the real experiences of Women in Peace-Building in Rwanda and Uganda and in all the other countries in the Great Lakes Region? What lessons can we draw from each of these countries? This paper tries to highlight the contributions and experiences of women in both

Uganda and Rwanda with regard to peace building.

Overcoming gender inequality

It is a fact that men have always overlooked women and “put them in their place” in many societies throughout history, although of late this trend is undoubtedly changing and perhaps even more so in today’s Rwanda. The bias against women, or rather the lesser stature of women, permeates legends and social traditions the world over. However there are moments in history that depict women as strong pillars in society with examples of women who have led nations into war, propelled societies into social and economic progress hitherto unknown, and presided over remarkable social transformations. Joan of Arc, nicknamed “The Maid of Orleans” provided leadership of the French army in the 15th Century and went on to win many battles during the hundred (100) years war that paved the way for the coronation of King Charles the VII. More closer to home, we have such examples as Prof. Wangare Mathai, the first African Woman to receive a Nobel Peace Prize. She was followed immediately by two more African women in Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, The Liberian President, and Lymah Gbowee, a woman social worker in Liberia who led Liberian women to rise up against oppression and dictatorship by men at a time when it was not so easy to do so. To share the Nobel Prize with the two African women was Tawakkul Karman from Yemen who has been a leading figure in the protests against President Ali Abdullah Saleh for some time now. The Nobel committee said the three women had been chosen “for their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women’s rights to full participation in peace-building work” (Norwegian Nobel Committee, 2011). We obviously cannot achieve democracy and lasting peace in this region and the world at large, unless women obtain the same opportunities as men to influence developments at all levels of society.

Measuring how far women have come to achieve equality with men in East Africa by the numbers that have been elected to parliament in Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania and Burundi is well known. However, in Rwanda, a small country in the region, the outcome of the 2013 parliamentary elections beat her own world record of 59% women representation in parliament set after the 2008 parliamentary elections. Today female representation in Rwanda’s parliament stands at 64%, arguably the highest number in any legislature anywhere in the world.

Interestingly, Uganda, another post-conflict country and a pioneer of gender equality insights that promotes women’s central role in society in the region, still stands at 34%, some 28 years since the coming to power of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) in 1986 and the introduction of the politics of women’s empowerment. Initially in Rwanda, politics were based on ethnicity, while in Uganda it was based on tribal differences. Arguably, the

effects of genocide in Rwanda has given a platform for women to participate in politics. In the case of Uganda however, a woman usually stands for politics on the basis of her marriage. If the marriage breaks, that is often the end of her participation on the political scene. The case of our former Vice-President, Dr. Specioza Wandera Kazibwe, is a case in point.

The underrepresentation and presence of women in national legislatures in high numbers has been studied and explained (Matland & Montgomery, 2003; Lovenduski & Norris, 1993; Norris & Lovenduski 1995; Goetz & Hassim, 2003; Ahikire, 2006; Powley, 2004; Longman, 2006; Burnet, 2008) largely using socio-economic, institutional and cultural variables or affirmative action. In the economically affluent West, there is a high number of women in legislature and the reverse is true with the less affluent polities of Africa. Due to a focus on quotas (i.e. the legal constitutional quota in most countries of 30% representation), there are few women aspiring to be members of parliament which makes the understanding of the phenomenon of the impacts of either high or low presence in parliament partial and insufficient.

Equal participation by both men and women in political decision-making provides a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society and it enhances the legitimacy of political processes by making them more democratic and responsive to the concerns and perspectives of all segments of society.

Violent conflict situations in Africa and particularly in Rwanda, Uganda and the larger Great Lakes Region have raised women's awareness of the necessity to take strong positions in ending conflicts. However, as women seek to engage in peace building processes such as bridging reconciliation across conflict divided communities, leading community peace campaigns or community dialogues, they are often frustrated by the structures that deny them equal opportunities shared by their male counterparts.

In the case of Uganda, since the liberation war of 1986 and the coming to power of President Museveni's ruling NRM Government, Ugandan women have fought side by side with men and have proved that they are capable of enduring tough situations, demonstrating great courage and dying for a cause. In recognition of the vital role women have played in the success of the liberation war in Uganda, a woman was appointed Vice President (Dr. Wandira Kazibwe) and women ministers have been appointed in key positions like Hon. Jessica Alupo (Uganda's current minister for Education and a retired Major General August 2014). Hon. Rebecca Kadaga also holds the top position of Speaker of Parliament of Uganda and there are several more decision-making positions held by women. The current Uganda government policy on women aims at raising the status of women and fostering their emancipation from socio-economic, political and cultural bondages. This has largely been through programmes to review and

reformulate sectoral policies to ensure that gender aware implementation strategies are put in place.

It is clear that the GLR faces many challenges ranging from poverty and epidemics to conflicts. The conflicts have cost the region immensely in terms of development, resources and human resource. In Rwanda, the effects of the Genocide are still fresh in many people's minds. There are still cases of trauma among genocide survivors while some families of genocide survivors are yet to get shelter over their heads. What is more critical however, is the fact that while violent conflicts affect both women and men, women in Rwanda probably bore the brunt of the genocide more than their male counterparts. This is common wherever there is a violent conflict, largely because of the women's biological make up - as most war crimes target women. As noted earlier, they are subjected to rape, defilement, and forced marriages, all of which expose them to HIV.

Rwandan women have stood up against the many conflicts that have plagued that country in order to foster peace. Their success in this noble cause, underscores the fact that women can take charge of the situation, not only for their own security, but also to protect their male compatriots. Most recently, the joint military operation of Rwanda-Congo against FDLR rebels, negotiated by among others the Foreign Affairs Minister, Rosemary Museminali, is a clear manifestation of the Rwandan women's determination to make peace prevail in the country by tackling threats to current peace. In addition, the role of Fatuma Ndagiza, as the Executive Secretary of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) further testifies to women's readiness to contribute to peace building in Rwanda. Ndagiza has played a pivotal role in uniting a society that had been deeply divided along ethnic lines. Other women like Rose Kabuye, the Director of State Protocol, and Senator Aloise are examples of women in high positions of decision making which has a positive impact.

Despite the many efforts in both countries to promote women, however, critical issues such as access to power and resources, as well as women's participation in decision-making, still need to be addressed to enable women to participate as effective pillars and stakeholders in the well-intended peace building initiatives of these two post conflict nations. Women have been portrayed as the main bearers of the consequences of the violence, as widows, as victims of rape, as heads of disrupted families in many post war settings. At the same time, extreme violence has been identified as a potential opportunity to redefine or reconstruct gender relationships, as it can be argued has been the case in Rwanda and indeed Uganda. Women have now become actors as well as beneficiaries of reconstruction, reconciliation and peace building in Rwandan society following the period of genocide.

It is important to recognise that while violent conflicts, including

genocide, are unfortunate, certain wars and types of violence create opportunities for formally marginalized groups, like women, to access sites of power that have been formally closed to them. Understanding how political power is organized and legitimized is critical to understanding why certain societies have managed to promote the advancement of women in politics while other have failed. The role of the dominant elite discourse in constructing and justifying the presence (or absence) of sites of power is also crucial.

Women's roles in the liberation movements across Africa has been at the centre of peace and security in different countries, such as during Namibia's struggle for independence, during the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, in Rwanda during the genocide, and in Uganda during the Kony war. Although many societies are male dominated, the liberation struggles in many African countries provided avenues for women to participate alongside men. Women's involvement in the liberation struggles has contributed to peace, enhanced education, strengthened the provision of women's rights and contributed to the development of their countries.

While women have demonstrated a willingness to participate, cultural constraints and traditional beliefs remained continued to constrain women from participating effectively. Women do not automatically have adequate tools in the form of skills, exposure, access to resources and freedom to participate and the only way to enhance their participation is by changing people's perceptions on the role of women and by breaking down the cultural barriers that demean women. If countries of Africa, and in particular those in the GLR, are to realize peace and security, women must be put at the centre of conflict resolutions and post conflict reconstruction.

Prof. Anyang noted in his recent lecture in Makerere on 'Ending the Servitude of Life Givers': "The reality is that we have not done as much as we should through our declarations and intentions." (Anyang' Nyong'o, 2011) There is still so much more we can do to point society in the right direction as far as women's roles and positions are concerned. It is appropriate that Rwanda as a small country within the East African sub-region that has done much better than most, to host the international conference on "Women's Participation in Peace-Building in the GLR", because others need to learn from the experiences and understand critically what it takes to put women in the fore, and what this means for societal transformation. Undoubtedly, Rwanda has done better, especially when we look at women's roles in decision making and in public offices and to some extent in business. Arguably, this could be explained by the existence of a much more progressive political leadership that values and respects the role of women in society and upholds the universal principles of equality for all.

In East Africa's history, it was President Julius Nyerere who first led this drive to raise the level of consciousness in society about Women's central

role and pointed out the dangers of patriarchy and social bigotry as enemies of social progress. He raised alarm bells for female emancipation at independence when he said:

If women want to take their rightful places in the community and if they do not want to be looked down upon, they have to prove this by leaving behind old practices and prejudices which push them back into the kitchen.....They have to prove that the confidence placed in them is justified since the party and the government have given full support for women. (Anyang' Nyong'o, 2011: 3)

This support from Government at that time was not simply given in form, through formal equality enshrined in law; it was also expressed in concrete programmes and projects that the independence government initiated to empower women, such as the adult education programme. In 1962 for example, 75% of those enrolled for adult education in the then Tanganyika were women from the countryside. This ultimately enabled women to compete with men on a more equal footing in the political, social and economic market. Undoubtedly, increased access to education has seen more women elected to parliament and local government institutions throughout the GLR, and to occupy top positions in the civil service, academia and leading professions.

While all these measures are important and indeed paint a clear picture of the extent to which equality of opportunity exists in our societies, it must be understood that it is equally important to start with the cultural revolution to demystify the old-age dominance over women and their relegation to beings of a lesser kind. As one scholar has noted: "*The Revolution Begins at Home by inculcating the confidence of self*". (Anyang' Nyong'o, 2011: 5) It all begins with such simple acts like fathers (and mothers) recognizing and appreciating their daughters as individuals who can be and can achieve all that is great, and form the ethos of their society. No doubt we have many girls and women in East Africa who are great achievers, some whom we have celebrated but many we have simply wished away and appreciated only in passing.

Women are key in peace building in the GLR as they take a central part in socialization, which normally starts within the home right from child-birth up to adulthood. That is arguably why one's first language is referred to as the mother tongue. On the Economic development front, associations and cooperatives that involve women have promoted peace building through sharing of experiences, education, bargaining power, extending assistance to the vulnerable and sustainable peace. Women should be actively involved at all levels as nothing can be successful without women. The elite women are the ones that often take the lead in most women associations and all communication is done in English leaving non-educated women behind.

We cannot forget to applaud the majority of women in rural areas and in

the slums of our cities who have given birth to many of us and have fed and looked after the workers and peasants that sustain our economies. As long as we do not question why the male side of the equation performs better than the female side under similar circumstances, then we shall continue to consign the majority of women to indignities, slave labour and human suffering, despite any progress made in woman's emancipation.

There is a need for the modification of our culture so as to eliminate prejudicial practices that block women's involvement in peace building. The crucial role played by social actors after conflict demonstrates the strong link between women and nation reconstruction, as clearly seen in Rwanda after the genocide. In Nyamirambo, for example, a women's group helped genocide survivors gain skills such as in computer applications, hand crafts and the use of sewing machines to develop themselves and their families. This created a means of livelihoods for many families that were previously desperate. Women are arguably more tolerant, give life and think of others as being more like their family than men.

While women's difficulties in times of armed struggle have recently featured more prominently on the international agenda for war-to-peace transitions, women's positive contributions to peace-building and post-war reconstruction remain largely unrecognized and undervalued. There is a need to overcome the obstacles that hinder women from participating more in peace building and post-conflict resolution and reconstruction processes. Women need to take advantage of the transformative experiences of war and the resulting weakened patriarchal order to build up a strong women's movement before it is too late -- before traditions that oppress women return to take over the space that has opened momentarily. Women need to build a strong movement before conflict starts and to sustain it through the war that may follow, as well as after the ceasefire. The movement should help to build bridges between different groups in civil society, thus bolstering the continued struggle for respect for women's rights without waiting for the end of the hostility to be achieved.

Furthermore, in order to make progress towards gender equality, we have to empower women by eliminating gender disparities in the enrollment in primary and secondary education and in access to higher education and learning in all professions. In the reproductive cycle of society in which women play the central role and bear the most burdens, maternal and child mortality must be reduced to near zero and access to reproductive health services made accessible to all women of child bearing age. However social change cannot really happen without profound ideological and cultural change at the level of ideas, beliefs and social norms. As Tadesse noted in the title of her presentation of the 2002 meeting of African Scholars in Ethiopia, we must all be in the "search of gender justice" (Tadesse 2002: 1).

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CHAPTER 5. THE POLITICS OF THE BODY IN CONFLICT: FOLLOWING WOMEN’S FOOTSTEPS: A HOLISTIC RESPONSE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE



Ruth Ojiambo Ochieng and Sandra Tumwesigye

Introduction

Our bodies are our primary means of participating socially, economically, politically, spiritually and creatively in society. They are the beginning point of the practical application of rights; the place in which rights are exercised, and for women in particular, the place where rights are most often violated. Without knowledge of and control over our bodies, including our sexuality, women’s rights can neither be fully exercised nor enjoyed. (Isis-WICCE, 2013)

Devota Mbabazi an ex-combatant in Uganda and her experience of armed conflict bares a strong likeness to the stories of women in armed conflict-affected communities as far-flung as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), South Sudan, Liberia, Nepal, Kashmir, and many more others who have experienced sexual violence and the effects it played out on their bodies, minds and spirits. The experiences of these women and girls, demonstrate the multifaceted effects of armed conflict on the female gender and the need for a holistic response to end sexual violence against women in armed conflict if sustained peace is to be achieved.

Isis-WICCE has witnessed the value of a holistic approach to post

conflict recovery programmes since meeting Devota, a survivor of rape by 21 soldiers. Despite existing 'peace', she was living in a remote village in central Uganda, unable to resume normal life or be integrated into the army due to her lack of a formal education. She had contracted HIV and AIDS as well as a glut of sexual and reproductive health complications including fistula. Owing to her failed reintegration, she was unable to access social services to deal with her psychological trauma as well as her gynaecological health needs, which worsened her experience of stigma and inability to productively participate in recovery of her community. As a result, Isis-WICCE was impelled to adopt a model that enables women war survivors to fully and meaningfully participate, by striking a balance between restoring the dignity of women, and advocating for redress through equitable redistribution of resources in post-conflict settings.

The personal is political

Following over two decades of documenting and responding to the effects of conflict on women in armed conflict and post-conflict setting, Isis-WICCE has become well acquainted with the struggle for national sovereignty at the expense of women's bodily integrity. These experiences, which are reproduced at household, community, national and international levels, have made it increasingly clear that for women, the personal is indeed political. This politics is played out when the bodies of women and girls, are turned into battlegrounds through multiple experiences of abuse, particularly sexual violence. The same politics continues when conflicts are resolved and the damaged bodies are deemed ineligible in contributing to peace as peace processes and post-conflict recovery exclude them and their specific needs.

Ultimately, women's bodies continue to experience this very same politics through post-conflict decisions about national priorities, resource allocation, capacity development, and women's effective participation that do not prioritise gender responsiveness specifically addressing their meaningful participation, psychological, sexual and reproductive health needs. As such, even after the guns fall silent, women who have borne the brunt of the conflict are unable to participate in peace building or post-conflict recovery because their bodies, minds and spirits have not been restored.

The impact of sexual violence

Isis-WICCE has observed first-hand the markedly different way that women and girls experience the impact of sexual violence on their bodies, minds, spirits as well as their overall existence. Women in different settings experience rape, sexual mutilation, sexual humiliation, burning and mutilation of their body parts, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy or sexual slavery. Each case varies with the profile of the survivor, the motive

of the perpetrator, the level of impunity and culture of militarism. As a result of their disadvantaged position in all societies, each woman or girl disproportionately suffers the effects.

In Liberia, Isis-WICCE found that 62.5% of women and girls in four counties of Banga Lofa Maryland and Grand Kru had experienced sexual violence. 73.9% had been raped and anecdotal evidence revealed forced prostitution in exchange for food from soldiers (Isis-WICCE, 2008). Women and girls in Sierra Leone experienced sex trafficking and in Central African Republic they were raped in front of their husbands or fathers (Isis-WICCE, 2011). In Jonglei, South Sudan, abducted girls are used as bargaining chips into sexual slavery and forced marriages, while women in Abyei and Northern Bahr-el-Gazal report rape by occupied forces (Isis-WICCE, 2013). Women in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) reported high incidences of rape and sexual slavery by armed groups, the army/police and civilians in Rutshuru, Walikali, Lubero and other conflict affected territories of North and South Kivu. (Isis-WICCE, 2013)

In all these cases, the vulnerability of these women and girls to further injustice is heightened, and Isis-WICCE through its research and healing interventions has discovered that if unaddressed, women continue to suffer the impact of sexual violence on their minds, bodies and spirits.

The Body

Survivors experience grave damage to their reproductive systems and gynaecological issues such as infertility, abnormal vaginal discharge, chronic pelvic pain, sexually transmitted infections, vaginal tears, prolapsed uteruses and traumatic gynaecologic fistulae¹ which affects their sexual and reproductive health as well as their capacity for their daily living or social integration. In the case of Sierra Leone, of the 44.9% female survivors of the conflict, a great majority suffered a range of serious reproductive and gynecological health consequences. The most severe of them was vaginal destruction from violent sexual assault and gang rapes resulting in vesico vaginal fistula (VVF) and rectal vaginal fistula (RVF). During the healing intervention camps in Kitgum district, northern Uganda, Isis-WICCE found

1 Traumatic gynaecologic fistula—an injury that can result from violent sexual assault, often in conflict settings. Brutal rape (by one or more assailants or by the use of gun barrels, beer bottles, or sticks) can result in a tear, or fistula, between a woman's vagina and her bladder or rectum, or both. Women with traumatic fistula are unable to control the flow of their urine and/or faeces, and they find it impossible to keep themselves clean. (Traumatic Gynaecologic Fistula: A Consequence of Sexual Violence in Conflict Settings, ACQUIRE Project 2006).

that of the reproductive health complications exhibited by women, vesico vaginal fistula was experienced among 6% of the survivors of sexual violence. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, a growing number of women dealing with fistula reported it as the result of gang rape, forced penetration with foreign objects or rape-induced spontaneous abortion. In certain cases, women who had been raped while pregnant suffered fistula as a result of unsuccessful attempts to extract the stillborn babies in remote health units.

Women with fistula and other ailments are unable to participate in society or support their families economically, due to fear of publicly bleeding or leaking urine and from overall weakness. They lack access to special health services that addresses these specific conditions. For example sexually transmitted infections (STIs) acquired following rape result in tubal blockage and thus infertility. This gynaecological condition leads to social stigma and affects the family stability worsening the effects of the experience on their bodied minds and spirit. In these settings some of the survivors are also faced with unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS, which put them at risk of carrying babies with no identity thus causing further stigma to the mother and later, the child. Some of the survivors have even attempted suicide and others have committed suicide even after delivering the children.

The Mind

While sexual violence is primarily administered on the body, the minds of survivors suffer grave and potentially long-term effects. Isis-WICCE research has revealed the severe psychological trauma among survivors of sexual violence. For instance, in Northern Uganda, women survivors had psychiatric disorders including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, alcohol abuse disorder, panic anxiety disorder, agoraphobia, social phobia, somatoform disorder and suicidal thoughts. The findings also show that 6% of such women had homicidal thoughts just as a result of sexual violence. These psychological effects had impaired their ability to function normally or participate within their societies.

The Spirit

The power behind these survivors is destroyed and suffers social stigma, rejection and elimination, which inhibit their social reintegration. For instance women and girls with children resulting from rape and sexual slavery during conflict are doubly marginalised due to their children's questioned cultural identity and their association with rape. They suffer low esteem and hence have limited ability to effectively participate in socioeconomic opportunities. Such survivors are often ostracised by their husbands and families, thus driving them to leave their communities and discontinue their education. As a result they cannot access information about

the government programmes as they have no fixed abode, and their homes are the streets in townships.

Ultimately, Isis-WICCE has ascertained that without addressing the immediate impact of sexual violence on women's bodies, minds and spirits, survivors are not only unable to enjoy their rights or benefit from development, but the vicious cycle of sexual violence remains unbroken. This is well illustrated in the case of the approximately 300 ex-combatants and women formerly associated with armed groups in Uganda. These women with the average age of 27 years are survivors of sexual slavery. Some 62% of them were single mothers, 63% were ostracised by their families and communities, and 87% were unable to access land. They were all unable to successfully reintegrate or provide for their families. As a result, they are displaced and unable to engage in more productive activities, and instead survive on the meagre resources they get through commercial sex work in exchange for food items. They have sex with 2 to 6 clients a night to earn 72,000 (\$30) a month. 67% of them would like to be able to earn an income without resorting to sex work. Despite purportedly living in peace or post-conflict, they are exposed to deeper levels of vulnerability and further sexual violence (IOM, 2010) that continue to make them insecure and thus not at peace. In these circumstances their communities and the nation at large can be at peace.

Consensus exists on the fact that while sexual violence is highest during armed conflict, it continues at alarming rates in post-conflict settings if the specific causes and associated dynamics are not addressed. As such, notwithstanding the existence of international and national laws criminalising sexual violence, such as the Rome Statute or local laws against rape and defilement. A holistic gender responsive approach is necessary in order to promote gender equality, challenge social constructs of violent masculinities and society's attitudes to women's bodies, dismantle cultures of militarism and build communities' capacities for conflict transformation. This will ultimately cause post-conflict recovery action that responds to women's specific judicial and bodily needs resulting from their experiences of conflict.

Impunity and liability for damage to women's bodies, minds and spirits

Over the years, Isis-WICCE has witnessed great strides taken on the part of governments and the international community in expressing their commitments to gender equality and more particularly to prevent sexual violence, impunity, and respond to the needs of survivors of violence. For instance, in the DRC as in Liberia, the governments have put in place national protocols on medical assistance, psychosocial support, legal referral and socioeconomic reintegration for survivors. Liberia's Ministry of Gender

and Development, was a pioneer in developing a comprehensive National Gender-Based Violence Plan of Action, with the goal of reducing sexual violence and responding with appropriate services to survivors. A growing number of States like South Sudan are currently developing National Action Plans for UNSCR 1325 (2000), geared to providing women's rights, opening doors for women to participate in the post conflict development plans, preventing sexual violence, ending impunity and responding to the needs of survivors of abuse.

The leadership of Burundi, Uganda and DRC (among others), for example ratified the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children (2006) as well as the Goma Declaration on Eradication of Sexual Violence and Ending Impunity (2008). They also signed the December 2012 International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Kampala Declaration, and launched the Zero Tolerance campaign to improve the effectiveness of judicial responses for sexual violence, as well as to ensure a one-stop centre where survivors can get medical and legal support. This year a regional Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) centre has been established and has a major aim of building the capacity of the police and judiciary to effectively address the scourge of SGBV. Even more Heads of States signed and ratified the Maputo Protocol (2003), the protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, as well as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. These represent a sample of policy and legal frameworks that have been put in place to the same vein.

Nonetheless, despite the strong expressions of commitment in these policies, their corresponding impact on the bodies, minds and souls of women affected by armed conflict has yet to be registered. The problem of sexual violence in armed conflict persists and the needs of survivors in post-conflict settings largely remain unaddressed. In cases such as Burundi, Uganda, Liberia, South Sudan and DRC, women human rights defenders continue to advocate for the efficient implementation of these expressed commitments. The distinctive message underlying this is the need to walk the talk by prioritizing women's needs and addressing the impact of sexual violence in conflict on their bodies, minds and spirits.

An illustration can be seen in the case of sexual violence survivors in north and northeastern Uganda, where, in 2002, Isis-WICCE held a healing intervention camp in Soroti district in eastern Uganda. Survivors reported having unsuccessfully sought medical attention for their gynecological problems from the national health centres a decade later, and 2 years into the implementation of the post-conflict peace and reconstruction plan (PRDP). This is because the PRDP has prioritized physical structures, with limited focus being given to human security which is embedded in the body of

individuals and thus the need for quality health services to repair women's minds and bodies.(Isis-WICCE; 2011).

Armed conflict inevitably destroys infrastructure and affects the provision of public services all of which calls for the post-conflict reconstruction of these institutions and facilities, and this takes time to be achieved. However, the same armed conflict damages the humaneness (IOM 2007).

This ultimately begs the question of who is liable for the damage to women's bodies that results from abuse in conflict? It can be argued that denying liability or disregarding the psychosocial, sexual and reproductive health needs of survivors of sexual violence represents a form of impunity for the perpetrators. In armed conflict and post-conflict settings where governments do not prioritise the needs of survivors there is an implicit message being sent that even though women's bodies are turned into battlegrounds, the repair of the infrastructural battlegrounds is of greater value. Consequently, in order to address the impact of sexual violence, women call for governments to express their commitment with plans and programmes backed with sufficient allotment of resources and capacities to address survivors' central needs so that they can reclaim their dignity, self-esteem and adjust the world so as to be accountable to these survivors. Ultimately, these responses should place women as prime agents able to significantly participate in processes of social transformation, peace building and post-conflict development.

Weaving women's power into peace

Since 1996, Isis-WICCE has been following the footsteps of women in different armed conflict and post-conflict settings of Africa and Asia. Over the years, through this practice of amplifying women's voices, documenting their experiences, exposing the underlying violent structures and conditions, as well as effecting positive change with their participation, a specific approach to feminist peace building has been honed.

This has been encapsulated in what is now referred to as the Isis-WICCE model of 'Weaving Women's Power into Peace'. This holistic model looks at a woman during her life span and works with five major ingredients. 'Illumination' focusing on research and documentation of the situation of women in armed conflict and post conflict, while 'Healing' repairs their body, mind and spirit. Under 'Synergy', women's skills are built to address critical issues and challenge the political status quo, while 'Advocacy' puts in place innovative strategies to influence androcentric post-conflict reconstruction policies and programmes. Finally through 'Radiation' Isis-WICCE mentors community based women's groups to implement activities that contribute to total peace building and gender responsive post-conflict rehabilitation; an aspect that builds a sustainable peace.

As a result, various shifts have been witnessed in women's ability to participate and contribute to peace building and development, in their respective communities and countries. Viewing women holistically and reaffirming their agency and personhood, while challenging the structures that oppress and perpetuate violence against women has brought about some positive results.

Illumination: Documenting violence against women in armed conflict

“If the president will be able to watch this on television and become aware of my experiences as an ex-soldier and survivor of armed conflict, then I want every detail to be made known for my sake and for the sake of other women in a situation similar to mine.” Devota Mbabazi

Centering women's bodies, minds and spirits

At the heart of the Isis-WICCE technique is the view of sexual violence survivors not simply as data sources but as ‘knowers’ and prospective change agents. As such, while the documentation process seeks information on their experience of sexual violence, it also seeks their views on the appropriate responses to prevention and protection from sexual violence in their contexts. These women are therefore not viewed as victims of a sexual crime but also as valued actors with a right to contribute to decision-making and any plans or programmes concerning their plight such as possible reparation or post-conflict recovery plans (Isis-WICCE Model; 2013). This fits within Isis-WICCE's view that all action on behalf of women should result from a bottom-up process that captures their views and priorities and is ultimately implemented with their participation.

Isis-WICCE also adopts a method that puts women's bodies, minds and spirits at the centre. To this end, storytelling is used as a distinctive tool to gather information while promoting the survivors' psychosocial wellbeing. It has been discovered in different contexts that by allowing women to tell their own personal stories, they experience healing because it allows them to challenge the shame and conspiracy of silence surrounding their bodily attack. Their bodies are put at the centre by facilitating emergency interventions to their sexual and reproductive health needs. Over the years, Isis-WICCE has applied this action-oriented approach by setting up healing camps and mobilizing health professionals to respond with treatment and surgery for the different sexual and reproductive health and psychological ailments in Uganda, Liberia and South Sudan.

In some cases some of the stories have become tools of advocacy and have supported calls to leaders to address the needs of survivors. As such the documentation process contributes to long-term processes such as gender

responsive transitional justice or post-conflict recovery and reconstruction processes.

Collaboration and capacity development

This same principle of contributing to local processes is reflected in Isis-WICCE's practice of building a self-sustaining mechanism for timely data collection and respond to issues associated with women's situation in armed conflict and post-conflict. Through its international capacity building programme, Isis-WICCE has developed the capacity of a vanguard of women leaders and human rights defenders, at local level to document and respond to women's issues. These women activists regularly document their own realities and women's experiences of SGBV for further action. For instance, following the documentation of women's experience of armed conflict, an institute alumna from northeastern Uganda responded by forming a Community Based Organisation, The Teso Women's Peace Activists (TEWPA), which has been instrumental in peace building, and engendering post-conflict recovery efforts in the region.

Through equipping a movement of documenters and working with local women leaders, Isis-WICCE has been able to address issues posed by the International Protocol process such as the question of sensitivity. Local women and women's organisations are knowledgeable of their contexts and are also well able to gather evidence from other women while maintaining sensitivity and providing support to the survivors. Through this approach, Isis-WICCE has been able to receive information from various armed conflict areas it would otherwise be unable to reach. An example is the documentation of rape and sexual humiliation in rural Zimbabwe (by Alumna), in areas that purported to supported the political opposition during the 2008 elections when NGOs were denied access and mobility was restricted (Isis-WICCE; 2012).

In a similar vein, several documenting and investigating processes of sexual violence in conflict have been curtailed due to female survivors' low willingness to report. This was the case in Rwanda where the local culture frowns upon discussing sexual violence, thus the low precedence for justice for sexual crimes of this nature. Another case is the truth and reconciliation processes in Sierra Leone and Liberia where many women and girls did not approach the commission to share their experiences due to the associated stigma, as well as gender insensitivity in data collection and presentation. Trust and local credibility is required in order for survivors to willingly share their experiences. Isis-WICCE has been able to overcome these hurdles by consistently working in collaboration with active local women and women's groups in their communities for a long time. Involving government departments is critical for continuity, responsibility and accountability.

As such, since the International Protocol seeks to promote practices that

nurture mutual support, it would be profitable to collaborate with local women's groups and organisations already concerned with providing support to survivors. Ultimately, the process of documentation and investigation of cases should contribute to a more long-term impact and social transformation. Consequently, in the absence of strong institutions, it is recommended that women's capacity and the capacity of women's organisations is developed to take charge of the documentation and investigation of violation of women's rights in their settings.

Radiation: Women's meaningful participation for peace and post-conflict rehabilitation

The value of women's participation extends beyond their ability to effectively gather information of evidentiary value on sexual violence against women. Women's roles as proactive change agents in addressing peace and human security in various countries is widely recognized and well documented. It is common knowledge that the women of what is now the Republic of South Sudan are largely responsible for the outcome of the 2011 referendum, which relied on their full participation and saw women's groups and Member of Parliament mobilizing women from door to door, providing water, food and in some cases transportation for women to participate in the referendum. The significant contribution of women's participation to peace and security in Burundi is also widely known. It is acknowledged that without the existence of local women's groups, there would be no structures to reach widespread communities to participate in peace and reconciliation, and close gaps in development across gender and ethnic lines.

Women peace activists in Sierra Leone were at the forefront of the movement for peace. The various creative initiatives used by the women's movement in Uganda, Liberia and Nepal, agitating for the peaceful resolution of the respective armed conflicts. The roles of women in bringing conflicting parties, as well as their spirited agitation for the criminalization of sexual violence in conflict-affected DRC, fall in this same category. Despite these demonstrations of women's capacities, women are consistently excluded from formal peace processes whose peace agreements and post-conflict reconstructions plans also exclude women's needs. An assessment of 24 major peace processes reflects this same dynamic with only 3% women signatories, 8% participation in negotiations and women visibly underrepresented when making vital decisions about post conflict recovery (UNIFEM 2010). As a result, the same script is played out in post-conflict settings with women agitating for inclusion in post-conflict settlements and for their needs resulting from sexual violence in conflict to be addressed in the programmes developed.

Reframing women's participation

Women's experience in formal peace and reconciliation processes has proven the insufficiency of participation without concrete influence. While different governments expressed their commitment to address sexual violence and women's associated needs at the peace tables, actual implementation of the post-conflict recovery plans do not reflect this. In many countries, such as Liberia, Burundi and Uganda among others, these commitments are not fully implemented and government machineries often lack sufficient funds and capacities to do so, (Isis-WICCE 2012). As such, it is inadequate to solely view and promote women's participation as women's representation in these formal structures and processes. Over time women have become discontent with solely seeking a seat at the table and continuously agitating for a slice of the pie even when all decision makers acknowledge the fact that women bore the brunt of the conflict.

Women are therefore taking the same proactive approach to address issues of violence against women in armed conflict setting and beyond. Women are advocating and applying pressure for governments to directly address the psychosocial and reproductive health and rights needs of survivors of sexual violence, as an expression of their commitment and accountability to post-conflict recovery and ending sexual violence. At the same time women and women's organizations are seeking partnerships with governments and other actors to break the cycle of sexual violence by taking direct action to prevent, mitigate and respond to the conflict that is played out on women's bodies, as is the case with Isis-WICCE's healing camps. This two-pronged method enables women to effectively **participate** in, and contribute to a genuine peace and reconstruction that prioritizes the bodies, minds and spirits of conflict-affected women and girls.

Additionally, instead of purely taking a reactive stance by ensuring that a representative number of women is included in formal peace and recovery processes, women's organizations such as Isis-WICCE now promote a proactive approach that develops the capacity of larger constituencies of women over a period of time, to prevent violent conflict, to transform household and community conflicts, to make decisions that protect women and girls from sexual violence and ultimately to participate in determining and influencing interventions planned on their behalf. Consequently support for interventions of this nature that do not always fit neatly into the more popular quick impact project frameworks, goes a long way in improving women's participation in sustainable peace, security and prevention of sexual violence.

Advocacy: women's innovative strategies for peace, human security and post-conflict rehabilitation.

In harmony with Isis-WICCE's survivor-centric approach that puts women's bodies, minds and spirits at the centre of rebuilding the shattered nations, it goes without saying that efforts to prevent sexual violence against women and girls in conflict must include and be driven by women and women's armed groups/organizations. In this regard, UN Security Council Resolution 1366 supplements UNSCR 1325, in emphasising the importance of women's vital role in conflict prevention. In addition, Isis-WICCE's experience over the years has highlighted the value of their participation in early warning and conflict mitigation, as well as the risks associated with excluding women's knowledge and participation.

This is well illustrated in the case of Uganda where in Karamoja (in north eastern Uganda), women were privy to valuable early warning information concerning planned armed raids, routes to be used and storage of firearms (Isis-WICCE 2009, Stites & Akabwai 2009) but this was never used to mitigate conflict or their experience of sexual violence. In Luwero, women who also experienced sexual violence spoke of having been lured to support the civil war with promises of quick delivery out of poverty (Isis-WICCE 1998). These women did not understand their vulnerability in a context of conflict. In 1989, when no one had the courage, a group of women wore rags and sang funeral songs as they walked through Gulu town, in northern Uganda, demanding an end to violence (Isis-WICCE 2000). These women understood their power to spark change for peace. These cases demonstrate the need to build women's capacity to participate at their different levels in making valuable decisions before, during and after armed conflict, to understand the nature of violent conflict and ultimately appreciate their role in preventing sexual violence in conflict.

Early warning for prevention of violence against women

In taking emergency action with the goal of prevention, humanitarian agencies only stand to benefit from close collaboration with local civil society actors and particularly women's groups or organizations already working with communities on issues of sexual violence. By engaging women and community members, these efforts benefit from a deeper understanding of the context, which is particularly important in appreciating and interpreting issues of gender, which differ depending on the society and in relation to sexual violence. In addition, they often fill a capacity gap by providing the financial and institutional support needed to set up sustainable mechanisms

to support long-term efforts to prevent sexual violence during periods of unrest.

Isis-WICCE received reports of women in South Sudan who were aware of the impending armed violence. However because these women did not have a mechanism or the resources to reach a large number of women quickly, they walked from house to house and several women and girls did benefit from this early warning information. Moreover, several women and girls who were aware of the imminent threat did not have the benefit of a protection mechanism.

Consequently, according to the UNMISS human rights report, large numbers of women and girls were raped by soldiers in Juba and opposition forces in Bor and Malakal. Among those that did managed to flee their homes, more women and girls were raped by civilians seeking refuge at the UN Mission (UNMISS 2014). Cases of this nature emphasize the need to prioritise, popularise and apply early warning frameworks and mechanisms for sexual violence along with self-defence or personal protection mechanisms for women and girls. This could be embedded in the structures of women's organisations and groups. In 2011 UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, UN Women and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations developed a framework of early warning indicators focused on conflict related sexual violence. However knowledge and use of this framework appears limited and not broadly shared.

This calls for collaboration between humanitarian agencies and women's groups and organizations that have long-term relationships with women and already operate in these areas, but lack sufficient financial and human capacity for extensive impact. Solid early warning and protection mechanisms for sexual violence are also needed and would benefit from strategic linkages due to numerous dynamics.

Analysis of different cases in DRC and South Sudan promote the value of collaborating with local women's organizations. They connect a relationship between a profound understanding of various elements of a specific context to the ability to foretell increased levels of sexual violence. This includes a strong knowledge of the actors including leadership, sources of funding, and methods of conscription, ethnic composition, and the past history of abuses. This can then be assessed together with information on the specific conditions on the ground so as to increase prevention. At the same time this can improve the efficient protection by security actors and self-defence by affected communities (UNWOMEN 2012). This role is best executed by local actors already taking action on sexual violence, such as women's organisations. A midterm review of the implementation of Uganda's post-conflict peace and reconstruction programme confirms the value of women's organizations in mitigating conflict as they were ranked highest (56%) for their work to this end (Isis-WICCE; 2011).

Funding for women's bodies

In the case of Burundi, women were consulted while the priorities for the countries post-conflict reconstruction were being determined. However final decisions were influenced by the Bretton Woods institutions and major funders who did not prioritise women's reproductive health needs (Isis-WICCE; 2012). In South Sudan, the allocation of resources over a six-year post-conflict period revealed the government's priorities with 29% being allocated to security, 12% to roads, 7% to basic education and 3% to health. It therefore comes as no surprise that the meagre financing for health did not emphasize women's health needs, which includes addressing increasing rates of HIV/AIDS in armed conflict and post-conflict sections of the country, (USIP; 2009). This lack of a focus in prioritization or funding on women's specific needs has resulted in post-conflict recovery programmes that do not adequately promote gender equality and women's total health, which are a prerequisite to sustainable peace.

In all these contexts, women decry the absence of health service delivery mechanisms that respond to their needs and situations, particularly those transiting out of armed conflict. Survivors face challenges of drug shortages, lack of medical equipment, scarcity of skilled medical personnel and quality gynecological services as well as inadequate health infrastructure to address their special sexual and reproductive health needs. In the DRC, there has been some level of free treatment for post rape survivors. However, most of these centres are urban based, with no mechanisms to facilitate moving traumatised survivors to the centres given that most of the rapes are committed in remote areas, Their remote locations and the long distance to health units therefore renders these services inaccessible to most of the survivors. While in Uganda, the health budget in the post-conflict Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) prioritises construction of health centres and purchase of transport equipment (ambulances), but it has not allotted sufficient resources to reproductive health care or the repair of survivors' bodies. As such, gynecologists are only located at referral hospitals and women have to travel long distances for these services and in some cases even pay 60,000 shillings (\$24), to use the government ambulance due to corruption. Health centres in hard-to-reach areas lack skilled health workers and women have complained of a lack of HIV testing kits for pregnant women in some units. (Isis-WICCE; 2011).

Across the board, women sexual violence survivors are calling for governments to put their money where their mouth is. The commitment expressed in policies to respond to the needs of sexual violence survivors should be translated into funding to heal women's bodies, minds and spirits. Funding for post-conflict recovery programmes such as the PRDP in Uganda should prioritize psychosocial support for sexual violence survivors.

These resources should also focus on recruiting and training health workers to identify and treat psychosomatic, sexual and reproductive health conditions. Funding should also address the shortages of medical officers, midwives and gynecologists as well as women's challenges to accessing health centres.

For more sustained and holistic support, there should be coordination between women's organisation, which play a first call post with government institutions responsible for the peace and recovery programs. Due to the limited number of staff within national health systems, these local organisations should be trained to provide complimentary support in trauma management. Funding should also be directed to organisations providing these much needed services.

Other civil society organisations such as AYINET² and Isis-WICCE have partnered with governments (such as Uganda's Ministry of Health and Ministry of Local Government), to directly respond with treatment and surgery for survivors' sexual and reproductive health problems. In Liberia, Isis-WICCE worked with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Gender and WANEP/WIPNET, to provide specialised health care to women survivors, build the capacity of local health workers in the management of reproductive and surgical complications of war, trained primary care health workers to provide psychological support to survivors and resourced reproductive health kits to rural health units. The team reached twelve health centres and two hospitals in two counties, in a period of one month. About 1200 survivors received counselling and treatment for fistulae, genital prolapses and fertility problems. The power of networking among the Isis-WICCE team of doctors influenced them to sell the idea of providing mental health clinics to these war ravaged areas. The Peter Alderman Foundation in the USA, supported the establishment of a trauma centre in one of the affected communities in Uganda; and in Banga, in Liberia, and contracted a Ugandan psychologists to support the hospital.

This medical intervention has been replicated in different conflict-affected parts of Uganda such as Luweero, Gulu, Soroti, Kitgum, Kasese, Lira and Kotido districts, as well as South Sudan, where Isis-WICCE partnered with the Ministry of Health and Totto Chan Trauma Centre. In order to contribute to the healing of women's bodies, minds and spirits, it is important that these partnerships with government are promoted and funding is also allocated to civil society organisations that have demonstrated transformative impact in directly addressing survivors' psychosocial as well as sexual and reproductive health needs. Presently a team of feminists Across

2. The African Youth Initiative Network (AYINET). It is committed to making peace and justice a reality for victims and survivors of war.

Africa have established a model with support from the Stephen Lewis Foundation, named the Africa Integrated Response for survivors of crisis to support the coordination of women's interventions and provision of appropriate skilled personnel for appropriate action.

Looking to the future: The post-2015 development agenda

Based on the level of progress achieved in promoting gender equality, ending sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict settings or responding to survivors' sexual and reproductive health needs, it is safe to say that governments and global actors cannot rest on their laurels. In line with the transformative shifts currently underpinning the post-2015 development agenda, it is clear that gender inequality must be addressed in order to leave no one behind, building peace and putting sustainable development at the centre.

The post-2015 framework echoes the sentiments of this paper in its recognition of vulnerability, the importance of protection, inclusiveness and participation. As such in order to build on this and the existing commitments in the millennium development goals (MDGs), the post-2015 framework should be framed to prioritise a specific focus on gender inequality as an expression of true commitment to sustainable development.

By specifically focusing on addressing gender inequality, national and international actors will have an implementation and accountability mechanism to address women's marginalisation and the structural inequalities that make women and girls vulnerable to sexual violence in armed conflict and susceptible to gender discrimination in the allocation of post-conflict recovery resources.

The framework should also include specific sub-goals and targets concerned with addressing the specific sexual and reproductive health needs of women associated with conflict and their experience of sexual violence. This includes explicitly prioritising sexual and reproductive health and rights responses, as well as adequate and quality health service delivery for survivors in order to improve past national and global performance in this area, which has been characterised by a lot of lip service. To consolidate and build on progress made under goal 3 of the MDGs, the post-2015 framework should prioritise these gender equality issues by strengthening the gender and peace pillars without which there can be no guarantee of global development, peace and security.

The opportunities to address this lie within the existing goals of the framework, for instance under goal 4. Women's mental, sexual and reproductive health needs should be specifically addressed as their health is the starting point for their meaningful participation in development, which is

hit hardest in armed conflict and post-conflict countries. Goal 10 must centre on women's meaningful participation and acknowledge their role as transformational actors in order to be able to boast of truly good governance and effective institutions. Without prioritising gender responsive post-conflict reconstruction that addresses women's bodily integrity, and their specific needs, goal 11 cannot expect to effectively ensure stable and peaceful societies. Ultimately, in creating a global enabling environment and ensuring long-term finance, the post 2015 development framework should ensure equitable resource allocation for women's concerns as well as funding women engagement in peace building and development.

Conclusion

It is important to bring back into focus the mind, body and spirit of women affected by armed conflict, which must be restored in order for women to be able to contribute to the social, economic, political, spiritual wellbeing of societies, and be at peace with self and others.

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CHAPTER 6. AGEING AND CHANGING COMMUNITY DYNAMICS IN AFRICA



Antony Ong'ayo Otieno

Introduction

African is a continent that constantly draws global attention for all kinds of human and natural disasters. In recent years however Africa has been undergoing significant societal transformation partly due to increased interconnectedness of global dynamics with local realities. The dynamism within the continent has led to significant leaps from the impact of colonialism and the decades of dictatorship and political instability. The continent has shown enormous resilience to the impact of the global economic crisis with a number of countries currently experiencing impressive economic growth rates of 5% and above. A growing middle class accompanies the observed growth, though with varying degrees in different countries. The noted economic growth is also linked to a change in population structure in terms of the number of youth and elderly, health status and level of education.

Demographically, life expectancy in Africa has seen a jump from 50 years in 2000, to 57 in 2012, compared to the global average of 70 (WHO, 2012). Mortality rates in Africa have not gone down but the local dynamics in Africa are further driven by population growth with studies showing a more youthful population (Young, 2005). While previous studies largely focused on the factors influencing demographic changes in Africa namely: poverty, lack of basic necessities, disease, drought, famine, floods and

conflicts, another strand of literature started to also give attention to ageing (Bigala & Ayiga, 2014; Apt, 2012; Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011; Oppong, 2006; Adamchak, 1989). Elderly care however has only received limited focus. The impressive economic growth and increasing life expectancy currently witnessed in many stable African countries need not overshadow the challenges of ageing as an important demographic feature in contemporary Africa. The family unit has been an important safety net in Africa, but currently faces enormous pressures from tendencies linked to modernization and urbanization. Urbanization in rural areas and rural-urban migration (Remi et al., 2014) have brought new challenges with regards to the care for the elderly in the context of marginalization, the increasing gap between rich and poor and between different localities in the same polity.

Part of this process started much earlier with the commodification of labour and the colonial labour legacy, which forced many young persons to leave rural areas for settler farms (Ong'ayo et al. 2013). Current mobility patterns are influenced by both push and pull factors (Remi et al. 2014) like economic decline and poverty in rural areas. In attempts to escape from poverty, and find means to support their families, large numbers of young people in Africa are leaving the rural areas in search of better opportunities in cities and other countries. This has also been dubbed the intergenerational 'migration contract' between a migrant and his or her parents, in which the (usually male) migrant moves and sends remittances in expectation of a subsequent inheritance (Black et al. 2006 p45). Migration studies also point to the socio-cultural and economic development implications of migration (Riccio, 2008; Adepoju, 2002), in relation to rural depopulation and reduced manpower for agricultural production.

In recent times rural-urban migration has led to the abandonment of elderly parents without safety nets that cushion them from the impact of globalization. The family structure which has been a bedrock of care and support in the African context is fast disintegrating as many communities experience enormous pressures to cope with threatened livelihoods linked to unemployment, climate change and food insecurity. Those that have left rural areas for cities increasingly adopt new cultures in what has been described as globalization of cultures (Nederveen, 2004). Challenges with blind aping or adoption of new cultures without reflection has since put many African urbanites at a cross roads due to their inability to completely de-Africanize and westernize at the same time. The social-cultural crises in Africa is further exacerbated by a failure to adapt valuable practices from both worlds. These dynamics have implications of how traditional values and family systems on care for the elderly are viewed in Africa.

In this paper we seek to provide an overview of the ageing situation in Africa. The paper further examines the challenges and opportunities for addressing current and future needs in elderly care in the continent. It uses

the legacy of Marga Klompé (van Reisen & Borgman, 2012) on ethical approaches to Health Care as its philosophical underpinning in order to derive complementary values and practices of care from other cultures in the context of globalisation. This perspective brings to the fore the questions of gender and masculinity in the area of ageing and care within specific national and cultural contexts. Part of the data used in this paper is derived from a study that examined the health sector activities of Dutch-based diaspora organisations (Ong'ayo, 2014). This is augmented by excerpts of two interviews conducted with a Dutch-based Ghanaian diaspora who has taken a number of elderly care initiatives in Ghana and an elderly person in Kenya who has been dealing with challenges of care in the absence of family and institutionalized forms of care in a rural setting.

This paper is structured as follows: Part one presents a critical assessment of ageing and changing family structures and community dynamics in Africa. This is important for understanding the kind of social changes currently taking place in Africa and how they impact on traditional care and safety nets for the elderly. Part two examines issues at stake in ageing and elderly care in Africa in terms of cultural and socio-economic conditions and the political, institutional and policy response to ageing and care. Part three discusses how challenges in ageing and care in Africa can be addressed through innovations that are contextually and culturally relevant, economically viable, sustainable and humane. The final part presents a set of reflection points with implications for policy and intervention

Critical assessment of ageing and changing family structure in Africa

In 2013, the population in Africa topped 1 billion people with the expectation of an annual average increase of 2%. A large proportion of this population consist of young persons at 46.2% (table1). Life expectancy has also changed significantly from a low 52 years in 1990 to 57 in 2010. By 2030 it is projected to reach 63 years (UNDESA, 2012). Female life expectancy in the same period stood at 53 and 57 respectively. The elderly population in Africa was estimated at 36 million in 2010. It is projected to increase by 10% in 2015 (UNDESA, 2012). As table 1 shows, the population in the 65+ brackets constituted 3.6% of the total continental population. North Africa and Southern Africa recorded the highest old age at 5.1% and 4.9% respectively. East and West Africa both had 3.2%. Central Africa had the lowest number of elderly persons at 2.9%. In 2015, the total African population above 65 years of age will be about 102,000. Current old age dependency is about 6.2% and it is expected to reach 7.0% in 2030. Urbanisation in Africa has also rapidly increased from 14.7 in 1950 to 36.2% in 2000 (UNDESA, 2012). These demographic changes generate new

challenges in terms of care for the elderly. This is more so in the context of a lack of data on the actual situation in rural areas, and inadequate institutional and policy preparedness.

Table 1. Population by age groups - continents and sub regions as at July 2013

Age	0-14	15-44	45-64	65+	Total
World	1,864,072,480	3,292,837,689	1,406,651,977	566,451,615	7,130,013,761
Africa	435,599,165	494,601,127	124,903,796	39,632,587	1,094,736,675
Eastern Africa	149,220,753	156,019,657	34,071,329	11,074,205	350,385,944
Middle Africa	60,212,613	59,378,390	13,173,239	3,947,057	136,711,299
Northern Africa	67,985,151	106,110,669	34,728,479	11,191,548	220,015,847
Southern Africa	17,786,005	29,193,003	9,076,738	2,881,720	58,937,466
Western Africa	140,394,643	143,899,408	33,854,011	10,538,057	328,686,119

Source: UNDESA (2012)

These challenges are further exacerbated by the social changes currently taking place in Africa especially at the family level. From a livelihoods perspective (Chambers & Conway, 1992) the family unit in Africa has been central in providing for all needs. These directly relate to the capabilities, assets and activities that enable them to secure livelihoods, health, and means of living through participation in the economic sphere. Through these activities, the family is guaranteed security in terms food, nutrition, health, water, shelter and education. Struggles by many families to address these factors thus become one major cause of the disintegration of the family unit. Consequently, the struggles are reshaping at the same time being reshaped by new roles that family members have to play including children and the elderly.

Changes in the way the contemporary African family functions have implications for care practices that are embedded in values and practices that have sustained communities for years. Values have been a critical component of traditional care safety nets in case of illness and disability. Historically, the role of the elderly in African society has been that of a mentor, counsellor, mediators in conflict situations and a safety net of support to grandchildren. In recent years the elderly, especially grandmothers, have become the primary carers for grandchildren in the context of AIDS related deaths of their own children. This situation raises the question about who takes care of the care of the elderly caregivers (Beilsma & Asio, 2013). In situations where there are surviving children, the elderly have traditionally been cared for within the family unit. It is for this reason that many African countries still lacking institutionalised forms of elderly care. However, as the family unit is

disintegrating under the pressures of globalisation, as well as local social and economic transformation, new or alternative forms of care become necessary.

As a result of the noted transformations and disintegration of the family unit, many elderly people in Africa are experiencing different kinds of abuse. Firstly because the role of the elderly is losing value compared to previous times when old age was revered and treated with respect. Secondly, the loss of these values has also informed the emerging abusive treatment of the elderly in African today. An example is the unorthodox interpretation of culture in ways that perceive the aging conditions such as dementia as witchcraft (Boatemah, 2012). Such perceptions and ignorance have led to physical abuse of the elderly including, ostracism and physical removal from the vicinity of the community. Other forms of elderly abuse include sexual, emotional and financial abuse (Bigala, & Ayiga, 2014). Observations in Ghana suggest that even in cases where children are highly educated and have means, elderly parents still encounter neglect (physical and emotional) as a result of claimed modern influence and perceptions about dementia as sign of witchcraft. Many middle classes in urban areas are less inclined to have their elderly parents living with them in their modern house in the cities. These conditions have given the impetus for alternative forms of care including home services by professionals even though these services are still under developed.

The family unit in the majority of African communities plays an important role in the economic sphere. This relates to production, which has a collective dimension. This entails collective participation in productive activities and in care of members of the family. Changes in mode of production has a significant impact on the socio-economic aspects of community life. This is more so in the context of agrarian and land reforms that have disrupted land ownership and production but also the conflicts that have emerged as a result of competition for scarce resources. Adding more complexity to the function of the family unit and its struggles with care is climate change, which has affected agricultural production, especially in rural areas where households rely on subsistence farming. Low agricultural productivity also impacts on a major source of livelihood as well as from a nutrition and health point of view.

The failure of many countries to facilitate the integration of all parts of the polity into the national, and consequently global economy continues to marginalise large populations from sources of livelihoods. A shift to a more market oriented economic system has left many households in vulnerable situations since a majority cannot participate in the modern economy due to lack of education and the necessary skills. For families that have managed to send children to school, employment opportunities are scares hence the safety net role of children in most African communities is in jeopardy.

Socio-economic conditions at the family level thus have a significant impact on families and by extension the elderly who rely on the safety nets for survival in the absence of state provided institutionalised care.

Issues at stake in aging and elderly care in Africa

As the demographic structure changes in Africa there is still limited understanding of the demographics of aging in terms of well-documented patterns and trends influencing factors and implications (box 1). This includes the social welfare, health status and conditions of disability of older people and patterns of change and care that the elderly require. The first critical issue relates to the limited comprehension of traditional care and social support mechanisms that can still serve as models to be upgraded and up-scaled in order to reach poor segments. Such models could be fused with modern approaches in order to tap into values and practices that informed care. This is more imperative in an era of high costs of giving care. State provided care might not be the long-term solution, but coming with a middle way is likely to be confronted by the fading away of the valuable traditional care practises as many people aspire to adopt modern lifestyles including western models of care.

Box 1. Issues on aging and care

- Social welfare
- Health care
- Housing an environment
- Food and Nutrition
- Support services
- Culture, value and practices
- Technological input
- Education and training

A second critical issue relates to the socio-economic conditions that underpin living, health and care in Africa. The patterns of demographic change in Africa further requires an in-depth understanding of influencing factors as the precondition for developing appropriate responses. The socio-economic conditions influence the overall social welfare of the elderly. This includes such aspects as secure livelihoods, healthy living, environment and capacities for mitigating the challenges that come with aging in contemporary times. A third important issue is the political condition in the local context. Many African countries have experienced conflicts of different kinds and a significant number continue to undergo reconstruction, reconciliation and putting in place essential services. The political angle to aging and care also relates to the question of inclusivity or exclusivity in resource distribution. This is important in terms of resource allocation for the establishment of the necessary infrastructure for elderly care as well as the necessary space for collaboration between government and non-state actors (civil society and private sector). The political system is also critical for addressing such concerns as rights of the most vulnerable such as women, children and the elderly through appropriate institutional, policy and legislative frameworks. Political stability also plays an important enabling role for addressing societal

challenges.

The forth issue relates to the approach and interventions that seek to address aging and care in Africa in ways that takes into account the numerous challenges and opportunities in the continent. This concerns the questions of addressing elderly care in a context where there is increased interconnections to developments elsewhere without being fully integrated into the global systems. The increasing use of ICT in Africa, rapid flow of information and images, expose local populations to a broad spectrum of products and a consumerism mentality that require a certain level of socio-economic foundation. These influences include the use of products and technology for solutions to local problems. This situation gives the impetus for exploring new developments and knowledge that could address contemporary and future aging challenges in Africa

Addressing challenges in aging and care in Africa

In terms of political, institutional and policy response to aging and care, demographic shifts have implications for the development trajectory in any polity depending on how its various dimensions are managed. The main concerns are pressures on health and education systems, infrastructure and the conflicts that are likely to arise due to resource scarcity. However the health of a population is most important since it determines participation in all spheres of life, and consequently the productivity of individuals and society. In the context of the observed challenges caused by demographics changes in Africa the main concern is to what extent are the political, institutional and policy frameworks responsive to these transformations. The centrality of political will in shaping policy outcomes gives the impetus for interrogating the political establishment in Africa with regards to aging and care for the elderly. The policy and institutional response thus concerns issues such as facilities, service delivery and the continuous search for solutions that meet constantly shifting care needs.

Community-based care (Moetlo et al., 2011; Kangethe, 2010; Kidman et al., 2007) is not new to Africa. The approach is often presented as an alternative form of care but such practices have existed in Africa from time immemorial. The problem lies with its prescription without linking them to the values and practices that underpinned such approaches. These challenges thus call for rethinking hybridity (Gunaratnam, 2014) in approaching care in different cultures and contexts that are undergoing dramatic societal transformation. These dynamics further call for redefining the family unity, community values, gender roles and the traditional care practices that provided safety nets for members of the family including the elderly, women and children. Additionally a redefinition of gender roles is critical since

family situations are changing in Africa to the extent that roles are increasingly switching. More females are performing tasks that have been traditionally in male domains. At the same time men are also increasingly performing roles previously left for females. An example is a situation where a male is a widower or the only caregiver in a family environment that is predominantly female.

In the face of an increasing deteriorating state of the social safety nets in Africa what lessons can we learn from Marga Klompe's visionary approach to these issues in her time? What kind of inspiration can we derive from the temporality of her vision and pragmatism in the area of social security and elderly care? Looking at Marga Klompe's legacy as represented by the Social Security Bill, Elderly Homes Bill, Caravan Bill and her work in education, politics and religion is a stark reminder of the timelessness, unbounded and transcendent character of the values she stood for. Her legacy and the value she stood for are very relevant to both past and present Africa in which vulnerability is pervading every area of human dignity. This is more so in cases of persons that continue to experience conditions of socio-economic and political marginalisation.

Challenges facing Africa today are reminiscent of Marga's own time, hence it gives an impetus for rethinking the issues for which Marga Klompe stood. This ought to be approached from the perspective of reclaiming the values that have been lost or being lost in the process of modernisation, and increased consumerism and individualism; retaining the values and practices that are still relevant, adapting new practices of care bases on a principle of cross-cultural exchange, reciprocity and win-win scenarios. This imperative is informed by the increasing interconnectedness of people and places through basic human needs and de-territorialised forms of interdependency. The new challenges posed by aging in the context of contemporary transitions (aging and care in Europe and Aging, young population and care in Africa) are thus intertwined with global and local processes, hence responses need to tap into values and practices from both contexts while at the same time protecting human dignity through care that is humane.

Conclusion

In the context of globalisation and dominance of neo-liberal economic policies addressing aging and elderly care challenges in African will not be immune to external influences. The main concern is how the externally led interventions will pay attention to local context perspectives and knowledge and needs in the prescribed solutions. This concern calls for interrogating new ideas being proposed as part of on-going and future social and technological innovations. The on-going social and economic transformations in Africa will be accompanied by technological challenges and opportunities as part of new solutions, especially in the health and care

sector. The main players in the health sector from industry, to knowledge institutes and civil society will have to rethink their entry strategy but also how to develop products in line with local needs and capacities. Such an approach thus calls for innovations that are context and culturally relevant.

In addition, costs are always inherent in new innovations and the extent to which new innovations can be rolled out through mass production and use has to take into account the question of affordability. While this is a normal calculation within the entrepreneurial logic there is evidence that disregard for affordability of life saving products has ended up excluding the most vulnerable and needy segments of society. Innovative undertaking in the health sector are capital intensive and the framework for their product in and application vary significantly between developing and highly industrialised countries. Hence new ways of ensuring cost returns and affordability, and sustainability need to be factored into any initiative that seeks to address the aging and care challenges in Africa. From an ethical perspective, and drawing on Marga Klompe's philosophy on humane care, innovations that target developing countries should align their concerns over costs and profit motives with humane dimensions of the end use of their products. At the same time users in the targeted contexts need to be made aware of the interests and costs that underpin innovations and interventions. Users of products and services could be included in measures that target the sustainability of systems, products and services if their needs are the focus.

The observed dynamics in Africa might present a bleak picture, but given a different angle, they also present opportunities, which can complement the on-going social and economic transformations. First, these challenges present an opportunity for rethinking care in Africa and the significance of combining approaches that borrow from valuable sides of global interconnectedness. Secondly the challenges present opportunities for reviving creativity and innovation in Africa and to up-scaling successful models. Combining models that include social enterprise inherently address the concerns about returns on investment, and sustainable interventions through local input. Such a framework taps into the added value of multi-stakeholder approaches in care, leading to reciprocity and win-win outcomes.

Marga's ideals of humanity, justice, and emancipation of women further serves as a reminder to the fundamental issues that need to underpin all kinds of intervention. Political systems, institutional, policy and legislative frameworks that address aging and care need to be underpinned by certain values that orient interventions towards more humane forms of care. This touches on the rights of the elderly, caregivers and more so the position of women as caregivers and persons that deserve care on equal measure. Science and technology also stands to serve humanity if innovations are informed by humane values. In the case of aging and elderly care in Africa, innovations based on actual needs and input from the targeted groups need

to pay attention to resilience in Africa. Solutions informed by local perspectives and experiences have the potentials to provide a framework for sustainability of innovations and interventions and return on investments. The design of interventions if informed by values will inherently address ethical and moral concerns and consequently the realisation of humane care. Such practices will require models of exchange and multi-stakeholder collaborations that facilitate reciprocity, and win-win outcomes

Interviews

Interview with Dorothy Boatemah,¹ Delft the Netherlands

Based on your family and professional experience with aging and care in Ghana what do you see as the major challenges for elderly care in Africa?

I became aware of elderly care challenges from my own family experience. My father was very ill and when taken to a hospital the substandard treatment he received compelled me to do something...It was a problem of lack of knowledge on the complications of old age and unpreparedness of health workers to handle palliative care.

What did you do then?

Upon returning to the Netherlands, I went back to study geriatrics and palliative care next to my regular work in a care home. With these tools I decided to organize skills training and awareness creation activities mainly targeting poor communities.

What kind of gaps have you observed in the last 6 years that you have been going back to share your skills and experiences from the Netherlands?

In the course of my involvement, which included participation in IOM's MIDA health programme, I experienced first hand the many gaps in the health care system...what I see as major challenges are absence of Government national health policies, inadequacy of essential medical policies; inappropriate education policy, poor public awareness and understanding on elderly care. I also noticed that people in need of palliative care have no rights yet many are in very vulnerable situations.

To what extent are current interventions addressing the needs you have observed over the years?

1. Ms Boatemah is a health worker in elderly care in the Netherlands. She is originally from Ghana where she has been involved in skills transfer in the area do elderly care and awareness creation on dementia. Ms Boatemah is also involved in lobbying the Ghanaian parliament to include elderly care in the health policy and service delivery

One important thing to note is that even though the concept of palliative care within Africa has its roots in the western models, we believe it must be adapted to African traditions, beliefs and cultures – all of which vary between communities and countries. Care should be provided, where possible by a multidisciplinary team, which includes community workers and traditional healers, as well as nurses, doctors and other health care professionals. Provision varies according to context, but Africa currently faces extremely restricted access to the multidisciplinary teams needed to deliver holistic palliative care tailored to each patient. Most health facilities have no palliative care teams, or health care providers working with different colleagues at different times. The reality is often simply a nurse and community volunteers, working with family members – an arrangement which is overwhelming for hard-pressed health care workers and inadequate for meeting patients’ needs.

What are your views on the role of women in relation to the aging and elderly care needs in Africa?

I believe we are all equal when it comes to our roles from the level of our families to our communities and the nation. In terms of community development African woman represent a potent force for change as custodians of family and community values and norms. The African woman is good in helping each other, building peace and harmony, and pushing for stable communities and neighbourhoods.

What are the challenges for women as caregivers and people who also need care in old age?

For us African migrant women what is important is to see ourselves as one group facing challenges of discrimination, abuse, marginalization, unemployment, deprivation, and many obstacles which block us from using our full potential and exercising our rights.

Interview with Mama Matilda Ong’ayo², Asembo, Kenya

How are you coping in your current conditions?

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2. Mama Matilda Ong’ayo is 87 years old widow living in East Asembo, Siaya County in Kenya. Three children out of ten and thirteen grandchildren survive her. Due to her advanced age, her care has become complex in the context of changing family circumstances. Her care is currently being arranged through a close network of her children and those of her twin sister who lives in close vicinity to her home.

I cannot complain much. For me it is even a dream that I am alive today. We grew up as orphans, and with my twin sister, we almost died because we lacked the necessary care after the death of our mother. But now I am 87 years I look back with disbelief...My twin sister is 87, my elder sister died at 92 and recently my only brother died at 93 years. I see this as a miracle because we came from a poor family. We could not finish primary school and got married so early. Life has been a struggle all through....but each one of us has brought up their children under difficult circumstance. Education was important for us even though we only managed class 4. That some children have gone to university is a miracle but also a dream to us.

What role has the family played in care and support for its members in the past?

When I was young, after the death of our mother, we had to live with some relatives but not everyone treated us well. A sister to our mother took us in and provided the care we needed till we started school. The family has always been important especially when children loose a parent. Grandparents or uncles or aunts will always take care. I have been close to my twin sister, and we have always supported each other. We also had friends in the village and took care of each other including children. Today many of you young people are living far away not like in the past. But you have to maintain contact, with people close to you.

Who provides you with every day care in areas that you cannot do yourself?

I have my children and not all of them are around every time. They have arranged for someone to help because not everyone in the village can help as before...people in the village are also struggling...besides my own children, my sister's children have been looking after me. They bring me to hospital; they pass by from time to time. You know that I cannot travel anymore, but the little miracle, the little telephone is enabling me to reach the children.... now you see why education is important... I can call the children, or ask for help... I can also read my medicine... those who are employed to help me are also not very efficient. Today people are not keen on things they do... we used to work from the heart, helping was not forced, it can form the heart and because of that we gave our best.

If there were a home for old people in the village or nearby city would you live there?

No... I have a home and a house here, I am getting too old...I don't want to be away too long. Even when the children send me for treatment in the city, I prefer to come back home to recover from here. You know these days everything is very expensive.... here I don't pay anything.... except food we eat.... I still have friends, my network is here and from time to time I get help from those close to me...in our tradition it is not possible for someone old like me to leave her home and stay in another home.

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**PART II – WOMEN’S
POLITICAL LEADERSHIP**

CHAPTER 7. THE STRUGGLE OF THE SOUTH SUDANESE WOMEN



Betty Achan Ogwaro

Introduction and Background

South Sudan is characterised by years of war, underdevelopment, famine, drought and flood that have produced a crisis of enormous proportions across the country. The overall demand for food production, security, basic health and social services, infrastructure, income generation and capacity building is overwhelming. In addition to the tragedy caused by the war, there is continued loss of many lives, lost opportunities, destruction of infrastructure, devastation of livestock and crops, and displacement of many families.

Before its independence on 9 July 2011, South Sudan was under the Sudan, then Africa's largest nation. Sudan was divided into northern (predominantly Muslim) and southern (predominantly Christian) administrative zones under British colonial rule. In 1955, before the declaration of the independence of the Sudan, South Sudanese chiefs requested to have a separate administrative section from that of the North, preferably under a Federal system of governance. This however did not happen and resulted into the 1955 Torit mutiny in then Southern Sudan. During this period women concentrated on caring for families and had little public life.

After independence (1956), the Sudanese government from the North took control over the South, leading to tensions and the emergence of the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM). The First Sudanese civil war (1955-1972) between the SSLM led by Lt General Joseph Lagu and the

government resulted in the suffering and many deaths of women and children, as well as mass displacement as refugees into neighbouring countries, especially Uganda, Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The 17 years of war ended with the signing of the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement in 1972. The agreement gave the then Southern Sudan relative political autonomy and control over land and resources.

In 1980, the government of the Sudan redrew the north-south administrative borders, including the oilfields in the north. In September 1983, the government implemented Sharia Law throughout Sudan. The introduction of Sharia Law affected women of the Sudan negatively. Many women, who were bread winners for their families through cottage industries and as roadside vendors, lost their businesses as women were not to be seen serving in public places. It took a mass campaign by women of both the South and North Sudan to bring women back into small trades, and to achieve amendments in the regulations. The introduction of Sharia law also provoked the emergence of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) under Col. John Garang, and led to the second civil war (1983-2005). An estimated 1.5 to 2 million people died as a result of the war and approximately 4.9 million were internally displaced or became refugees. The war ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, which included a clause about self-determination for the South (The Government of the Republic of South Sudan, 2005).

Women, politics and nation building

The participation of women in political and public affairs of South Sudan is a fairly recent phenomenon. This is partly due to the fact that, involvement in politics was, not seen as a woman's prerogative, a perspective that continues today. Traditionally South Sudanese women and men occupy different and unequal positions and power relations both within the family and society. Women are largely regarded as a source of wealth to the family (bringing in the bride price). They were denied education in favour of their brothers or male cousins. They were not allowed to speak in public as it was seen as disobedience to do so. They remained at home to help their mothers in doing the household chores, while mothers taught them the art of being a woman from cooking food to milking cows. However, as the war progressed the position of women soon began to change. Since the second half of the twentieth century, women in South Sudan have been able to venture into the political arena, business, and other occupations that were previously considered solely reserved for men.

Women's visibility in politics, however, though limited was evident in the Southern Sudan Regional Government established after the signing of the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972. For instance, some women from South Sudan joined the Women Socialist Union created during the Nimieri regime

(1969-1985) and some became members of Parliament. One woman (Hon Agnes Lokudu) became a governor of Central Equatoria State (1993-1995).

For the women of South Sudan, the most notable achievement was the acceptance by both the SPLM/A and the Government of Sudan of the inclusion in the CPA that, all levels of government of Southern Sudan shall: “promote women’s participation in public life and their representation at all levels of governance by at least twenty five percent as an affirmative action to redress imbalances created by history, customs and traditions [in accordance with Article 20, Sub article 4 paragraph (a)].” The item is further clarified in Article 58 (1) b and Article 112 (30) of the Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan (2005) and the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan (2011).

The women who worked hard for this article to be included in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Interim and Transitional Constitutions of Southern/South Sudan had a vision anchored in the values of gender equity and equality, social justice and fair representation. Women of South Sudan believe that a just and fair Sudan requires that all members of society (women and men, rich and poor, able and disable, advantaged and disadvantaged) are able to develop their full potential and contribute to, participate in and benefit from the political, social and economic life of the country. This provision is helpful as it assures women of the transformation of political structures and spaces, which are necessary for the viability of implementing equality-focused principles. Today, several women are playing parts in the Government of South Sudan in a variety of positions and roles. Such a small but important step is a big achievement for women to enter Parliament and Executive positions. Women in the Legislative Assembly have embraced affirmative actions for women being at least 25% of the total membership of the Legislative Assembly. Through their determination, today the women in South Sudan Legislative Assembly represent 31% of the total numbers of members

In 1986, women in the SPLM-controlled areas demanded a special unit in order to address women affairs. As a result, the position of Director for Women’s Affairs was created in 1989, later to be known as the Commission for Gender, Youth and Social Welfare. Out of this the Commission developed into being the Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare. However, it became challenging to keep women’s issues as a core and part of the public debate and action after the CPA was signed, and even more so after Independence (July 2011). Women seem to have lost the zeal they had during the war and have slipped back from being centre-stage, which they enjoyed during the war.

Although over the period of the war periods, 1955-1972 and 1983-2005, women were concerned about human rights abuses in the Sudan. After the signing of the CPA, women shifted their campaign to look at women’s

priorities and where they would position themselves in the Interim Southern Sudan post-CPA era in nation building. In 2005, Sudanese women met in Oslo, Norway and identified their priorities and presented these to the Donors Round Table (Sudanese Women's Priorities, 2005). Women realised that the affirmative action promised in the CPA was not reflected in resource flows or in the results of peace building and development. Women were not included in the meeting but worked their accreditation through Dr. John Garang. This gave them the opportunity to read the women's statement to the Donors and demanded that in the next round of the Donors Conference, women should be included in the official delegation.

In 2008 women met again in Oslo and identified the gap in financing for gender equality in the reconstruction period of the Sudan and South Sudan. Again they presented a paper to the Donors Conference requesting a part of the donation to be specifically allocated for financing for gender equality. Women of South Sudan struggled to occupy top ranks, especially in the fields of politics. Women are no longer physically unfit for military and police departments. We have women Police officers. Eastern Equatoria has shown us that women can excel in local government. Chief Magdalena Ihisa has been the head of chiefs in Eastern Equatoria State and has shown development in the traditional leadership. Yet, this inclusion of women in the peacekeeping institutions was not reflected in their political representation. This in turn led to inadequate funding allocations to areas to promote gender equality.

During the post-CPA period (2005-2011), women were optimistic that the priorities they presented to the Donors' conferences in Oslo (2005 and 2008) would make the critical stakeholders pay attention to the voices of women so as to ensure an improvement in the lives of the women of South Sudan but little was attained. Taking ownership and consolidating the gains; ensuring that the promises are met; allowing women to be part and parcel of the democratic space and governance processes of the government of South Sudan; and keeping women's issues core and part of the public debate and action were increasingly confronted by competing government and donors priorities, providing real dilemmas to the women's movement of South Sudan.

As female literacy on the whole is on the rise, women in South Sudan have now become more aware of their rights as individuals and they are now opting for higher positions at work at the same time aiming to be perfect housewives at home. There are now many examples of women making major contributions to the national life of their states. Women managed to rise to the position of a Governor (Gemma Nunu 2007-2010; Nyandeng Malek Deleich was elected in 2010 in Warrap State and has remained in office to date); and Parliamentary Speaker (Hon Sabina Dario was elected in Eastern Equatoria 2007-2010). However these women met with resistance from men

and also so often from fellow women too.

Continued pressure by women on the Presidency has seen women heading foreign missions. On 7 March 2012, South Sudan's President, Salva Kiir, issued four decrees announcing 90 ambassadors to be deployed throughout the world in various diplomatic and foreign services posts. Presidential Decree No. 18/2012, No. 19/2012, No. 20/2012, and No. 21/2012 appointed 10 Grade (1), 43 Grade (2) and 37 Grade (3) ambassadors. Out of the total of 90 ambassadors, nine were women: three from Grade (2) and six from Grade (3). This only represents 10% of ambassadors being women, most of whom are Grade (3). (Sudan Tribune, 2012)

Similarly, women also progressed and became Chairpersons of Commissions, Under Secretaries and heads of political Parties. These are positions normally accorded to men. Women continued to work hard to gain places in Parliament, the Executive, Judiciary, as administrators, officers, entrepreneurs, doctors, engineers, and almost in all spheres of activity contributing to social transformation and nation building. Although gender equality in its real sense is still far from being achieved.

During the interim period (2010-2011) there was an increase in the number of women in decision-making positions of the former Government of Southern Sudan. But this did not come easily. Women groups and civil societies played a big role in campaigning for the fulfilment of the Constitution's article 16 mentioned above. The women's critical mass campaign for the implementation of the minimum 25% quota representation, which was gladly joined by some men, resulted into the "Women Only" seats known in the Parliament as the Women List. This accorded 25% of the Parliamentary seats for women. Having achieved representation in Parliament, women were then faced with the challenge of taking leadership positions at all levels. For example, in 2009, women in the Legislative Assembly in Juba moved a motion for the Executive to implement the 25% minimum representation. This move saw men displaced from the National Assembly and the 25% quota implemented in the 10 State government Executives. Furthermore, after the elections of 2010, women attained 33% representation in the Parliament (25% came from the Women List, 3% from the Party List and 5% from the geographical List). However, women were initially appointed to only 24% of the positions of Chairpersons of the Specialised Committees. They were assigned to 26% of the positions as Deputies to the chairpersons.

After a tough negotiation with the Speaker of the House, Rt Hon James Wani Igga, a breakthrough was achieved and women were accorded more seats in the leadership of the Assembly, which then brought their representation to 29%. This consistency in demand set a precedent and now women enjoy 25 % of seats in the executive at all levels of governments.

There is still a great imbalance in the appointment of leaders such as Ministers, Ambassadors and Head of Commissions. The current constitution is very clear about the representation of women but the problem is in its implementation and the political will to implement the provisions.

Another of the achievements of women is the outcome of the Referendum for self-determination that counted on the numeric superiority of women (52% of voters were women) and the roles that they played to ensure that communities came out to vote peacefully. South Sudanese women withstood the consequences of armed conflict and continued to be the social glue keeping a community together at times where its leaders differ fiercely and sometimes brutally.

Women's participation in War and Peace-building

Women in the armed forces

The women of South Sudan played an instrumental role in the country's liberation struggle and will continue to make sure their voices ring loud and clear. Women participated in many fronts, besides taking care of families: nursing wounded soldiers, and preparing food for soldiers, even serving in the front line. During the 1st armed conflict (1955-1972), which ended with the Addis Ababa Agreement in 1972, women's participation in war and other types of violent conflict was quite invisible. During the SPLM war, the then Southern Sudanese women became the backbone of the liberation struggle in the Sudan. They fought alongside men at the war front during the 21 years of struggle for equality, democracy and peace in the Sudan. Since 1984 women became actively involved in the SPLM and created the Girls' battalions (Katiba banat). Today many women are officers in the Army.

Women at the Peace Negotiation Tables and Peace building

Women of South Sudan have a varied and long history of working towards peace and the betterment of women's position in society. Women used their lobbying skills to make their voices on peace heard in several forums. For years Sudanese women's groups and civil society have been involved in community peace building and advocacy among the communities. They also lobbied for inclusion in the formal peace negotiations.

In 1995 Sudanese women made their voices heard at the UN World Women's Conference in Beijing and at the UNIFEM-Carter Peace dialogue in Nairobi. The Joint Assessment Mission for Sudan (JAM) offered the opportunity for greater participation as it sought to identify those structures,

policies and practices, which would help perpetuate patterns of disadvantages and inequalities for women and men. UNIFEM provided the lead in mainstreaming gender issues into the JAM process. Gender analysis, as a methodology for the JAM, began at the level of the household by considering ways in which women and men participate differently in the household economy and in society. It also sought to identify structures (institutional, political and social), policies and practices, which act to perpetuate patterns of women's and men's disadvantages and inequalities. In articulating the primary responsibilities of the government, the obligation of "ensuring the protection of the rights and interests of the people in Southern Sudan" is important for women.

In 2000, a coalition of Sudanese and international human rights and women's groups created a shared vision for a future transitional government in the Sudan expressed as the Second Declaration on Human Rights, Democracy and Development in the Transitional Sudan.

Despite the involvement of women's groups in peace activism, women were not included in the negotiations of the CPA, which were completely controlled by military forces. Consequently, the agreement does not contemplate gender concerns and, instead, specifically protects customary law, which is often detrimental to women's rights. To address this, women held several meetings and workshops that were convened to identify gaps and women's priorities. These meetings included the Yei Women's Conference in March 2005; Nairobi Women's Consultation meeting in March 2005; Oslo Women Symposium in May 2005 pre-Donors Conference; Sudanese Women Consultative meeting in Kampala July 2005; Oslo Women's Symposium in May 2008 pre-Donors Conference and many other consultative meetings.

Although the CPA did not adequately address gender equality, it was more inclusive of women than previous peace negotiations. The recognition of the ability of women in Mediation was achieved first in 2006, when the Government of Southern Sudan appointed two women (Hon Betty Achan Ogwaro and Hon Mary Nyaolang) out of five in the peace Mediation Team negotiating a peace settlement between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

Internal Conflict of December 2013

Ever since the conflict broke out in South Sudan on 15 December 2013, women's organisations have tirelessly been advocating for peace. This has led to both sides actually having women representatives at the peace talks. The women campaigned towards the government quoting the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 which explicitly called for all parties in the conflict to respect women's rights, and to support their participation in peace negotiations and post conflict reconstruction, as well as on South Sudan

Constitution's provision of 25% minimum representation of women at all levels. South Sudan has made steps towards the development of a 1325 National Action Plan (NAP) and the Parliament has passed ratification of CEDAW.

As early as 20 December 2013, just 5 days after the recent crisis broke out, women leaders and other women civil society actors called for peace in South Sudan. They made a press statement condemning the crisis. They called upon President Salva Kiir to restore peace and stability in the country, and they called on the SPLM in opposition to lay down their arms. Women met in the capital Juba and later in Kampala, Nairobi and in New York, U.S, to mobilize for an end to the conflict and for women's participation in peace negotiations. When the African (AU) summit took place in Addis Ababa 21-31 January, the women also gathered there, releasing a statement that addressed these issues as well as the need for the protection of women and children. In the US, women lobbied the Troika – Norway, UK and U.S – and the seven-member East African regional bloc Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). A ceasefire was brokered on 23 January 2014. Peace talks then resumed in Addis Ababa on 11 February. Women went further to meet the IGAD Chief Negotiator, Seyoum Mesfin, Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Borge Brende, the delegation of the government of South Sudan and other important actors in the peace process.

The government initially thought it was not important to include women on the team. According to Makuei Lueth, the government spokesperson, said, "What is important is not the gender representation but what is important is the achievement of the objective" (Marthe van der Wolf, VOA 16 January 2014). Governor Clement Wani said, in a meeting of the three Equatoria States, it was not yet time to include women because the situation was still too harsh for women. However, women strongly objected to this statement. As a result of the advocacy by South Sudanese women and international pressure there are now three women on the government side. Despite all these changes, women's role as negotiators, mediators, signatories or even witnesses remained notably low.

Internally Displaced and Refugee Women

The majority of refugees and displaced are women, children and older people. Women refugees and displaced persons encounter gender-specific constraints. Women face difficulties in accessing their homes, land and property rights in South Sudan. South Sudanese women like many women in war situations suffer gruesome journeys as they flee from the war zone. Sometimes they struggle with sickness and diseases on the way. Children die and they have no alternative but to bury and leave their children in shallow graves and move on. On arrival in a new destination they struggle with homelessness in their new locations or host countries. Often women

refugees or IDPs have to develop coping mechanisms to survive. They struggle with learning new languages and culture. Lack of access to routine care puts pregnant women and their babies at risk. Women at the camp struggle to survive, including in fetching water and looking for firewood. They often walk long distances even while pregnant, which increases the risk of complications. They are vulnerable to sexual assault while in the bush collecting firewood, with it risk of unwanted children and diseases such HIV/AIDS.

Obstacles to women's participation in political and public life

South Sudanese women's involvement in politics and public life face numerous challenges which include socio-cultural, low educational status, class, family background, ethnic and regional variations, economic, etc. Women themselves become obstacle to their cause. In fact women became more confused and started working as small groups instead of working together. Disparity became clearer when the crisis of December 2013 occurred. There is a gap between the women at the negotiating table and the rest of the women back home. Women have voiced their concern about the lack of communication between themselves and women at the negotiation tables.

Funding for gender activities

One of the difficulties South Sudanese women face is funding their struggle, thus South Sudanese women have voiced the need for opportunities, empowerment, participation and inclusion of women in the establishment of legislative and constitutional systems. The gender symposium held on the eve of the Oslo Donors Conference in 2008 produced a common set of priorities and recommendations for funding for gender activities (The Sudan Consortium, 2008), but so far women still struggle to fund their activities.

Low educational status of women

The low educational status of women in South Sudan has often been used as an excuse not to appoint women to high positions, thus reducing the chances for women competing for leadership positions. 53% of women have had no formal education and only 37% have attained primary/junior level education. Several factors contribute to such a high illiteracy rate among women, including the consequences of over 50 years of civil war (1955-2005) as well as cultural perceptions that undervalue girls and women's education. With poor social services the gaps in health provision are also high. The war

impacted greatly on the physical and psychological wellbeing of over 60% of women and girls (Southern Sudan Centre for Census, 2010).

Lack of knowledge of the negotiation and mediation peace talks

One of the excuses that men have used to keep women away from the negotiation table is their low educational status and lack of knowledge of negotiation and mediation peace talks. Arguably, men face the same problem but this is normally not considered. Women of South Sudan have organised to attend negotiation and mediation training sessions but such capacity building is far from sufficient to equip women to stand up to the challenges posed by men.

Lack of coordination of various women's initiatives

During this current crisis, which started in December 2013 in South Sudan, it became evident that despite the gains made during the SPLM/A war, women have slipped back into their heterogeneous groups. Differences based on educational achievement, financial situation, age, marital status, political party affiliation, ethnic and regional affiliation, religion, and other forms of social difference started to emerge. These social differences in turn shape and influence women's decisions, their chances, and the choices they make regarding their participation in political activities and public life at large. Currently, there is a lack of proper coordination of the various initiatives for women. This hinders their ability to consolidate their efforts so as to reach a consensus through a dialogue that would enable alternative messages to be developed, which may be critical for sustainable peace.

Cultural Practices and Perceptions

Cultural practices and perceptions in South Sudan view women as suited only for domestic responsibilities, while involvement in politics is seen as the domain of men. A Sudanese rural woman, for example, gets up at five o'clock in the morning to walk up to five kilometres, just to bring 20 litres of water. After the long walk she would spend another five hours working on the family farm, and would then come home to make the family meal.

This represents a major obstacle to women's participation in politics and other public affairs. In addition, a number of communities in South Sudan encourage early, forced, and/or arranged marriages. Such practices limit women's chances to continue education, which would allow them to pursue careers in politics and other professions.

When requesting the 30% minimum participation of women in decision-making, Dr. John Garang commented that “women are the marginalized of the marginalized whose suffering goes beyond description”, according to minutes of a meeting of the SPLM Secretariat of Information (1994). Customary laws in the South also have influenced the role of women in public life, in particular political participation. The existing customary laws make it harder for women to escape the bondage of domestic roles, which relegated them to the status of second-class citizens. It is true that under customary law women are valued and respected as mothers. They are also valued and cherished as daughters because they are expected to bring wealth to the family upon marriage. Women are also seen as guardians of culture and traditions and are charged with imparting cultural values to the younger generation. However, this accord of respect is not usually complemented by many other parts of customary law as they pertain to women’s lives. Aspects of the law are sometimes used to marginalize women’s voices and rights, as well as to justify women’s exclusion from political participation and decision-making processes.

Women themselves

South Sudanese women themselves have lost the zeal for fighting for their rights. Many times the progress women activists make is derailed by attitudes of other women who begin to dislike and/or feel reluctant to get involved in politics, having to get permission or approval from their husbands, or men from their communities, to do so. This is also seen in parliamentary discussions over contentious issues, even if the issue affects women. Women openly criticise their fellow women colleagues. Politically active women are sometimes labelled as “unfeminine,” “irresponsible wives,” “loose women,” “spoilors”, “ring leaders” or other derogatory terms.

South Sudanese women’s priorities

During the war women were particularly concerned with human rights abuses in South Sudan. However, after the CPA insufficient attention has been given to critical issues affecting women by both the government and development partners. A compilation of Sudanese women’s priorities taken from all the meetings held by the women from 2005 to 2010 found that every year women emphasized the same issues (ISIS-WICCE, 2013). The priorities in this booklet were developed to identify the key areas of concern for women of South Sudan including across age, livelihood, and political ideology.

The priorities of South Sudanese women are important because:

❖ WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN PEACE BUILDING

A new nation has its new diverse issues. Despite women's achievements during the war, new challenges impacting on their advancement continue to arise. Politics changes for the better when women are able to play their full part. There can be no real development without women;

Insufficient attention is given to critical issues affecting women;
It is important to remember the past in order to shape the future.

The key areas needing to be addressed are:

Peace and Security;
The elimination of gender based violence;
Basic social services;
Governance and the rule of law;
Economic empowerment and poverty reduction;
Institutional building.

The meetings included from which these concerns and priorities were collated include:

Yei women's Conference (March 2005),
Nairobi Consultation (March 2005);
OSLO Women's Symposium (pre-Donor's Conference); May 2005
Kampala consultative meeting reflecting on Oslo Donor Conference; July 2005
OSLO Women's Symposium (pre-Donor's Conference) May 2008
Thereafter, several Juba Consultative workshops and Conferences (2006-2010)
Juba review of priorities April 2011

Participants included women leaders from the government, state administrations, women Parliamentarians, women groups and women actors from civil society.

Summary and Conclusion

South Sudanese women played a significant role in the war, fighting and supporting the multiple armed movements. Women also suffered sexual violence throughout the struggle. The trauma suffered as a consequence has remained largely unaddressed.

South Sudanese women play a central role in Sudanese society, in physical and psychological welfare as well as in conflict prevention, resolution and peace building. South Sudanese women play a role in shaping community life, assisting with fundraising when a member is in need, nurturing healthy families, raising future generations and providing for family needs. The efforts that Sudanese women put into building strong, vibrant and healthy communities should be recognised.

Despite the importance of women in communities, their post-conflict

status is among the lowest of all groups in South Sudan, regardless of ethnic background. The recent crisis in South Sudan has shifted the focus of donors and humanitarian actors to emergency response. It will be important not to lose sight of the importance of gender equality in this context too, as women become refugees or internally displaced persons.

There is still a long way to go for women throughout South Sudan to realize their rights, including for housing, land and property rights and to achieve durable solutions. Attention is needed to address the low literacy rate among women and girls, harmful traditions, customs, male domination and gender insensitivity of men, all of which act as barriers to women's active participation and being leaders in decision making.

In conclusion, so long as women are not uplifted and granted equal status with men in all walks of life – in political, social, economic, domestic and educational areas, progress in South Sudan will be slow. Despite the evident progress and opportunity for securing peace, development and women's empowerment, it is crucial to recognise that the struggles of South Sudanese women are not over and that the challenges ahead are immense and numerous.

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CHAPTER 8. REVOLVING REVOLUTIONS: THE INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN PEACE BUILDING IN NEPAL AFTER THE WAR



Susan Sellars-Shrestha and Leena Rikkila Tamang

The story of Yogmaya

Any story about women and peace building in Nepal must start with the story of Yogmaya Neupane, whose integrity and courage is still inspiring women today. Born in the 1860s, Yogmaya Neupane was widowed soon after becoming a child bride. She remarried – three times – breaking all kinds of social taboos.

In the early 1900s, she became an ascetic and a religious leader, meditating in a cave and following strict austerity practices. Her teachings were against corruption and injustice and, in the dark days of the Rana regime, she championed the powerless and exploited, including women and Dalits (so-called ‘untouchables’). She fought against practices such as child marriage, dowry and sati. She condemned caste discrimination and demanded education for girls. Her’s was the first serious attack on social traditions. She attracted thousands of followers who called her *Shakti Maya* (Power Love).

In the early 1900s, Yogmaya submitted a list of demands for equality for the downtrodden and oppressed, including women, to the Rana Prime Minister, Chandra Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana. This led to the abolition of the practice of sati in 1920 (Neupane, 2001).

In 1936, not long after the death of Chandra Shumsher, Yogmaya travelled to the capital to meet with his successor Juddha Shumsher Rana, who came to the holy temple of Pashupatinath in Kathmandu to seek her blessing. Juddha Shumsher gave Yogmaya a plate of gold coins, which she refused asking only for the creation of a humane state. He agreed, but after she returned home to Bhojpur in the east of Nepal, Juddha Shumsher sentenced her and four others to death.

In 1940, Juddha Shumsher arrested Yogmaya and four other activists, whom he labelled revolutionaries. Yogmaya was jailed, but released a few months later. The four others were executed.

On 14 July 1941, Yogmaya waded into the Arun River in defiance of the repression of what she saw as an inalienable truth – that we are all equal. Sixty-seven of her followers waded in after her and were washed away. Their deaths lifted their truth up high, above politics, and gave it immortality, so it could no longer be denied (Republica, 2007; International IDEA et al., 2011; Aziz, 2001).

Revolving revolutions

Since the time of Yogmaya Neupane, Nepal has seen many revolutions – all promising inclusion and with the stated aim of ending oppression. In the 1950s, the people of Nepal lived under the autocratic Rana regime. The Ranas came to power after a coup and ruled as Prime Ministers, keeping the Shah Kings as powerless figureheads. The Rana regime banned education for anyone other than the ruling classes and reinforced a feudal system that kept the people poor and the elites rich. The regime was brutal and the people were oppressed mercilessly.

This regime was toppled in 1951 by revolutionaries who trained across the border in India, under the auspices of the 'Nepali National Congress', the precursor to the Nepali Congress party, Nepal's first political party and the largest mainstream party to this day. Most of the soldiers in this army were Gorkhas who had returned from World War II – some of them educated in India (Darjeeling and Sikkim) and even Myanmar. The revolutionary army took the major Terai towns one by one, toppling each feudal lord and eventually marching on the capital. The Ranas yielded before the army reached Kathmandu (Edingo, 2010).

The mood of the time was pro-change. There was a new world order after World War II; colonial powers and oppressive regimes were being replaced by democratic governments on every continent. Hence, the revolutionaries of the Nepali Congress were labelled 'freedom fighters' and their cause considered just.

A new constitution was promulgated and democracy was trialled in 1951, but the new regime was reluctant to give women the right to vote. Nepali women who had actively participated in the movement against the Rana

regime were being cut out of participating in the new government – or even voting for the new government (International IDEA et al., 2011). But the women who had watched the revolution from their houses and kitchens, and many who had participated in it, would not be silenced. The seed had been planted by Yogmaya Neupane and others and women were aware that there could be a different life for them. They staged a demonstration and sent a delegation to meet with the Prime Minister, who was compelled to grant them voting rights. In the first municipal elections in 1951, the Nepali people voted for the first time – and women proudly cast their vote and ran as candidates (International IDEA et al., 2011).

Political women of Nepal

Mangala Devi Singh: Early leader of the women's movement

Mangala Devi Singh (1925–1996) was one of the women who went to Prime Minister Padma Shamsher demanding equal voting rights for women. She led the democratic faction of Nepal Mahila Sangh, an organisation established to work for women's rights. The women of Nepal Mahila Sangh united against the Rana regime, visited political activists who had been jailed, carried letters to and from the jail, and educated women on politics. However, after democracy was established in 1950, these women were fragmented into different parties and lost their single platform. During her political career, Mangala Devi was imprisoned and tortured. She participated in Jana Andolan I (People's Movement) in 1990 and contested in the first parliamentary election after the restoration of democracy in Nepal.

Source: International IDEA et al. 2011; Pradhan 1996

Kamakshya Devi: Uniting women in one platform

Kamakshya Devi (1924–1987) believed that the tradition to limit women to domestic chores should be broken down. On meeting a fellow politician who was sentenced to death, she said, "Brother, I will not chew betel nut leaf until the work you have initiated for the country and the people is completed." With this oath she entered into politics. She believed that women should not be divided on the issues of women and accommodated women of disparate views. She established Nepal Mahila Sangh to unite all women for equality in the one platform.

Source: International IDEA et al. 2011

Unfortunately, the first exercise in democracy was brief and King Mahendra instituted the feudal Panchayat system of local government in 1962, in which women had little space or political voice. Inevitably, another

revolution took place a short time later in the form of the 1990s People's Movement (Jana Andolan I). This movement, which included many strong women, culminated in a march to the palace gates, where the people demanded democracy. King Birendra readily agreed and became a constitutional monarch. But what did this democracy bring? The same political families and the same Brahmin and Chhetri men divided up the power and the spoils. True equality and a functional democracy seemed far away and many looked back on the party-less Panchayat system with nostalgia citing that at least it was a functional form of decentralised local government.

A short 6 years later the Maoists started what would become a 10-year civil war in the Far West of Nepal. Their rally cry was again freedom from oppression and equal rights for women and the downtrodden. The people of the Far West of Nepal had suffered much due to poverty and had historically been neglected by the state. Much of the arable land in the Far West was owned by feudal lords, many of whom did not even live in the area, and farmed by local residents. When the land reforms promised during the 1990 revolution did not materialise, the people undertook their own reforms, declaring fields that they had farmed for generations to be their own. The army and police responded brutally with Operation Romeo in 1995 and Operation Kilo Sera II in 1998 (Bisht 2008). These operations played into the hands of the Maoist by radicalising the people of the Far West, the most forgotten region of Nepal, who readily took up arms, as much to defend themselves against the army and police as to fight for freedom. But the global mood had changed after 9/11 and these revolutionaries were labelled 'terrorists' by the government in Kathmandu and some western governments, including the United States of America. Indeed these new revolutionaries were fighting against a democratically elected government, not an autocratic regime, but these are labels that had little meaning for the farmers who found themselves still without access to the means of production and still without a voice in this new 'democracy'.

Women as Maoist combatants: Equality on the battlefield

In the 10-year civil war (1996–2006) by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) against the state, women fought beside male combatants on the battlefield for a 'new Nepal' that was to include women and people from disadvantaged and oppressed groups in political and social processes. The Maoist revolt was basically a revolt against oppression by the ruling classes and the Maoists rose to power on the promise of equality. You may get the feeling in reading this that history is about to repeat itself. You would not be far wrong; more than four decades after the Rana regime was toppled, little

had changed in rural Nepal. Although some argue that development indexes had started to improve in the 1990s and that the Maoist war interrupted this (Dixit 2011; Dixit and Ramachandran 2002), these pockets of development were mainly among the emerging middle class – precious little had changed at the bottom of the hierarchy. Early experiments in democracy in Nepal had proved to be simply new ways of justifying the use of power by the same power elites. Leaders in the capital wrestled with each other to lead the government; people in the Far West starved; people in the Terai produced, only to have their wealth exploited by those in the capital; people in the mountains of the North lived in isolation – nothing much changed.

Women’s political space in Nepal

After the 1990 revolution

Before the civil war between the Maoists and the state, although the women’s movement was strong, women had virtually no role as elected representatives. Sahana Pradhan was the only female minister in the 11-member interim coalition government formed after democracy was established in 1990 and there were no women in the 9-member Constitution Recommendation Commission. As a result, there was no space for women to participate in the making of the 1990 Constitution (Pathak and Pyakurel, 2008 cited in International IDEA et al., 2011). Women were once again deprived of their political rights – despite having fully participated in the revolution that established democracy in 1990. Accordingly, after the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990 was promulgated, nearly 100 laws that discriminated against women continued in force (International IDEA et al., 2011). Women’s participation in the House of Representatives between 1991 and 1999 ranged from 3 to 6%, a dismal reward for their efforts in the fight for democracy (Didi Bahini, 2008, cited in International IDEA et al., 2011).

Besides central level politics, women have also been active at the local level. In 1997, the laws governing local bodies/elections (The Decentralization Act 1982, Village Development Committee Act 1992 and District Development Committee Act 1992) were amended (Government of Nepal 1997) to ensure women’s participation in local government. As a result, 44,120 women were elected to local bodies (municipalities and VDCs) in 1997, an increase from a mere 217 in 1992 (National Women’s Commission 2008, cited in International IDEA et al., 2011). The fact that this number of women (although less than 10% overall) gained political experience is significant in the political landscape of Nepal. It is also important to note that this ‘win’ for the women’s movement was possible only because of a legislative framework for the political inclusion of women.

Sahana Pradhan: Leader of the 1990 revolution and government minister

Sahana Pradhan (born 1941) fought against the Rana regime for the right to education for women. In the 1951 revolution she played a key role in mobilising women against the regime. She was detained in the army barracks in 1961 for participating in the democratic movement and expelled as a teacher during the Panchayat era for staging a protest against the party-less Panchayat system. Sahana Pradhan then led the United Left Front during the historic People's Movement of 1990 and went on to hold the portfolio of Minister for Industry and Commerce in the interim government. She went on to serve in the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, and Ministry of Women and Social Welfare. After Nepal was declared a republic, she served as Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Source: Prabhat 1996, cited in International IDEA et al. 2011; Republica 2014

Women in the Maoist movement: A paradigm shift

Women's liberation was one of the key agendas of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and women were given positions in the party and as combatants in the People's Liberation Army. Rural women, many of whom were facing extreme forms of discrimination and violence, left the villages and joined the Maoist movement by the thousands. The armed conflict redefined women in Nepal. Many young women realised for the first time that they could hold a gun, live in the camps with the men and fight on the battlefields. With 15% women in its political wing, 35% in the military wing, and 40% in the state and militia (Chand 2010, cited in International IDEA et al., 2011), women formed a critical mass in the Maoist movement. Despite this, women were glaringly absent "in peace dialogues and negotiation committees that brought the war to an end", which "reflects the patriarchal mindset and disapproval of women as leaders" (International IDEA et al., 2011, p 22). As explained by International IDEA in its publication 'Women members of the Constituent Assembly: A study on the contribution of women in constitution making in Nepal':

The significant participation of women and their important role in the Maoist war helped overcome traditional images and roles associated with Nepali women, and changed Nepali society's perception of women. To a certain extent, this has helped to overcome social and religious norms and values that view women's core responsibility as to engage in household chores, give birth and raise children. Values that segregated certain work for men were also torn down. (International IDEA et al., 2011, p 44)

Hemanti Syanda's story: Life as a woman in the People's Liberation Army

Hemanti was 16-years old when she joined the women's wing of the People's Liberation Army in 2002. She had heard about Maoist ideas from a Maoist woman who had come to her village and spoken about gender and caste-based discrimination. "I immediately understood her as we witnessed the same problems every day around us. Then I decided I wanted to be a part of that movement", says Hemanti.

Hemanti became an Area Committee Member. Instead of fighting, she visited communities and talked about women and Dalits' rights and about the change that the Maoists wanted to bring about. She led a double life: during the day she lived in the traditional way, but at night she visited the surrounding villages. This posed a great danger to her family and the other villagers: "When the people in my village and my family found out that I was a Maoist they became very angry." Eventually, the police came to her village and burned down her family's house.

Hemanti was regularly trained for two or three days in a row. The topics included mostly political orientation and sometimes the use of weapons. It was a hard way of life: "We had to mistrust everybody because there were many army informants around. We did not know whether people were on our side or not. I carried a rifle and a hand grenade to defend myself, but I never had to fire a shot, even though I witnessed two battles." After three years in the movement, Hemanti was appointed vice president of the district's Maoist women's wing.

At one point, she realised she was pregnant. She had married when she was 14-years old and her husband was also with the Maoists. She was still visiting villages during the late stages of her pregnancy. One night, while coming back from a political event, she went into labour. The people around her were afraid to be in contact with her, a Maoist, so she had to give birth outside the village. She brought a plastic sheet and a knife into the woods. A girl from the neighbouring village joined her to assist during childbirth, but the girl became so nervous that Hemanti had to comfort her – even while giving birth. "I cut the umbilical cord myself and washed my child. That was the moment when I realised that I can do everything if I am prepared for it."

Source: Extract reproduced with permission from Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction and GIZ (2013) 'From combatants to community members: Reintegration of ex-combatants.' Chapter in: *Improvement of Livelihoods in Rural Areas (ILRA)*. Kathmandu: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, pp 94–96

Jana Andolan II

On 6 April 2006, to foil a demonstration in the capital called by the

Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and the seven party alliance (an alliance of the main political parties), King Gyanendra called a 'shoot on sight' curfew. The Maoists had trucked thousands into Kathmandu from the villages to demonstrate against the King, who had dissolved the elected parliament in 2004 and seized executive power in 2005. The demonstrators defied the curfew and the King sent the army into the fray. The demonstrators did not back down. The army showed great restraint – perhaps they saw the writing on the wall? The curfew was extended. The Internet was cut and the airport closed. The newspapers of the time carried photographs of sari-clad women sitting in between riot police and activist in the laneways of New Road, arms crossed, rocks littered around them (Nepali Times 2006 and 2007). Defiance is the word that springs to mind.

As well as these women, who were at the forefront of student groups, political parties and members of the Maoist movement, there were also other women – housewives, women who worked in hospitality, and legal professionals – who staged protests in this movement, which came to be known as Jana Andolan II, or People's Movement II (Nepali Times 2006). These women, and many other groups of non-politically active citizens – musicians, tourism entrepreneurs, traders – gathered in small groups at different points in the capital to oppose the curfew. Many were not politically aligned with any particular group. The mood was not so much pro-Maoist as it was pro-change. The people did not want to stay in their houses under another curfew called by another autocratic ruler who wanted to control them.

Towards the end of what stretched into a nearly three-week curfew, everyone seemed to come out onto the streets – either to march or watch; some played hand drums; some gave water to the protesters to drink as they circled the ring road. King Gyanendra had no choice but to step down. The seven mainstream political parties and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) formed an Interim Government and promulgated an Interim Constitution, with the promise of elections for a constituent assembly to write a new constitution.

Interim Constitution: Legally defining the space for women

When the Maoists joined mainstream politics they brought with them the women who had participated in the revolution – but not in leadership positions. During Jana Andolan II, women demonstrators were arrested and killed: "Of the 26 people who lost their lives in course of the movement, 6 were women" (International IDEA et al., 2011, pp. 45–46). Initially, there were no women in the 16-member Interim Constitution Drafting Committee. Women protested and the committee was reorganised to include four women – but it felt like an afterthought.

The Interim Constitution of Nepal promulgated in 2007 was a victory for women and there were 17% women in the reinstated Interim Parliament. The reinstated Parliament passed a women's rights resolution requiring 33% participation by women in each and every organ of the state. This paved the way for women's participation in the Constituent Assembly.

Constituent Assembly Election 2008: Landmark women's representation

In what some would say is a surprising turn of events, the Electoral Commission of Nepal enforced the quota set for female candidates in the Interim Constitution through proportional representation (Nepal applies a mixed electoral system of first-past-the-post and proportionate representation). Political parties who submitted lists of candidates that did not meet the quota for women under proportional representation were sent back to the drawing board. As a result of this, and the fact that the Community Party of Nepal (Maoist) fielded a lot of female candidates in the first-past-the post system, women constituted 33% of the members of the first Constituent Assembly, elected in 2008.

However, their participation in constitution building as a part of peacebuilding was not assured by this landmark level of representation. Instead they were sidelined from decision-making processes, both formal and informal, and represented often by the press as token women, without the education or expertise to contribute.

Despite this, the Constituent Assembly stands as the greatest achievement of the women's movement in Nepal to date and has created a paradigm shift in terms of women's participation in politics (International IDEA et al., 2011). Women united in the new Constituent Assembly, across party lines, in the Women's Caucus. The Women's Caucus in the Constituent Assembly was able to ensure that important women's issues were included in the preliminary drafts of the Constituent Assembly's thematic committees. The right to inheritance, to proportionate inclusive representation based on population size, and to equality in citizenship regardless of gender were some of the issues successfully raised (International IDEA et al., 2011). However, the term of the Constituent Assembly, although extended several times, lapsed before a new constitution could be written.

Constituent Assembly Election 2013: Eroded space for women

Unfortunately, the gains of the 2008 election are being eroded. Part of the reason for the 33% representation of women in the first Constituent Assembly in 2008 was the strict enforcement of the quota (through proportional representation) by the Electoral Commission of Nepal. The

other part of the reason is that so many Maoist women won under the first-past-the-post system; in other words, they were directly elected with the support of their parties and constituencies.

Unfortunately, this 'space' for women narrowed in the second Constituent Assembly election in 2013 with only 10 women elected through first-past-the-post, compared to 30 in 2008. One of the reasons for the low number of women elected through first-past-the-post is that only 10% of all of the first-past-the-post candidates were women (International IDEA, 2013), which is the minimum that the parties needed to meet the requirement in the Interim Constitution 2007. Also, whereas in 2008 strong women candidates were fielded with a fair amount of party support, in 2013 the candidates simply did not have 'winnable' tickets – either because they were fielded against strong male candidates or they did not have sufficient party support, including campaign funds (International IDEA, 2014 – forthcoming). The onus is on the political parties to improve this.

A recent Nepal Democracy Survey conducted by the State of Democracy in South Asia, Nepal Chapter and International IDEA, *'Citizen Survey 2013: Nepal in Transition'*, indicates that people in Nepal are ready to vote for women; 45% of respondents said that they would prefer a female candidate in the Constituent Assembly elections, compared to only 25% who preferred a male candidate (International IDEA, 2013).

A strong legal framework for inclusion and a bona fide attitude towards the inclusion of women (and other marginalised groups) on the part of the political parties and the Electoral Commission is needed to consolidate the gains made by the first Constituent Assembly election (International IDEA, 2014 – forthcoming).

In the meantime, the second Constituent Assembly has started its work by going through the drafts prepared by the first Constituent Assembly and identifying resolved and unresolved issues. Issues that have been resolved are being forwarded to the constitution drafting committee for finalisation and inclusion in the new constitution; those that are unresolved are being put before the political dialogue committee. In terms of the women's agenda, it seems that most of the achievements on women's issues in the first Constituent Assembly are considered 'resolved' and now in the drafting process. The main outstanding contentious issue is that of citizenship by descent and by marriage (through the man or woman, or both).

In terms of positions held by women, again the vice chair – very much a ceremonial role – is a woman and two out of the five committee chairs are women. However, the two committees chaired by women are the ones considered 'less important' and were given to small parties within the Constituent Assembly, while the major political parties and men took the chair positions of the political dialogue committee, drafting committee and the committee reviewing the work of the first Constituent Assembly. It is yet

to be seen whether the women Constituent Assembly members will come together across party lines to ensure a women-friendly constitution and to what extent the male Constituent Assembly members are ready to support the same.

Interviews: One Maoist woman and one Nepali Congress woman share their experiences of politics in Nepal

The following interviews were conducted with prominent women in Nepali politics (from the two main political parties) who have been through the people's war, were members of the Constituent Assembly in 2008 and who are still in politics today. Their interviews were conducted to ascertain their views on the 'space' for women in politics and peace building in Nepal after the civil war and what they think needs to be done to expand that space.

Hisila Yami

“It is also a leadership question; very few women were able to get positions in which to grow into the bigger responsibilities. [...] After the war, men started to relegate women back to the private sphere.”

Hisila Yami (born 1959) is one of the leaders of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) party. During the People's War (1996–2006) she served as a central leader of the Maoist party, staying 'underground'. In 2006, when the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) party resurfaced as a mainstream political party, Hisila became Minister for Physical Planning and Works in the Interim Parliament. After winning her seat in the election of 2008, she became Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation and a member of the Constituent Assembly tasked with writing the constitution (2008–2012). She has authored books including 'People's War, Women's Liberation in Nepal', and 'Marxism and Women's Liberation', which she co-authored with her husband, Dr Baburam Bhattarai. Hisila comes from a political family. Her mother and father both spent time in jail in the 1940s for their political activism. Her father, Dharma Ratna Yami, was a founding member of the Nepali Democratic Congress Party, which joined forces with the Nepali National Congress to overthrow the Rana regime in 1950. When asked why she joined the Maoist movement, she tells of her first trip to India in the 1970s where she saw the suffering of Nepali labour migrants firsthand. Not only was the work they did pitiful (mostly menial jobs such as watchmen, household servants, and dishwashers, as well as in the 'red light' areas), their sense of dignity was completely crushed. When she saw this, Hisila felt she had to do something for her country.

You were part of the People's War (1996–2006) and Jana Andolan II (April 2006) and have been in politics ever since, what is your view:

**Did the revolution change the role of women in politics in Nepal?
Were the promises of the revolution, in terms of gender equality, kept?**

One of the reasons for us [women] not being able to seize the momentum after the revolution was that various oppressed and marginalised groups did not bring the issue of gender up as part of the overall struggle. Women are part of all these groups too. But it is also a leadership question; very few women were able to get positions in which to grow into the bigger responsibilities.

Secondly, when peace settled in, the 'heat' on issues like women's political participation went down, and issues like emancipation were pushed aside. To my mind, the reason for this is simple: we still live in a feudal patriarchy. After the war, men started to relegate women back to the private sphere. They started to think of their personal life and asked: where do they want women to be; at home, or in politics? During the war, children were taken care of by the community in our party. Who is taking care of the children now?

What do you think is the role of the law in creating an enabling environment for women to participate in politics?

In 2008, the law and the government were ahead of the political parties in terms of gender equality; without the electoral laws and the quotas there would not have been so many women in the first Constituent Assembly – or even in the second. It is the political parties that are lagging behind. I am also very critical of the fact that other parties, for example, the Unified Marxist-Leninist and Nepali Congress [the other two main parties in Nepal], are doing much better in terms of the internal inclusion of women in their party structures than the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist).

The Maoist party was seen as the champion of women and other marginalised groups, but since we lost, or came third, in the November 2013 elections, naturally these questions also lost some prominence in the political discussions.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time, still in politics?

Yes, politics is my life. Both my parents were in politics and I was lucky to be able to pursue my own path. My father was very progressive. There have never been any '*ifs*' or '*buts*' from my husband either [Maoist party leader and former Prime Minister of Nepal, Dr Baburam Bhattarai]. I want to be part of transforming society – you need political power in order to change things.

What do you wish for your daughter?

We [my husband and I] have left her to choose her own path; but I am very proud that she is now doing her PhD at the Jawaharlal University in India, the place where both myself and my husband studied.

Pushpa Bhusal

“The political parties provided very little support to women candidates: no financial or campaign support and even moral support was precious little. Only strong constitutional provisions and laws will ensure women’s political participation in the future.”

Pushpa Bhusal (born 1961) is a lawyer by training and former elected member of the Constituent Assembly (2008–2012) for the Nepali Congress party. She was chair of the committee that drafted the Truth and Reconciliation Act. She was also a member of the drafting committee for the Interim Constitution (2007). Pushpa comes from a political family; her father was a Minister in the cabinet of Prime Minister BP Koirala in 1959. On 15 December 1959, when the then King Mahendra dissolved the cabinet and took over power, Pushpa’s father went into self-exile in India, followed by his family, where they remained for 13 years. Following in her father’s footsteps, Pushpa was attracted to the Nepali Congress since childhood. She feels that it was the Nepali Congress that led the movement for democracy in Nepal. Pushpa says that she is committed to making the Nepali Congress a democratic and even more effective political party in the future.

Do women in Nepal have more space in political decision-making forums now than before Jana Andolan II in 2006?

I do think that Jana Andolan II, the Peace Agreement in 2006 and the subsequent Interim Constitution 2007 changed a lot for women. Already earlier, at the beginning of the 1990s, Nepal had signed many important international treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and agreements against racial discrimination etc., but our parliament, as well as the Supreme Court, only produced ‘messages’ for greater participation, but no binding action, no new laws or policies were produced.

I do give it to the Maoist movement – it was largely because of them that issues of inclusion, discrimination and gender equality were taken seriously by the state institutions. I think that the Maoists used these groups [women and marginalised groups] and themes [equality for all] strategically in order to get support for their movement and attract people to the war, but the results were also there. The Interim Constitution 2007 made radical changes to the provision for ‘citizenship’ [which was changed from by male descent to by both female and male descent], it also states that the human rights commission needs to include women. Furthermore, the parliament passed laws for social inclusion in all of the public services [organs of the state] and the election law is very progressive. All these were unthinkable before Jana Andolan II. To an extent, the People’s Movement [Jana Andolan II] forced cultural changes in the party leadership, even if the inner circle of party decision-making remains male and Brahmin /Chettri (so called ‘upper castes’).

Nepali women seem to have achieved numbers in politics, but do they have power?

Women have played important roles in the peace committees at the village levels, but it is true that there were no women at the most important tables during the peace process. And yet many of the peace process issues affect mostly women; women suffered as victims and the disappearances and displacements affected women in multiple ways – as victims, mothers, wives, sisters and care givers. In the Constituent Assembly too, women do have the numbers, but they are not in the important positions; not as chairs of the important committees, or even of subcommittees, nor are they in sufficient numbers in the critical negotiation teams – formal or informal.

Why is this so and what can be done to change it?

Women should raise their voices themselves, that is true. Women should also propose each other to important positions. Men always expect that the few women leaders who are there are seeking positions for themselves. I am always suggesting: why don't we appoint Chitra Lekha Yadav or Meena Pandey [prominent Nepali Congress women] to such and such position.

The new constitution is the document in which women need to include a maximum amount of rights, and the proportionate representation [of women] cannot be left to the political parties. That is why it is so important to use this constitutional momentum for ensuring women's equal participation in politics. In the 2013 Constituent Assembly elections, the political parties provided only 10% of the first-past-the-post ticket to women, and even then only because the Interim Constitution forced them to do so. The political parties provided very little support to women candidates: no financial or campaign support and even moral support was precious little. Only strong constitutional provisions and laws will ensure women's political participation in the future.

Do you see any hope for the younger generation in political parties?

It is very difficult to get a position in a party in the short term; you need to be there with a long-term vision. I am afraid everyone gets opted by the system by the time they are in power. The Nepali Congress is a mass-based party and senior leaders make all the decisions. There is much interest among young women and men to participate, but very few platforms for them raise their voices. We need to start democratising our political parties.

Conclusion

The recent civil war in Nepal was fought for equality and the inclusion of previously excluded and marginalised groups, including women. However, as with the previous civil war (that overthrew the Rana regime in the 1950s) and the first democratic movement (Jana Andolan I in 1990), the post-war landscape in Nepal is divided among the same players as always: Brahmin

and Chhetri men and so-called 'high' caste political families. A simple fact of peacebuilding processes is that whoever participates in the process determines the outcome. So, if women are to have a say in the outcome of the peace process, they need to be able to participate in the process – and not just in numbers, but in leadership positions.

Women's place in Nepali society is changing: Although it is hard to generalise, women are now being viewed differently. There has been a paradigm shift since the civil war. Many stereotypes about women (e.g., that their place is in the home and that public life is the work of men) were broken down by the Maoist movement. Before this war, women had participated in the revolutions, but not on the battlefield. Holding a gun and standing beside their male combatants changed how women were viewed and how they viewed themselves. However, as peace sets in, men are closing ranks to protect the status quo. Men in Nepal (and perhaps in most of the world) are simply not comfortable with women having real decision-making power – or submitting to the decision of a woman. However, while men in Nepal might initially succeed in putting logistical barriers in women's way in terms of their participation in politics (such as not allocating funds to women candidates for their political campaigns), the ideological war has been won: men have admitted that women have a right to be equal.

Although much ground has been won for women by the various revolutions in Nepal (including the right to education for girls after the Rana regime was toppled), revolutions in Nepal seem to succeed initially, only to fail in the long term as those in power are not willing to share the power with everyone, including women. Conflicts tend to be cyclical in nature: what remains not implemented from past peace agreements becomes the cause for the next conflict. Issues related to power sharing between the conflicting parties and political issues are generally more easily implemented, whereas providing for the wellbeing of those harmed by the conflict is more difficult to implement. The majority of Nepalis are still waiting for the dividends of peace in terms of improved economic situations and opportunities; almost 8 years since the peace agreement was signed, the promised truth and reconciliation process is yet to start.

Although the first Constituent Assembly was the most inclusive in the history of Nepal (in terms of women and other previously excluded groups), it appears that the dream of an inclusive state is fading as the power elites close ranks and divide up the spoils. If we do not learn the lessons from history, then history will repeat itself again and Nepal may find itself facing yet another revolution. How many revolutions do we need before we realise that everyone must have a say in governing their future – including and, especially, women?

Among other things, a strong legal framework is needed for equality for women in politics and the peace process more broadly – as those in power

have never been known to share without compulsion. The women of the new Constituent Assembly have a vital role to play in this. Although the male leaders of Nepal seem to have closed ranks to protect the status quo, if organised properly, the more than a quarter women members of the Constituent Assembly can unite – and rise above party politics – to push the agenda for women home. The hour is upon us.

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CHAPTER 9. TOUGH CHOICES, LIMITED SPACES AND CONFLICTED LOYALTIES: WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA TODAY: THE KENYAN EXPERIENCE



Stella Maranga

Under-representation of women in elective politics

Despite the major contribution women leaders in Kenya make towards governance processes and results, they face a dual struggle – ascending into leadership and governance positions and getting their voices and agenda to centre stage. This chapter looks at experiences of women leaders in Kenya during the period between the promulgation of the new constitution in 2010, and the first elections under the new dispensation in 2013. The chapter looks at the challenges that women faced in trying to realise the promise of the constitution, the experiences on the campaign trail and the subsequent experiences when women try to set the agenda. The central premise of this chapter is that for equality in leadership and governance to be realised fundamental inequalities in society, including gender inequalities, will need to be addressed. The chapter is based primarily on reports and documents written at this time and after, media reports during this period, and on the personal experiences of the author who worked as a gender and governance advisor during this period.

A key feature of women's participation in leadership in Kenya is the

under-representation of women in elective politics. From Independence in 1963 to 2012 only fifty women had been elected to parliament. In the 10th parliament women comprised only 9.8% of members of parliament, the lowest in the East African region. The low numbers of women in leadership became the focus of feminist advocates, and a specific goal was to at least attain a critical minimum of 30% representation. Feminist advocates had realised that the political climate in Kenya was not ready for women to compete on an equal footing with men, and recognised the need for measures to address and redress the gender imbalance in leadership in Kenya; thus started a fifteen year journey to have a new constitutional dispensation that had gender equality at its core.

The Constitutional Review Process (1995 – 2010)

The Constitution of Kenya officially became law on 27 August 2010, after a historic referendum and a long journey to ensure that gender equity and human rights were entrenched. The Constitution had many gains for gender equality and human rights for men and women in Kenya. It delivered on many issues that had been at the heart of struggles for gender equality, democracy and fundamental human rights in Kenya. This constitution was a product of wide consultations with a wide range of stakeholders for whom this was the first time they had participated in a Constitutional review process. Women in particular had never been consulted and their under-representation inside parliament meant that their interests had not been well articulated. The constitution review journey, including the setting up of the review bodies such as the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission and the Committee of Experts, entailed a struggle to ensure gender equality and equity. Women lobbied to ensure that the review and harmonization processes included representation of women (Musembi et al, 2011). The process saw women learn how to engage with the centre, manage political machinations seeking to undermine women's meaningful participation, and how to get women's issues on the national agenda. Women negotiated under the umbrella of the Women Political Caucus, a loose umbrella organisation of women's organisation and groups.

The constitutional gains were far reaching and touched on many aspects that had previously been areas of contention for human rights advocates including: citizenship – women could now pass on citizenship to their children; family law – including women's rights to inheritance; and matrimonial property to name a few examples. The constitution also has a bill of rights that guarantees fundamental human rights for all Kenyans. On the political participation front, women made many gains including the provision to guarantee gender-balanced representation in elective public

bodies. The constitution directs parliament to enact legislation for the special representation of certain groups of women, persons with disabilities, youth, ethnic and other minorities, and marginalized communities. With regard to women, in both the National Assembly and the Senate, a number of seats were reserved for women candidates - 47 in the National Assembly and 16 in the Senate. The 47 National Assembly seats are filled through elections in which only female candidates may participate. The 16 Senate seats for women are filled through party-based nomination, according to the proportion of each party's elected membership in the Senate. Further room for gender balance is provided in the seats set aside for youth, and for persons with disabilities. The two nominees representing each of these interests must consist of one man and one woman respectively.

On the development of party lists, the constitution requires that they alternate between male and female qualified candidates, opening greater possibilities for representation of women in the National Assembly. Kenya still retains the First Past the Post system, (FPTP), a system of voting favoured by former British colonies. This is a controversial system which has been criticised as one that distorts representivity:

Voting takes place in single-member constituencies. Voters put a cross in a box next to their favoured candidate and the candidate with the most votes in the constituency wins. All other votes count for nothing. We believe FPTP is the very worst system for electing a representative government. (Electoral Reform Society, 2014)

The constitution chose to employ reservations rather than party-based quotas to boost women's political representation. Further gains for women were made within the provisions of the Political Parties and the Elections Parties Acts, both developed on the basis of Article 100 of the constitution that required political parties to respect the rights of all persons to participate, the inclusion of minority groups, and the requirement that parties "promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, and gender equality and equity".

Another notable gain for women in leadership and participation in governance was the provision for devolved government. The constitution provides for a devolved government structure (articles 174, 175 and 177), in order to promote democratic and accountable exercising of power, and to protect and promote the interests and rights of minorities and marginalised groups. Devolution had been at the centre of civic strife in Kenya and many Kenyans welcomed the provision they saw as eliminating the disenfranchisement they felt with the central government in Nairobi, and dominance at this level by some communities. Article 175 directs county governments to ensure that no more than two thirds of the members of representative bodies are of the same gender and article 177 established the County Assembly, which consists of elected members and special seats to

ensure that the two-thirds requirement is met. So, where parliament was required to develop a formula for national level representation, the Constitution provided one for the county level.

Finally, to ensure that the constitution was implemented and that the spirit and letter of the law was respected, the Constitution established a number of commissions to oversee its implementation. A notable one for gender equality was the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), whose role was to safeguard women's and gender equality provisions.

2010-2012: Getting the word out and finding a formula to implement the affirmative action provisions

Article 27 (8) of the Constitution states that “in addition to the measures contemplated in clause (6), the State shall take legislative and other measures to implement the principle that not more than two-thirds of the members of elective or appointive bodies shall be of the same gender.” This left the onus on parliament to develop a formula to implement the provision. Women and gender advocates in Kenya realised very quickly that no matter how far reaching the articles were in the Constitution, the war was far from over for women's participation in leadership. Women advocates tried many times to get parliament to enact a law that would ensure that it was implemented, but each proposed draft had fundamental flaws and problems that would require the dismantling of some other fundamental legal provision or that would be impossible to realise. Apart from lacking an implementation formula the provision posed potential problems with the reserved seats already in place. Political parties and the electorate become even more hostile toward women seeking party nomination to compete in the elective politics. Any formula developed was increasing the number of legislators making parliament even bigger and more expensive. Since the article was air tight regarding the provisions on affirmative action, the winning party would not constitute a parliament without ensuring the one-third representation. Based on historical voting patterns, the chance of women being elected in enough numbers was nil. In the end parliament failed to pass a viable law and the matter was referred to the Supreme Court, which ruled that the provision was progressive and gave parliament until 2015 to find a formula (Supreme court of Kenya advisory opinion no. 2/2012). This gave parliament a lifeline to function without the 30% representation of women, to the great disappointment of women throughout Kenya. Women activists still maintain that with political will a formula can be found and that the absence of a formula right now is more an indication of the patriarchal nature of Kenyan politics, not a provision that is impossible to implement.

If the provision was complicated and confusing to the legislature and judiciary, it was much more confusing for civil society advocates trying to communicate to voters, most of who were sceptical of its viability and legitimacy. The messaging had to carry both the facts as provided for in the Constitution, and the rationale of feminist arguments for having affirmative action. This did not work as effectively as it could, due to time constraints. Civic educators had to quickly learn the new Constitution and the attendant acts to facilitate the first elections. They had to understand the new six elective positions compared to the previous three, the devolved structures and the new roles of the political parties. The constitution had been billed as a product of people's participation so there was a strong ownership of the document at the grassroots, and a high demand for public education. Unfortunately these demands were too much for civic education groups who were under time and other pressures, so any chance for addressing gender equality and the role of affirmative action was limited or lost.

2013: Women candidates get on the campaign trail

The first past the post system tends to favour already entrenched leaders and is harder to penetrate for new comers, marginalised groups and women. Civil society advocates were lobbying for a system of proportional representation, where candidates may not win the top position, but are still able to get in lower slots and, depending on a party's success, into the legislature. This was not adopted for the elections although some form of proportional representation was adopted for the reserved seat nominations.

For women to get elected they had first to get nominated as their party's candidate to vie against other candidates from other parties. This nomination process is perhaps more significant in Kenya than other countries because of the strongly entrenched identity politics. A candidate nominated by a party that was popular in a specific constituency was almost always assured of winning the seat. Party nominations were strongly contested and women had little chance of getting nominated by parties for these, particularly for safe seats. Affirmative action measures could have helped, but the Elections Act 2011 did not put in place any significant affirmative measures for candidates. Most seemed to have been minimal measures intended to ensure that the party qualified and, more importantly, accessed party funding which was contingent upon having a one-third representation of women. Very few women earned meaningful party nominations.

Those women who managed to get nominated faced a political campaign field that was highly masculinized. The campaign mode was overly aggressive, the perception of a leader was along very traditional male lines,

and the concept of women as the weaker sex was often repeated on the campaign trail. Feminine leadership traits when displayed were used as evidence that women could not make good leaders. Any display of emotion was seen to confirm that women were too weak to lead. Because of the historical ethnic clashes that seemed to happen during elections, communities were looking for politicians who would protect their communities. Prominent politicians were given nicknames reminiscent of great warriors of past eras. Moreover, women wanting to join politics come with disparities in professional experience, minimal familial ties and obligations, and with the existing disadvantages in the labour market that meant limited access to finances and experience. Many women found this environment intimidating and did not present themselves as candidates or shied away from competitive seats, opting instead for the overcrowded women's seats.

One important fact to note here is that women did not gain seats as expected because fewer women were nominated to vie in the direct elections. Those who did get nominated performed fairly well compared to men according to the FIDA audit report: 14% of all men who vied for election won compared to 12% of women (Federation of Women Lawyers, 2013). It is at least a demonstration in that the sex of the candidate was in itself less of a barrier to getting elected than political parties assumed.

Election violence and violence against women

Since 1992 and probably earlier, Kenya has been prone to election and post-election violence and displacement. The violence has been largely ethnic and reached a tragic climax in the 2007 elections when over 1000 people were killed in ethnic clashes across the country. Tens of thousands were displaced. Some of who still remain displaced. Women experienced violence both as voters and as candidates and over 3,000 sexual violence cases were recorded.

As reported by the Nairobi-based Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW), police data for 2007 indicated that there were approximately 3,000 cases of rape, defilement, indecent assault, and abduction reported. With hundreds of thousands of people displaced by the violence, women were sometimes forced to have sex in exchange for food and shelter, said Christina Siebert of the Heinrich Boll Foundation in Nairobi. (Simpson, 2012)

In 2013 the problem was not as widespread as 2007 but women still reported a number of cases of violence against women. One way in which things were different from 2007 was that there were better response mechanisms from civil society and democracy advocates to gender based electoral violence. UN Women for example provided support to both the

peace building platforms to enable them to record, report and respond appropriately to incidences of violence against women. A UN Women observation mission recorded a number of incidents of harassment and violence.

“I was confronted with a situation where I received threats on my life, while my supporters were physically intimidated” was reported directly to UN Women election observers.

The following incidents were reported by election observers, supported by UN Women, and contained in a report by Caroline Nyambura. Constituency names have been removed.

In X constituency, there was a case of propaganda bordering on threats to a female candidate. The candidate’s husband, who did not support her bid, fell sick and later passed on. She was accused of killing her husband and threatened with death, which intimidated her to the extent that she could not campaign despite being a competitive candidate.

In another constituency, a male politician hired young men to circulate hateful and abusive leaflets about a strong woman candidate a day before the elections.

In constituency Y, a female candidate vying for the county representatives position received threats from three male opponents, who were determined to frustrate her since she was the strongest candidate. Her vehicle’s windscreen was shattered while on the way to a polling station. She subsequently received phone calls threatening her to not to leave her house for any polling station or she would be maimed. Another female candidate was threatened to the effect that she would pay heavily if she won, which was traumatizing because she did not know what her opponents anticipated to do to her or to those close to her. Another female candidate found her vehicle tyre deflated after leaving a polling station for another, which took her time to fix.

There was a case of attempted rape of a female candidate during the campaigns in Z and reports of sexual harassment. (Nyambura, 2013,)

Another widely reported case in the Kenyan media involved a candidate from Central Region, Ms. Alice Wahome, who reported that on the eve of the party nominations her rivals distributed condoms to voters with the following inscription “A gift from Alice Wahome”. The intention was to paint her as moving away from traditional values and encouraging promiscuity amongst the youth. She went on to win the election, but was to later share several examples of how gender based violence was used against women candidates.

Women in Kenyan Parliament – current situation

	Lower house	Senate
Total seats	350	68
Total women	67 (47 elected representatives, 16 members of parliament and 4 nominated women)	18 (all nominated)
% of women's representation	19%	26%
system	First Past the Post	

Source: Quotaproject,

Whether the elections were a success for women is a not that straightforward. This observation from FIDA's review sums up some of the perspectives of women activists.

“The results disappointed backers of the new Constitution. In the National Assembly women won just 6% of directly elected constituency seats, down from 8% in 2007. Not a single woman was elected to the powerful position of governor or senator for the 47 newly created counties.” (Migiro, 2013)

Despite the fact that the percentage of elected women was reduced compared to the 10th parliament, the reality is that there are more women in legislative assemblies than in any other period in Kenya's history. As shown in the table above, women form 19% and 26% respectively of the representation in the lower and upper houses of parliament.

The promise of devolution and bringing services closer to women

Devolution was intended to bring decision-making and services closer to the people. Not surprisingly with the devolution of power, many of the positions that had become available at that level now also attracted greater interest with male and seasoned politicians and women did not find the going any easier vying for such positions. The constitution provided for two seats that could be vied for at the devolved levels, the powerful county governor and his/deputy and the Ward representatives (Member of County Assembly - MCA). There was a lot of misinformation and propaganda applied to keep women away from being candidates for these seats. The most commonly applied tactic was that male politicians convinced the electorate that women already had their reserved seats and did not need to seek election for the competitive positions. Parties discouraged women from seeking the candidacy and promised women nominations instead. Eventually women only won 5% of the 1,450 MCA positions. Another 650 women were nominated to meet the constitutional threshold of one-third gender

representation.

Analysis

Beyond numbers: some lessons emerging from 2013 elections

Despite a good track record for policy level advocacy and fairly decent domestic laws as far as gender equality is concerned, parliament has still not developed the legislative framework for realising the affirmative action provision. The timeline given by the Supreme Court is approaching but there is no formula developed yet. Indeed the constitutional provision is constantly under threat of being reviewed in a referendum. The numbers are vital for women to be effective in getting their voices heard, but numbers alone are not enough. For meaningful participation in governance, the focus will ultimately need to move beyond numbers. This section looks at some of the emerging issues that will be the focus of feminist advocacy in the next elections and beyond. Four key issues are identified as being important for women to participate effectively in politics.

Addressing underlying causes of inequality

Gender is an important factor in determining leadership styles, how people access or do not access leadership positions and how governance is structured. Gender is not the only factor that has an influence. Kenyan women's lives are complex. Pastoral women in northern Kenya experience inequality very differently from poor urban women in informal urban settlements, who in turn experience inequality very differently from middle class women in Nairobi. The different economic, social and cultural differences between and among women will need to inform the women's leadership discourse in Kenya. During previous elections one of the most frequently mentioned criticisms of this discourse was that most of the women nominated represented the middle class.

Recognising the inter-sectionality of women's representation need not be taken to mean women are divided along ethnic or class lines or even urban and rural lines. Rather it is a way of acknowledging how nuanced women's lives are, and the importance of getting all the voices heard. It means understanding how the ethnic and economic differences intersect with gender inequality to keep women unequal. It also means understanding other forms of marginalisation. In attempting to bring women's issues to the fore, it is important to start looking at the realities of the most marginalised women, as this is really where the historical, economic and other social injustices come into play.

Changing the perception and portrayal of women

The way that women are portrayed and perceived by the public and media is a major factor in keeping them from entering politics. Even after the campaign period women continue to face adverse and negative portrayal from both their male counterparts and from the media. A prominent politician was reported to have issued this threat to a female member of parliament in 2014. "If you are 35 and don't have a husband, there is something wrong... We will start demanding that you are married before you are elected". (BBC, 2014)

The MP was later to issue an apology after outrage from women's groups and other civil society organisations, but his view was far from an isolated case. The commonly held stereotype of women entering politics as single, frustrated or divorced women implicitly communicates that politics and leadership are a male domain and that a normal happy woman would not want to be part of the leadership. They should be at home with her family! Another woman candidate, Shakida Abdalla, who lost the elections but was nominated on a party ticket made this observation:

Voters judge us by a different standard than they would a male candidate. For instance, a man's marital status hardly ever comes into consideration – we had a president (Daniel Arap Moi) who ruled Kenya for 24 years without taking a wife. But, in the case of women in electoral politics, whether they are single, divorced or widowed becomes an election issue. (Mushtak, 2008)

Tokenism

One of the major risks of having an affirmative action provision in an unwilling political climate will always be tokenism. This has been demonstrated in a number of ways: political parties nominated women to positions where their chance of influencing the agenda was limited. Tokenism is also demonstrated in other ways, by political parties nominating only those women whom they can control or who are affiliated to them in some way, while at the same time denying women who merit positions. By far the worst case of tokenism happened in the 2013 elections when women were edged out of competitive politics with the argument that they already had the reserved seats.

Agenda setting

Ultimately the aim of having women in leadership is so that they can set the agenda and influence governance for the benefit of all as a means to achieve equality. To do this, women need to take centre stage and to have their

voices heard in national political discourse. Although it is too early to judge the performance of the current crop of women representatives, there are clearly some successes and some gaps. Women have taken centre stage and shown good leadership, for example, on issues of sexual offences and violence against women. There are certain issues where the capacities of women leaders are absent and where leadership has been absent. A good example was the debate on polygamy. In 2014, the President signed into law the Marriage Act (Marriage bill no 13 2013). When the bill was debated in parliament women were conspicuously absent.

This is what the Daily Nation reporter Ngirachu said about the law when it was passed:

In amendments that appeared more designed to serve the marital needs and assuage the financial fears of male MPs, the House watered down the Marriage Bill, which had given wives the right to be consulted before their husbands brought home a second wife. (Ngirachu, 2014)

Women in county assemblies too have faced challenges in articulating women's issues and setting an agenda for gender equality in Kenya. This also is compounded by the fact the majority of women representatives are nominated and are yet to enjoy the full mandate of their positions. In the fullness of time it will be important for women's and gender issues to become not just an issue for women but national issues that inform our governance and development agenda. Currently women tend to be most vocal on issues that affect women or are seen as family issues. When they lead committees they are usually found in those committees that tend to reinforce their reproductive roles and their roles as mothers and carers.

Conclusions

For most Kenyan women working on these issues on a daily basis, it is easy to get absorbed in current challenges and to feel that not much has changed for women's participation. Of particular cause for concern is the on-going lack of political will to fully realise the constitutional provisions for women. This chapter attempted to show that there has been progress in women's representation and participation.

The progress has been primarily as a result of women organising and fighting for rights at every stage as demonstrated in the constitutional review process. Women's gains were also secured once women joined with other rights advocates and activists and identified the interconnectedness of their struggles. A progressive legal and policy framework is an important first step for women's participation, but more is needed to ensure that such participation is substantive. Women should not just be sitting at the table but also influencing decisions and making an impact on gender equality and the quality of life for all women. As demonstrated in the analysis above, this

requires a look at the underlying causes of gender inequality, looking at other types of inequalities including ethnicity and economic status, and recognising the multifaceted nature of women's lives. The argument has been made that women are shying away from politics because of its highly masculinized nature of political discourse, and by the way women get into politics is portrayed. All of these will need to change to make space for women to engage.

In conclusion, the women who are actively engaged in leadership have made strong contributions to development and to gender equality in Kenya. They have shown tenacity and taught the Kenya nation that it is possible to be a leader despite the odds. What has been most impressive has been the way women have learnt how to negotiate the leadership terrain and find ways of being influential despite the limited space they currently hold. These gains can only improve as more women enter the fray.

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**PART III: GENDER IN THE
CONTEXT OF SECURITY
CHALLENGES**

CHAPTER 10. “BRING BACK OUR GIRLS”: CONFLICT AND INSURGENCY IN NIGERIA



Obadiah Mailafia

Introduction

In April 2014, the world woke up to the shock of the kidnaping of 270 girls from a boarding secondary school in the sleepy town of Chibok, northeastern Nigeria. For years the region had been ravaged terrorism and insurgency masterminded by a brutal Islamist terrorist organisation popularly known as “Boko Haram”. Although a few of the girls managed to escape, the fate of over 200 of them remains unknown. The leader of the terrorist group was later to announce that he would “sell” the girls. A few of those who escaped reported incidences of serial rape and other forms of butality. The Nigerian government has been helpless. The world community is outraged. The “Bring Back our Girls” campaign went global, with even American First Lady Michelle Obama being photographed with a campaign poster.

This chapter discusses the politics and economics of terrorism and insurgency in Nigeria set in a global context.¹ The point of departure is that women and children tend to suffer disproportionately from most acts of violence and conflict perpetrated by men. The fate of the Chibok girls brings

1. This article is a re-edited version and part reprint of an earlier publication by Mailafia, O., 2012.

into dramatic focus the evil nature of terrorism, Islamic and otherwise, and the gross abuse of Humanity that it entails. The Nigerian case has been particularly savage and its toll on women, children and the family is an affront to human dignity and an evil that must be reversed at all costs.

In this chapter we discuss the nature, origins and impact of terrorist insurgency in Nigeria. We situate this phenomenon not only in the context of globalisation but also in poor governance and the failure to devise effective policies to meet the country's daunting challenges (Cf. Nnadozie, 2012). The presentation is in four main parts. Part one addresses definition and conceptualisation of terrorism as a social phenomenon. The second discusses the global context for the proliferation of terrorist violence. In the third section we analyse the incidence of ethno-sectarian conflict in Nigeria that provides the context for the rise of the Boko Haram insurgency. The fourth part discusses the economic and social consequences of terrorism. We then provide a general summary and conclusion.

Theoretical and Conceptual Considerations

The analytical approach of this paper is premised on the theory of social constructivism. According to this approach, it is not only empirical reality that determines social outcomes. Differences arising from conflicting construction of worldviews, ideas, identities and historical experiences are influential in shaping the structure of politics and public policy. Constructivist epistemology goes back to the renaissance scholar Giambattista Vico, Immanuel Kant, Max Weber and the philosopher John Dewey. According to this approach, human consciousness is shaped by the shared meanings that shape the worldviews of a people and the meanings they give to events and symbols. Reality is thus shaped less by truth than by conditioned learning and received tradition. Socially constructed interpretations of national challenges shape how different segments of society perceive issues and what solutions they proffer. In the words of two co-authors:

Perceptual differences in terms of relative political and socio-economic issues generate disparate and competing templates for finding solutions to national problems. When one premises these differences on fundamental ideological and cultural foundations, they oftentimes become irreconcilable and hence less amenable to long lasting and durable solutions (Kalu & Oguntoyinbo, 2012: 91).

From the viewpoint of social constructivism, the idea of a universal Muslim 'Ummah', the political categories known as 'The North' or 'The Middle Belt' are socially constructed concepts. While remaining conceptual myths, their potency as idea and rallying banner cannot be under-estimated. Part of the contestations shaping the structure of politics in contemporary

thinking relate to the force of these constructed ideas. Solving them will require returning to the fundamentals of nationhood and reinventing the grammar and syntax of political discourse.

Defining Terrorism

Terrorism is a rather emotional topic. Not only do people differ on questions of conceptual definition; they also disagree on interpretation of facts in specific cases of terrorist activity. Noam Chomsky, points out two different and conflicting approaches to the study of terrorism. One is the literal approach and the other is the propagandistic approach. While the first one seeks a rational-scientific understanding of terrorism as a social phenomenon with specific empirical causal factors that lead to particular societal impact, the latter prefers to view terrorism as “a weapon to be exploited in the service of some system of power” (Chomsky, 1991: 56). While the scientific approach is interested in finding lasting remedies, the propagandistic is more interested in labelling and demonising for the sole purpose of deploying hegemonic military power to score strategic advantage over perceived enemies.

The late Charles Tilly pointed out that terrorism as a social phenomenon surfaces in a wide variety of cultures, institutions and political forces. It is certainly not a preserve of Muslims as the American neo-conservatives would have us believe. Indeed, the governments of world powers and developing countries have also practised some form of terrorism or other, not to talk of a whole brigade of environmentalists, liberation fighters and anarchists. According to Tilly, “Terrorists range across a wide spectrum of organisations, circumstances and beliefs. Terrorism is not a single coherent phenomenon. No social scientist can speak responsibly as though it were.” (Tilly, 2004: 12)

Terrorism is not just a Nigerian problem; it is a global problem. Nor is it an exclusively Islamic problem. Extremists are to be found in all religions. Our central thesis is that the increasing salience of Islamist terror may be explained by the unique experiences of Arab-Muslim societies and how religion has often been deployed as a weapon of political struggle. Globalisation and the technologies associated with the increasing internationalisation of production, capital and markets have facilitated the capacity of terror groups to mobilise, network and implement their violent projects across nations and communities.

Curiously enough, nobody has ever been known to describe himself or herself as a terrorist. Terrorism is a rather value-loaded term that people often use to describe those who are pursuing goals or deploying methods with which they do not agree. It can even be a term of abuse. Equally problematic is the fact that it is often deployed as a political term to categorise people or countries that have already been identified to be

enemies (Kapitan, 2003). A major challenge in seeking to understand terrorism is the fact that perspectives differ, depending on where we stand on a particular issue. The well-worn cliché that “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” rings as true today as it did when first used in terrorism discourse. For example, both Ronald Reagan in America and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in Britain dismissed the imprisoned Nelson Mandela and his colleagues as “terrorists”. To their own people and to most Africans, however, they were “freedom fighters”; heroes of a historic struggle for liberation against Apartheid and racial humiliation.

Given these complexities, it is not surprising that there are probably as many definitions of terrorism as there are organisations and governments working to counter the menace.² Several definitions have been on offer, most of them expressing nuances and perspectives deriving from the type of agency in question or the historical experiences of the government proffering the definition.

For the purposes of this chapter we understand terrorism to mean all forms of violent action by clandestine and semi-clandestine actors aimed at achieving criminal, military, religious, political or other objectives, with such actions often directed at government and non-combatant populations with the deliberate objective of spreading fear, anxiety and terror.

The Global Context

The resurgence of radical political Islam has been recent key features in Africa. In East Africa, it has been suggested that discrimination against Muslims during the colonial era and after has been a key factor in the radicalisation of Muslim groups (Dickson, 2005). Equally crucial has been Saudi-sponsored Wahabbism in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere. Among the predominant Muslim nations of Africa, Senegal stands out by its unique blend of Islam and modernity and the spirit of tolerance that defines the national culture. This is so despite the prevalence of social and religious conservatism and the widespread influence of the ‘mourides’ in social and political life (O’Brien, 1971; Trimingham, 1962; Copans, 1988).

Since the 1998 bombing of US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam by Al-Qaeda, there appears to be an exponential growth in the spate of terrorist attacks, including the kidnapping and killing of Western aid workers. Since the 1990s, the collapse of Somalia has spurred an army of pirates and lawless gangsters who have become a menace to their neighbours and merchant vessels on the Red Sea.

2. We could probably avoid these definitional issues by simply defining terrorism as “what terrorists do”. But that would be begging the question.

The American military campaign in Afghanistan may have succeeded in breaking the back of the Taliban and their al-Qaeda comrades, but as a consequence they may be turning to Africa. There is evidence that Al-Qaeda has taken a strategic decision to re-locate to Africa as a safe haven for its global operations. The Taliban, al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) and al-Shabab from Somalia have joined forces with Tuareg insurgents and drug barons, taking over vast territories in the Sahara desert. Fleeing mercenaries from Libya may have also brought substantial supplies of weapons thereby supplementing what the Sahelian terrorists already possessed.

At the heart of contemporary terrorism is globalisation and how it impacts on national systems, cultures and faith-communities (Coker, 2002). By globalisation, we are referring to the internationalisation of production, markets and capital and the virtual emergence of a single global marketplace. It also entails the trans-border diffusion of knowledge and information through new technologies such as the worldwide web, the Internet and mobile telephony. There are good as well as bad aspects to globalisation.

Most economists would agree that globalisation has been positive in many aspects: in terms of improved international trade and investments; providing an impetus to growth and enhanced global welfare. Indeed, the emergence of new economic powers such as China, India and Brazil would not have been possible without the relaxation of domestic as well as global barriers to the movement of people, goods, services and capital. Thanks to liberalisation and digital technologies, our world has become the proverbial ‘global village’. The internationalisation of world markets, the expansion in global trade and the movement of capital through instantaneous communication and the impact of electronic media such as CNN and Al-Jazeera have brought the world closer together as never before. Today information travels at the speed of light. Governments can no longer hide information from their own citizens as they did in the past.

However, globalisation has engendered new forms of vulnerabilities for nations and communities. Financial contagion and the spread of epidemic viral diseases pose greater risks than ever before. Communities that have hitherto lived in cultural cocoons have suddenly found themselves exposed to new habits and mindsets. Terrorist networks such as al Qaeda have become transnational organisations that thrive on the opportunities opened by new technologies and communications channels. Not only are they able to coordinate their activities through such channels, they are also able to raise funds, network and coordinate their activities across national borders and frontiers with greater ease than would have been considered feasible just two decades ago.

Globalisation has to some extent also altered the character of the Westphalian territorial state as we have always known it. In a liberal market economy, the state is expected to restrict itself to playing the role of umpire

while looking after public goods such as law and order, transport and infrastructures, education and control of communicable diseases. There is a sense in which globalisation has eroded the traditional 'parental role' of the state while undermining its capacity, authority and legitimacy.³

With globalisation, the boundaries between the domestic and the international are becoming increasingly blurred. It has also engendered new inequities between the rich and the poor. In the advanced industrial nations as well as in low-income developing, all the relevant indicators show that income inequalities are reaching alarming proportions.⁴

The National Context

With a population of 165 million, Nigeria is Africa's largest country in terms of demographic size. With a GDP of US\$ 415 billion, it is the second largest economy after South Africa. Nigeria holds the record for being the largest oil producer on the continent and the sixth in OPEC. The country is well endowed with petroleum, gas and yet-untapped mineral resources. Its agricultural potentials are considerable, although the country remains a net importer of food. Over the last decade growth has averaged 7.4% (African Development Bank, 2012).

Nigeria remains a paradox, if not an enigma, to many observers. A country of energetic and highly entrepreneurial peoples and with an embarrassment of natural riches, where the bulk of the population remains impoverished. Although per capita income has improved in recent years to about US\$ 2,500 (in PPP terms), more than 60% of the people live below the poverty line and income inequalities are widening, with an estimated gini coefficient of 43.7 percent. Unemployment stands at a national average of 24%, with an estimated 54% of youth without jobs. A World Bank study depicts the country's development trajectory in terms of 'jobless growth' (The World Bank, 2009). Massive revenues from oil earnings have gone into consumption and recurrent expenditure, with little left to finance the yawning gaps in physical infrastructures. Corruption is widespread in public

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3. Of late, we have witnessed the emergence of powerful non-state actors who vie for authority, power and influence with the state. These non-state actors range from transnational firms to non-governmental organisations, drug cartels and international terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda. Such powerful non-state actors can also seize new opportunities to leverage on their capacity to do good as well as evil.
 4. The Occupy Wall Street Campaign in New York in September 2011 emerged as a spontaneous mass movement against what is perceived as the greed and corruption of global bankers and financiers which fuelled inequality as well as the international financial crisis.

life while capital flight is an endemic feature of the political economy. As a result, the vast majority have no access to electricity, water and basic social services. Life expectancy stands at 51 years; well below the average for sub-Saharan Africa.

After decades of military rule, the country returned to democratic rule in 1999. The writer Fareed Zakaria’s concept of “illiberal democracy” (2004) perhaps best describes Nigeria’s current governance situation, where the culture of impunity reigns supreme and the rule of law and constitutionalism remain very much work in progress. Nigeria is an ethnically diverse country, with some of the most ancient civilisations known to man. In the context of widening inequalities, joblessness and poverty, it is inevitable that social tensions, most of which are exploited by politicians, will tend to find expression in ethno-religious conflict.

Deepening inequalities are, for their part, fostering new forms of anxiety and frustration among dispossessed groups. In oil-rich Nigeria the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. Increasingly desperate young, educated and unemployed urban youth, can easily be mobilised for ethnic or religiously inspired violence.⁵

There is no denying that sociological factors deriving from rapid urbanisation and modernisation can and do contribute to spurring alienation and, ultimately, political violence. The French sociologist Emile Durkheim identified ‘anomie’ as a major psychosocial malady in industrialising societies. The sprawling slums of cities such as Kaduna, Abuja, Lagos and Maiduguri are cesspools of crime, prostitution and violence. When youths drift to cities and lose the traditional moorings that provided meaning and signification to their lives, they can fall easy prey to extremist ideologies. It has been estimated that in Northern Nigeria there are over 9.5 million ‘Almajiris’ (itinerant youths who attend traditional koranic schools). Most of such children are the cannon fodder for ethno-religious conflicts that spring up from time to time.

There is also the impact of new information and telecommunications technologies (ICT). Such technologies connect disgruntled and alienated groups that may not even know each other. They share information, strategies and tactics and disseminate propaganda materials as a means of recruitment and socialisation into their theology of death. The historian Michael Burleigh observes that the internet “has become the broadband river whereby noxious ideologies...can be accessed in the privacy of the bedroom

5. The mere prevalence of poverty cannot be said to engender terrorism. Rather, poverty normally interacts with other variables such as ethnically divided elites, absence of societal cohesion, corruption, political disempowerment and perceptions of horizontal or vertical deprivation.

or study in provincial towns and major cities of the West by young people, of whom significant numbers applaud the actions of al-Qaeda and other Islamic terrorists” (Burleigh, 2006: 468)

It is also evident that a country with historical antecedents of political violence, civil war and dictatorship nurtures an environment that is more susceptible to terrorism. Nigeria's rather long history of civil strife makes it more understandable why terrorism could easily thrive in the country. Over the last decade alone, more than 10,000 people have died as a result of ethnic and sectarian conflict in Nigeria. Nigerians are beginning to accept random violence as their lot and destiny.

Linked to this is the new architecture of global power and the insecurity that it engenders. The Cold War created two major centres of power, one based in Washington DC and the other in Moscow. China and the group of Non-Aligned countries provided a shield for those nations who chose to side with neither camp. Today, we live in a largely unipolar world in which the United States is the dominant economic, military and political power. During the era of George W. Bush, Washington did not hesitate to use its military pre-eminence in pursuit of narrow national goals and purposes. The retreat from multilateralism, the almost religious faith in ‘American Exceptionalism’ and the pursuit of unilateralist folly has incurred the resentment of many across the world. In the Middle East educated youths, alienated intellectuals and dispossessed communities in Palestine see the fate of their nations as the end result of American ‘hegemony’. Most believe that the survival of Israel would not have been possible without American military and financial support.

In November 2001, barely two months after the attack on the Twin Towers, the late French philosopher, sociologist and intellectual Jean Baudrillard, in an influential article entitled “The Spirit of Terrorism”, argued that contemporary terrorism has its roots in the contradictions arising from the global system that has emerged with America's Atlantic hegemony (Baudrillard, 2011). Declaring that “terrorism, as a virus, is everywhere”, Baudrillard pointed out, quite correctly, that the Bush administration, as late as the summer of 2001, had been fully in touch with the Taliban. He also noted that Washington had over the years provided support to Osama bin Laden and the mujahideen in Afghanistan. He sought to proffer an anti-intellectual antidote to the blind nationalism and wholesale demonization of terrorists that greeted the 9/11 attacks. His own compatriot, the economist and historian Alain Minc, has, however, challenged this view as being in itself a form of ‘intellectual terrorism’.⁶

6. Minc argues that the real problem is the fact that our globalised post-Cold War international order no longer possesses a moral centre of gravity and represents

In a changing world Robert Kaplan identified West Africa as the signifier in his premonition of a future of chaos and global disintegration (Kaplan, 1994). Kaplan believes “West Africa is becoming the symbol of worldwide demographic, environmental, and societal stress, in which criminal anarchy emerges as the real strategic danger.” (Kaplan, 1994: 46) He points to trends such as disease, uncontrolled population growth, criminal violence, resource scarcity, refugees and the “increasing erosion of nation-states and international borders” (1994: 47) as factors likely to speed up the inevitable process of societal collapse in Africa. Kaplan makes oblique references to Nigeria as one of those countries destined to fail, prophesying, in effect, that terrorist groups and criminal bandits are likely to fill the political vacuum that will emerge.⁷

Kaplan paints a rather apocalyptic picture of a new international disorder; a coming age of impending chaos: “To understand the events of the next fifty years...one must understand environmental scarcity, cultural and racial clash, geographic destiny, and the transformation of war” (1994: 54). He is obviously right about the pressures exerted on national systems by demographics, unchecked urbanization and lack of adequate infrastructures, in addition to poor leadership and lack of effective governance. Some of these weaknesses no doubt account for the rise of groups such as Boko Haram. But Kaplan is also the victim of the classic syndrome of “Afro-pessimism” which constitutes the prism from which commentators of his ilk view the continent of Africa. He was writing in 1994 when Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau were enmeshed in violent conflict. Today, West Africa represents one of the regions with the fastest rates of growth in the world. The guns have fallen silent in Sierra Leone as most of the countries in ECOWAS make bold efforts to consolidate their democracies and restore confidence to their people. Nigeria is the leader of West Africa and is bound to be one of the leading countries in the world, if only the leadership could get their act together.

Poverty and youth unemployment

The dramatic unfolding of events in the Middle East at the beginning of 2011 reinforces this hypothesis about the political consequences of economic deprivation. It is evident that deepening frustrations occasioned by poverty and economic stagnation, coupled with the absence of political expression

the emergence of a new medievalism, with its chaos and lawlessness. (Minc, 1995)

7. West Africa, he insists, “provides an appropriate introduction to the issues, often extremely unpleasant to discuss, that will soon confront our civilization” (Kagan, 1994: 4).

and dwindling socio-economic opportunities were the key elements that explain the recent upheavals in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen. The countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) have probably the worst records of youth joblessness in the world, averaging some 25% (Kabbani & Kothari, 2005). This largely explains the upheavals that have come to be known as 'the Arab Spring'. The once 'fertile crescent' has remained trapped in the Middle Ages since the end of the Ottoman Empire. According to one account, if you subtract earnings from oil, the entire exports of the Middle East are merely equal to the total exports of Switzerland.

Few developing countries illustrate the spiral of decline in human welfare as Nigeria has experienced in the past four decades. Peter Lewis has undertaken a fascinating comparative study of economic development in Nigeria and Indonesia (Lewis, 2007.) Although both countries began with the same initial conditions in 1960 and both experienced instability and military dictatorships, Nigerian elites bled dry their country while the equally corrupt elites of Indonesia make the critical choice of investing at home. It is clear that poverty is a major factor explaining the current wave of terrorist insurgency.

Poverty in Borno State

On all the poverty indices, it is clear that the North is comparatively more impoverished than the rest of the country. Available studies from UN agencies, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and other relevant institutions point to the fact that poverty is worsening in Nigeria. According to the NBS, over 60% of Nigerians are living below the internationally defined poverty line (National Bureau of Statistics, 2012). It is evident from recent data that poverty in Nigeria wears a predominantly northern face. Borno and the North East comprise some of the most impoverished regions in the country, where the incidence of absolute poverty exceeds 70%.

Borno has one of the fastest growing populations in the country estimated at 4.5 million people, and growing at an average of 2.8% per annum. The rate of urbanisation is estimated at over 4% annually and as people move into the cities, greater pressure is placed on dilapidated infrastructures, social services and housing, and consequently results in a growth of urban slums. Migration southwards is placing additional pressures on scarce fertile land for cultivation and pasture for livestock.

Agriculture, which remains the backbone of the local economy, is hampered by low productivity and access to inputs such as seedlings, fertilisers, appropriate technology and affordable credit. Enhancing farm productivity is critical to eliminating hunger and ensuring food security.

Infrastructure facilities across the State, particularly electricity, transport and water remain in acute deficit with electricity supply largely restricted to

urban centres. Water scarcity is probably the single most critical challenge facing ordinary people in the State, much of it due to poor maintenance of dams and boreholes. Ordinary people have poor access to medical services and most cannot afford the charges.

The State remains one of the most educationally disadvantaged regions in the Federation with only one out of seven pupils (13.82%) proceeding from elementary school to secondary education.⁸ Most youths have no access and no opportunity to acquire vocational skills that will make them economically self-sufficient. While the State is disadvantaged in terms of western education, it is a magnet for Qur’anic education under the ‘Almajiri’ system. Of the estimated 9 million ‘Almajirai’ to be found throughout northern Nigeria, an estimated 1.5 million are said to be in Borno State alone. Such an influx of under-fed, ill-clad and poorly housed youth constitutes a potentially explosive force in the hands of a teacher with extremist ideological views and politicians with an axe to grind with their opponents.

Linking poverty and terrorism

Poverty maybe one direct trigger for terrorism, but we must recognize not all terrorists are poor and not all people in poverty are terrorists. The 19 poorest countries in the world have no recorded incidences of terrorism. A more credible explanation is that the prevalence of poverty makes it easier for extremist groups to mobilise disenchanted mobs in pursuit of their own political goals. In northern Nigeria, where over 70% of the population lives under the internationally defined poverty line, it is easy to see how any demagogue or religious extremist can mobilise the poor and destitute as instruments for his own political goals. Youth unemployment, especially within the growing stratum of university graduates, is an added factor (The World Bank, 2009). When people are pushed to the lowest levels of desperation and hopelessness, they can easy fall prey to religious demagogues who offer them a sense of belonging.

It is equally true that unjust and corrupt governments provide a fertile ground for terrorism. Some would argue that non-democratic governments breed conditions that terrorists can exploit in furtherance of their own objectives. While this is highly probable, social science provides no evidence that undemocratic governments necessarily lead to proliferation of terrorists. In fact, the opposite appears to be the case. The likelihood of terrorism surfacing in countries such as North Korea, China and Cuba is quite remote. What seems obvious is that in fledgling democracies where corruption is rife and institutions are weak, there is a higher likelihood of terrorist activities

8. Interview with Borno State Ministry Official in Maiduguri, April 2012.

emerging.

Terrorist movements are always led by well educated and, in some cases, highly privileged people. Osama bin Laden hailed from an affluent Saudi background, having studied economics and engineering at university. His deputy, Ayman Mohammed Rabie al-Zawahiri is a qualified surgeon from an illustrious Egyptian family of intellectuals. It begs the question as to why some of those intellectuals and not others become alienated in the first place. This would suggest other factors relating to individual psychology, personality types, dynamics of socialisation, environmental influences and the specific conditions in which such individuals find themselves.

State failure and the fragility of nations

State failure is another contributing factor. A failed state is defined by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD as a situation where “state structures lack political will and/or capacity to provide the basic functions needed for poverty reduction, development and to safeguard the security and human rights of their populations” (OECD, 2007: 2). State failure can be said to prevail where public institutions are no longer able to deliver positive political goods to citizens and that such failure prevails on a scale likely to undermine the legitimacy and the existence of the state itself. The most critical areas of state failure relate to inability to provide a wide range of public goods, especially in terms of law and order, security, provision of economic and communication infrastructures and supply of basic welfare services (Ghani & Lockhart, 2008). Some of the indicators of state weakness that could potentially lead to state failure include emergence of disharmony among communities, inability to control borders, growth of criminal violence, corrupt institutions and decaying infrastructures. A good number of countries in Africa have been categorised as “failed states”, the most obvious cases being Somalia, Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau.

Nigeria may not be a “failed state”, but it is speedily relapsing into the band of failing states. The symptoms of state failure are to be seen in the inability of the state to maintain law and order; in the random outbreak of gratuitous, nihilistic violence; in the widespread practice of cultism among some members of the ruling elites; in the inability to provide stable electricity for all its people; in the parlous state of infrastructures; in the failure to build and maintain refineries and so being a net importer of refined petroleum; in the inability to effectively patrol its borders; in the failure to control corruption; in the high prevalence of lawless violence and criminality; all the carnage on its highways; and in the abject failure to keep the common peace and to secure the lives and properties of its citizens. Millions of youth wonder the streets with no hope on the horizon. A good number are finding succour in cultism, prostitution, kidnapping, robbery and other forms of

violent criminality.

State failure provides a good excuse for terrorist groups to question the legitimacy of the state and to seek to impose an alternative vision of political order. With regard to Boko Haram, for example, the writer was surprised to hear from many well-educated ‘Northerners’ that they sympathise with the movement and would join the group if they had enough guts to do so. In a country that does not offer its citizens any hope and denies its youth all the opportunities, it is no surprise that extremists such as Mohammed Yusuf were able to mobilise such a formidable following.

Equally important is the politics of competitive ethnicity and the dynamics of inter-group relations within the Nigerian federation. The geometry of power places awesome powers in the federal centre. This makes the Presidency the most coveted political prize of all; a zero-sum game in which the winners view state power as an opportunity to corner the nation’s wealth for themselves and their small coterie of acolytes. Most development experts have tended to dwell on vertical inequities as measured by the Gini Coefficient as the only real yardstick for determining socio-economic inequality. Important as this is, it is becoming more evident that inter-group inequities are also vital and could actually prove even more politically explosive.

There is also the culture of violence, which has been endemic to Nigerian politics since independence. It has been suggested that the roots of this tradition of violence go back to the colonial state itself, which was founded and maintained by violence. It also took violence to dislodge it. A tradition so established was quite easy to perpetuate in the post-independence period, from the ‘Agbekoya riots’ in the Western region in the 1960s to the skirmishes between the Northern People’s Congress (NPC) and the Northern Elements’ Progressive Union (NEPU) to the post-election violence that followed the April 2011 presidential elections.

External influences are also major factors in terrorist activities, particularly in countries such as Nigeria. Muammar Gadaffi in Libya, before his demise, was known to have financed certain extremist groups in Nigeria. There is anecdotal evidence that Iran and Saudi Arabia have provided considerable financial support over the years to Islamic groups in Nigeria. Not all the money has been used for building mosques, schools and clinics. It has been estimated that over the last 30 years Saudi has been spending an annual average of US\$ 2.5 billion on Islamic activities across the world. The Islamic Republic of Iran has shown an undue interest in Nigerian politics over the last couple of years. There is no doubting that some of their money has gone into financing terrorist activities in Nigeria. The discovery in October 2010 of 12 containers of highly sophisticated arms that were traceable to Iran was perhaps only the tip of the iceberg.

The roots of ethno-sectarian conflict in Nigeria

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country. There are some 200 ethnic groups and over 500 dialects within the country. Although national census enumeration exercises have always excluded religion from the headcount, it is generally accepted that the country is almost evenly divided between Christians in the South and Muslims in the North, with the predominantly Christian Middle Belt straddling north and South. The structure of politics in Nigeria has often reflected the fissures, regionalism, identity politics and competitive ethnicity inherent in such a diverse polity (Dudley, 1968).

Most Nigerian Muslims are Sunnis, with some of the elites belonging to rival Qadiriyya and Tijanniya Sufi denominations. Other denominations include the Tariqa, the Malikiya, the Ahmadiya, and the Islamiya. One of the latest denominations to make an entry into the religious landscape in northern Nigeria is the Shi'i religion. Following the Iranian revolution of 1979, several Nigerian students went to study in Iran and returned as Shi'i adherents and proselytisers. One of the new denominations that draw the young educated Muslim intelligentsia is the Jama't Izzalat al Bid'a wa Iqamat as Sunna (Society of Removal of Innovation and Reestablishment of the Sunna).⁹ Another new group is the Da'awa, sometimes used interchangeably with the Hisba whose role is to enforce Sharia law.¹⁰

In a country of such diversity, ethnic and religious cleavages can easily be exploited by unscrupulous elites to inflame latent tensions, leading to inter-communal violence. In this respect, Nigeria is no different from other multiethnic developing societies where power elites often prefer to exploit what Crawford Young terms "the politics of cultural pluralism" (1979). Politicians who lose out in power struggles often resort to religion and ethnicity as banners for political mobilisation. This largely explains why violence has been a characteristic feature of the Nigerian political scene since independence.

Political violence has a rather long path-dependent trajectory in

9. Also known as Izala or Yan Izala, the movement was founded in Jos by Sheikh Ismaila Idris in 1978 with the objective of purifying Islam from what he believes to be Sufi syncretism.

10. It has been suggested that both the Shi'i and the Yan Izala are opposed to the current application of Sharia in Nigeria. They insist that Sharia can only work where the political leaders fully operate an Islamic republic. Among those who hold this view is said to be the Zaria-based Shi'ite leader, Sheikh El Zakzaky, who is said to have opposed the precipitate application of Sharia on the grounds that the prevailing social and economic conditions did not make it feasible.

Nigeria.¹¹ British occupation was accomplished largely through force and violence. For much of the first decade of independence, politics in Nigeria was characterised by widespread political violence, including violent coups d'état and ultimately civil war during 1967-1970. The traditions of democratic politics have been marked by electoral violence and occasional bloodletting between rival political parties (Anifowoshe, 1981; Cf. Osita Agbu, 2004; Dike, 2003). Succeeding governments, whether civilian or military, have sometimes engaged in what could only be defined in terms of 'state terrorism'.

With the widespread misery occasioned by Structural Adjustment Reforms and the ensuing repression and political decay in the 1980s, Nigerian ethnic communities began to seek succour in new primordial associations. Regional and ethnic militias became the order of the day.¹²

On the specifically religious dimensions of social conflict, northern Nigeria has remained the most troubled region in the country. For much of Nigeria's history since independence, northern elites have found it expedient to use religion as a means of consolidating their power and ensuring their ascendancy over the peoples of the Middle Belt (Kukah, 1994). The latter have felt that the rhetoric of 'One North' rings increasingly hollow and that, in fact, it was never intended to apply to them in the first place. The infamous remarks, rightly or wrongly attributed to the Premier of the Northern Region, Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto, has been a cause of much grief, if not paranoia among middle belt peoples:

This New Nation called Nigeria should be an estate of our great grandfather Uthman Dan Fodio. We must ruthlessly prevent a change of power. We must use the minorities in the North as willing tools, and the South, as conquered territory and never allow them to rule over us, and never allow them to have control over their future (Bello, 1960).

While the late Premier was actually more liberal in practice than his words would suggest, the near-forcible conversion campaigns towards the end of his life in the Middle Belt further reinforced fears of domination by the peoples of central Nigeria (Paden & Bello, 1986; Tseayo, 1973).

Whatever his shortcomings, Sir Ahmadu Bello was certainly more liberal

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11. Nigerian political culture has been replete with violence and assassinations. (Ruth Watson, 2003; Shehu Sani, 2007).
 12. Notable among these were groups such as the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Egbesu Boys and O'Odua Peoples' Congress (OPC) in the West, Niger-Delta Volunteers Force, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and the Ijaw Youth Organisation in the Niger Delta.

and more accommodating to others than those pretenders who imagined themselves his legatees. Not only were they infernally corrupt, they were lacking in moral scruples and had absolutely no vision of Nigeria as a nation other than their own narrowly defined class interests. The shadowy group, which came to be known as 'the Kaduna Mafia', was seen as the vanguard and protector of northern interests, essentially defined in terms of elite access to patronage, public appointments and other forms of preferment.¹³ The Northern Nigerian Development Company (NDDC) and affiliates such as the former Bank of the North were the economic legacy institutions that provided the financial base for the northern ruling class. During the days of the northern commodity boards, the Middle Belt, which is the breadbasket of the country, felt increasingly short-changed as the commodity boards monopolised the marketing of commodities, imposing prices that amounted to creaming off the profits accruable to local farmers.¹⁴ Rightly or wrongly, the peoples of the Middle Belt felt increasingly treated as second-class citizens by the northern oligarchy, leading to embitterment and alienation.

In the 1980s, the northeast, like the rest of the North, fell under the sway of the Maitatsine sect. Thousands were killed and considerable properties and infrastructures were destroyed during months of mayhem perpetrated by Maitatsine followers.¹⁵ The re-introduction of Sharia criminal law in several northern states during 2000/2001 provoked widespread further unrest. Sharia criminal law was more or less abolished when the British conquered Nigeria. Common law replaced all practices that were deemed to affront the British sense of 'natural justice, equity and good conscience'. The controversy over Sharia had almost threatened to scuttle the political transition process in the late 1970's (Laremont, 2011). Protests by minority Christian communities resulted in the death of thousands. For many, the issue is not whether Sharia should operate, but that the manner of its operation could lead to implicit discrimination and harassment of non-Muslims. The issue has become increasingly entrenched, effectively dividing Nigeria into two separate jurisdictions: one governed by Islamic Sharia and the other by common law tradition (Peters, 2001. Ostien, 2007).

Ethno-sectarian conflicts have continued to characterise the political

13. They may have taken too literally Ibn Khaldun's doctrine of 'asabiyya', forging a solidarity based on clannishness centred on the Caliphate and its hegemonic structures. On the role of the 'Kaduna Mafia' in northern politics (Takaya & Tyoden, 1987).

14. The case of cotton may be quite instructive. (Onu & Okunmadewa, 2008).

15. As a young researcher and Fellow of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, I was part of a team that carried out a detailed study of the Maitatsine phenomenon, carrying out extensive field work in Kaduna, Adamawa and Borno (Gyuse & Mailafia, 1983).

landscape (Suberu, 2001), probably taking the lives of 35,000 Nigerians between 1999 and 2011.

Further complicating the situation has been the emergence of state-sponsored vigilante groups that were purportedly set up to prevent armed robbery and other forms of violent criminality. These often resorted to extra-judicial methods to tackle crime and the meting out of summary justice to alleged criminals. The proliferation of these armed militias reinforced a culture of violence and lawlessness as these groups capitalised on legitimate grievances to justify bank robberies, assassinations and kidnapping.

Under the pretext of keeping the common peace, vigilantes and groups such as the ‘Hisba’ in the Sharia States have sometimes served as enforcement agents for powerful elements in pursuit of narrow selfish ends. Some of the activities of the occasionally overzealous yan Hisba Sharia law enforcers in places like Kano and other Sharia States have caused concern among Christian communities who feel they are being compelled to subscribe to religious tenets with which they cannot identify. (Olaniyi, undated). From Maitatsine in the 1980s to Boko Haram in 2011, some State Governors have been known to patronise religious teachers with potentially extremist views. We are led to believe that Nigerian political culture does not exert a cost on those who perpetrate acts of political violence.

The Plateau crisis as a metaphor

Perhaps the crisis on the Jos Plateau is the most tragic of these conflicts because of its enduring character, the venom with which it has been fought and, increasingly, the involvement of Islamists from neighbouring countries.¹⁶ Violent killings took place in 1994, 2001, 2002, 2008 and 2010. The Jos crisis has been interpreted variously as a religious, ethnic and political crisis. At the heart of it is the acrimonious question of ‘indigene versus settler’ that has pitted one group against another. The Hausa-Fulani who have settled in the town would like to lay claim to ownership as much as the Berom, Afizere, Anaguta and others who claim to be the original ‘owners’ of Jos.¹³

The creation of Jos North Local Government by the military administration of General Ibrahim Babangida was seen by indigenes as a piece of mischief making. While the area has a substantial population of Hausa traders, it is also the seat of the Gbong Gwom Jos, the paramount

16. In a recent email discussion with researcher Jana Krause, she opines that foreign elements, including al-Qaeda, may have been involved in recent episodes of violence on the Jos Plateau. Her study on the subject is probably the most comprehensive so far. (Krause, 2011). See Also (Okpaga, Chijioke and Innocent, 2012).

ruler of the Berom people. The Berom insist that just as no Berom person could ever lay claim to standing for elections in the Local Government which seats the Emir of Kano, they would not accept 'foreigners' lording over them on their own turf (Higazi, 2011). It has become increasingly difficult to provide a dispassionate analysis of the so-called 'Jos crisis'. There is no doubting that the 'settlers' have encountered some form of discrimination by succeeding administrations in the State. Plateau people would insist that it is not a problem peculiar to their State, but rather a problem that is widespread throughout the federation.

Plateau State is located in the central savannah of the Middle Belt of Nigeria, at the confluence between north and south, east and west. Like the rest of the Middle Belt, the vast majority of the people are Christians. This is so by virtue of the fact that, unlike the Hausa city-states of the north, they were never conquered by the Fulani Jihad of the early nineteenth century. The imposition of British colonial rule and its indirect administration foisted the feudal emirate system upon these people who had never been conquered in war and who were themselves heirs of the great Nok civilization of ancient times.¹⁷

At independence in 1960, it remained part of the old Northern Region, although the area had a reputation for voting for the opposition. For this and other reasons, the Plateau remained largely 'marginalised' by the Northern Region Government.

The Plateau has a rich and fertile soil that supports livestock as well as cultivation of temperate vegetables and fruits. The establishment of the Federal Capital of Abuja under two hundred kilometers away has boosted the demand for agricultural produce from the Plateau. With the worsening crisis of climate change in the far north pastoralists have moved into the Plateau and other parts of the middle belt in search of better grazing land for their livestock.

Historically, the city of Jos was probably the most cosmopolitan urban centre in Nigeria. It was the centre of missionary activity in the Middle Belt, attracting Christian missionaries from different parts of the Western world. The large presence of expatriates meant that physical infrastructures in the city were second to none. This was further enhanced under the late Joseph Dechi Gomwalk, the military administrator of the old Benue-Plateau during 1967—1975. Gomwalk was a master-builder who constructed roads, expanded housing, clinics and schools. He built a newspaper and a new radio

17. The Kwararafa peoples of the Middle Belt had conquered Hausa land and were, on and off, the rulers of Kano for the better part of two centuries between the 16th and 18th centuries. On the changing character of identity politics in the Middle Belt, see Mustapha, undated.

house and television station. The northern oligarchy was uncomfortable with these developments, seeing in them a direct challenge to their dominance and hegemony. The Dimka coup attempt of 1976 by predominantly Plateau and Middle Belt officers further soured relations between the Plateau and the core north.

For nearly two decades, the people of the Plateau have known little or no respite from conflict and violence. While some have interpreted the conflict in religious terms, others insist it is all about politics. Many see it in terms of ethnicity and the struggle over land and limited resources. The truth is that most human conflicts are deeply embedded in a complex web of forces. In the case of the Plateau, they may have been triggered by local political factors relating to the willful creation of Jos North Local Government, but they have also taken on the coloration of religion, thanks to the rise of Global Jihad and the re-location of al-Qaeda from Afghanistan to the Maghrib and the Sahel. The demographic movements occasioned by climate change and desertification are also major factors. When all these are linked to dwindling job prospects amongst youth and increasing impoverishment among the general population, you get a fatal cocktail ready to implode at the slightest opportunity.

While much of the conflict may have originated from the problem of political representation, it has snowballed into a religious conflict with global dimensions. It would seem that part of the agenda of Boko Haram and other such jihadist groups is the ‘cleansing’ of the Christian presence in the north. There are hardly any churches left in Yobe State. Christian communities in Borno have resorted to praying at home instead of meeting at a place of worship. After full success in this ‘ethnic cleansing’, the next logical step would be to intensify their activities in the Middle Belt so as to break the spirit of those communities through the grand strategy of ‘fitna’ and to ensure that their ideology prevails throughout the ‘Old North’. The fundamental contradiction of this movement is that they entertain a strictly narrow definition of the ‘the North’, but at the same time they insist that the Middle Belt must also remain in the historic North.

Since they will stop at nothing, it is self-evident that the embattled people of the Plateau and the Middle Belt will have to defend themselves and the values that they hold most sacred. What is at stake is nothing less than the future of Nigeria itself. Given the complete breakdown of trust, the failure of efforts to find a just and lasting solution, and the existential threat which they face, local communities will probably have to resort to self-help to protect themselves and their families – at least until such a time that the government takes concrete steps to protect them.

Governments at State and Federal level have attempted to hold peace summits and institute interfaith dialogues, but these efforts have borne little fruit. Military intervention has only succeeded in maintaining a Carthaginian

peace. We have seen neither original thinking nor bold initiatives that would address the situation and rescue the benighted people of Plateau from the jaws of catastrophe. Judicialism has also failed. Between 2004 and 2010 no less than five judicial commissions of inquiry have we established to address the Plateau crisis. None have yielded any meaningful results. For some strange reason, government has not taken bold steps to publish the findings of the commissions as a means of building a framework towards a just and lasting peace (Krause, 2012).

Origins of the Boko Haram Sect

The Boko Haram sect originates from 2001 when a Muslim cleric, Mohammed Ali, succeeded in attracting a large following at his mosque in the northeastern city of Maiduguri. In 2003 its leader and several of its members were killed in a dispute. A charismatic young man by the name of Mohammed Yusuf (Sanusi Aliyu, 2009) took over. The group were known as 'the Nigerian Taliban', on account of their Puritanism, The new mosque they built became known as 'Ibn Tamiyyah Masjid' in honour of the medieval Arab theologian Sheik ul-Islam Ibn Tamiyyah (1263—1328 AD).

Mohammed Yusuf used his charisma and organisational abilities to build a formidable network of followers. His organisation was run almost like a cooperative, where the well off contributed funds that were used to help the poor. He drew a mass following from the elites as well as the masses and was patronised by the wealthy and the politically well connected, including the Governor of the State at the time. From the significant charitable works among the poor the group was increasingly known as a 'State within the State'. (Walter, 2012.)

In 2007 Mohammed Yusuf was accused of having Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmoud Adam, a cleric and regular preacher, assassinated because of his public criticisms of Yusuf and his followers. Bloody confrontations were to follow in Bauchi in July 2009, with the group becoming more radicalised. The highhanded crackdown by the police simply upscaled the level of confrontation, with the group resorting to the use of more sophisticated weapons (CLEEN Foundation, 2011). The conflict soon metamorphosed from being a clash among Muslim groups to a focus on churches and Christians from Yobe to Maiduguri and Bauchi. On 30 July Mohammed Yusuf was arrested while in hiding and was soon reported dead, presumably executed by the police. Also executed was Buji Foi, a former commissioner of religious affairs in Borno State and a known financier of the group.¹⁸

18. In May 2012 a court ordered the Borno State Government and the Federal Government of Nigeria to pay the family the sum of 100 million naira (US\$617,000) for the illegal killing of Mohammed Yusuf.

The death of Mohammed Yusuf, far from quelling the rebellion, added more fuel. The April 2011 post-election violence in the north appeared to have enhanced the legitimacy of the Boko Haram sect as an enforcer of northern political interests under the cover of religion.¹⁹ The October 2011 Eagle Square bombings that took the lives of 12 people were the opening salvoes for the current round of terrorist activities. Before then, there were rumours of the massive importation of arms by all sorts of shadowy groups as the country was moving towards an election year. An arms cache coming from Iran was intercepted. The Boko Haram sect, avowedly committed to the forcible Islamisation of Nigeria, has moved from one audacious act to the other, including attacks on the UN Office and Police Headquarters and military barracks in Abuja.

It would be a mistake to view Boko Haram as being a purely religious problem. Not only are politicians and other influential persons implicated, but it thrives on the increasing misery in which young people, particularly in the impoverished North, find themselves today.

Economic and social consequences of terrorism

In rich as well as poor countries, terrorism exerts a heavy toll on national economies. The economic impact is inevitably felt more in low-income economies. Economists have developed various approaches for analysing the economic costs of terrorism. First, the direct costs resulting from damage to physical infrastructures and economic assets. Secondly the indirect costs associated with long queues at airports and highways due to the security checks that people now have to undergo. A third level derives from the loss of domestic and inward investments associated with terrorism. It is evident that terrorism scares foreign investors and increases the costs of doing business within and between countries.

It has been estimated that the city of New York alone lost US\$ 21 billion as a result of the 9/11 attacks. With the establishment of the Homeland Security, the US Government now has to spend a whopping US\$500 billion on security alone. Globally, it has also been calculated that world GDP decreased by a massive US\$3.6 trillion in 2002 as a direct and indirect consequence of terrorist activities in 2001. Put in perspective it amounts to a third of the GDP of the United States and exceeds the combined GDP of

19. Several commentators are of the view that there are not one but several groups that are lumped under the common rubric of Boko Haram. There may well be opportunistic criminals whose activities have been subsumed under Boko Haram.

Argentina, Italy and Britain. Another area of economic cost relates to the impact of terrorism on international trade supply chains, i.e. the sequence of steps that global suppliers of goods take to get products from one area to another.²⁰

Linked to this is the increased cost to global supply chain logistics. Substantial costs do accrue to businesses when extra security layers have to be introduced at ports and land borders. According to the OECD, higher transportation costs associated with more security checks have a negative impact on the external trade of emerging economies that, over the last decade, have benefited from reduction in costs in the last decade. This would in turn affect those countries' ability to combat poverty.

Insurance firms revise upwards their actuarial risk projections and premium costs. New market-based instruments such as 'catastrophe bonds' have been introduced to ameliorate risk from terrorist activities. In the industrial economies, the estimated extra spending on security by government and the private sector by 1% of GDP is forecast to result in a 0.7% fall in GDP output, which further complicates national fiscal balances and growth prospects.

For countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, Kenya and Tanzania that are dependent on tourism, any incidence of terrorism is likely to register significant falls in the number of tourist visitors. For such countries, a drop in the number of tourists translates into significant falls in revenue and economic growth. In the case of Nigeria, it is clear that the new focus on tackling terrorism would mean diverting scarce budgetary resources from vital development projects to defence and security.

The association of Nigeria's external image with terrorism and until recently being on the list of 'Terror Watch' countries also means less FDI coming to the country as potential investors reassess their risk options. Some who have already invested in Nigeria may consider relocating their businesses to neighbouring countries such as Ghana, Togo and Benin.

Apart from the economic and monetary costs associated with terrorism, there are also social and psychological costs. Terrorism erodes inter-communal trust and destroys the reservoir of social capital that is so vital to building harmonious societies and pooling community energies for national development. The attendant proliferation of small arms and the militarisation

20. It has been estimated that the introduction of additional security measures between national borders may increase the ad valorem cost of trading internationally by 1 to 3 percentage points. With elasticity of trade flows with respect to transaction costs falling within the -2 to -3 range, this could be expected to lead to a significant fall in the volume of international trade, which in turn would have a negative impact on openness, productivity and medium-term global output growth.

of society result in a vicious cycle of violence which hampers national cohesion and stability.

The long-term impact of such violence on cities and regions is best exemplified by the impoverishment that has affected Kaduna and Jos. Kaduna used to be one of the most prosperous cities in Nigeria. It was in many ways the industrial hub of the north, a cosmopolitan city with over a dozen textile firms and prosperous trading companies. The Kaduna of today is a tragically divided city in which Muslims live predominantly in the north and Christians predominantly in the south. Most investors have packed up their businesses. The Jos Plateau is following a similar trend, as it loses its cosmopolitanism and local economies are destroyed. The tragedy is that the collapse of local economies and the erosion of social capital reinforce a downward spiral of further impoverishment, which in itself sows the seeds of further conflict.

For most of the north, the ongoing insurgency impacts on the regional economy. Lebanese and Indian expatriates with established businesses in Kano going back decades relocate to Abuja and the south. Many have left the country altogether. Hotels, banks and other businesses have witnessed significant reductions in their activities. The border towns that once thrived on trade with neighbouring countries have also seen business curtailed because of increasing restrictions on cross-border traffic. In Kano alone, an estimated 126 industries have recently closed down. Another trend is the massive movement of southerners from the north, many of them SME operators and professionals.²¹

The case of Borno is particularly illustrative of the general trend. A State that officially defines itself as “The Land of Peace” has become a by-word for violence and religious extremism. Partly engendered by mass disenchantment born of impoverishment and partly sponsored in the past by misguided politicians, the rising spectre of extremist violence has reinforced a path-dependence of poverty, wiping off livelihoods, undermining societal cohesion and deepening the vicious cycle of poverty.

The terrorist insurgency in Borno and the northeast has not only destroyed the local economy, it has compounded the crisis of poverty in the region. The author visited Maiduguri in April 2011 at the official invitation of the State Governor, Kashim Shettima. Although the Governor gave the impression that he was firmly in favour of finding a lasting solution to the crisis, we also noticed some form of moral ambivalence on his part. Indeed,

21. Rumours are rife that the elections of 2014 are likely to lead to another upheaval in which southerners may once again come under attack in the north. Many are therefore selling off their properties and re-locating to the south. (Sunday Sun, 9 September 2012).

it has been suggested that people like him have actually been surreptitiously arming and financing the terrorists as a means of undermining the legitimacy of the Federal Government. We found Maiduguri to be a shadow of its former vibrant self – a city of ghosts where people talk in whispers.

Terrorism and nationhood

It is clear that the current situation portends ominous trends for Africa's most populous nation. In the northern cities of Bornu, Damaturu and Yola, Christian worshippers have been attacked in churches and latest reports indicate house-to-house killings by extremists, far from the eyes of the police, army and security agencies. President Goodluck Jonathan recently alarmed the entire nation when he declared that the Boko Haram sect has infiltrated the military, the police and security services and even the Presidency. He declared the current situation as the worst since the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970. There are also strong indications that southern Christians - including indigenous Hausa-Fulani northern Christians - are leaving the north en masse. Northern Muslims are also leaving the south by the truckload. What someone has termed the 'spirit of Sudan' has gripped the entire nation, with an unprecedented atmosphere of fear and gloom under what appears like a gathering storm. If Christians were to retaliate, Nigeria's future may hang on a precipice.

The Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka has recently pointed out that Nigeria is already at the verge of disintegration. It is a choice that the current generation of Nigerians must make: whether they want to live together as one country or face the bleak prospects of dissolution. The country stands in that twilight zone where any wrong move or misguided action could spell disaster for the survival of the federation. With the onslaught of Boko Haram and other terrorist groups, the country faces the grim prospects of a disastrous genocidal religious conflict on a scale greater even than Rwanda. The Goodluck Jonathan administration must make very tough choices in the years ahead. Fishing out the kingpins of terrorism and confiscating their assets and prosecuting them is absolutely vital, in addition to decisive military action to defeat the terrorists. He must realise that a government that cannot secure the lives and properties of its citizens has failed in its most elementary duty. In all this, however, efforts must be made to bring Muslims and Christians - north and south – together and heal the bitter wounds of the recent past.

Can we legitimately suppose that some of the political leaders of the north know more about Boko Haram than they are prepared to admit? Could the silence of some of them imply tacit complicity? Are there significant elements in northern society who may not approve of the methods of the insurgents but who nonetheless endorse their objectives?

Whatever the answers that emerge from the foregoing questions, one

thing is clear: Boko Haram could not have done a greater disservice to the Muslim cause. Such barbarities seen against defenceless women and children in places of worship are unworthy of any religion. Other Nigerians are more than able to inflict the same, if not higher levels of damage. They have held back, not out of fear, but out of that moral restraint and inner hope that Nigeria must not be allowed to descend into utter darkness. I would urge them to continue to exercise restraint and to forgive those who kill and maim their women and children.

On its part, the international community must rise in wholesale condemnation against the evil that Boko Haram represents. Civil society, government and the international community must join hands to restore hope and to build the foundations for a just and lasting peace. Indeed, the sages of old have taught that light will always triumph over darkness. But it is clear that light can defeat darkness not with the weapons of vengeful violence, but with the arsenals of enlightenment and reason; with that moral force which accords with the spirit of the laws and the conscience of civilised humanity.

The attitude of the United States and the West in general has been rather intriguing. The EU has not expressed a strong position with regard to terrorist violence in Nigeria, beyond the pious resolutions that were passed during the joint ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly in Horsens, Denmark in May 2012 condemning terrorist violence and urging disarmament and dialogue (ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, 2012.) The Obama administration has not placed Boko Haram on the list of terrorist organisations on the pretext that that the link between the sect and al-Qaeda has not been established beyond any shadow of doubt.²² There are also those who insist that doing so will give Boko Haram undue prominence, expanding its access to international terrorist financing while making it more difficult to engage with the group while providing development assistance to the impoverished North. What has been particularly surprising is that American weapons have been found among the terrorist insurgents. Some Western commentators have tended to blame lack of Christian forbearance

22. The seeming coincidence between the EU and U.S. position is rather surprising. This is because the two sides have centred fundamentally on how to confront global terror. Robert Kagan discussed the key elements in the divergence of strategic approaches across the Atlantic. See his “Power and Weakness”, Policy Review, No. 113, June/July, 2002. For a critique of Kagan, see Dilling, 2002. Dilling expresses this divergence in terms of “the Hobbesian philosophy of the Americans and the Kantian *Weltanschauung* of the Europeans” (Dilling, 2002: 964).

for prolonging the crisis.²³

Whilst it is true that it always “takes two to tango” and that aggressive preaching by Pentecostal groups has been offensive to many Muslims, we cannot run away from the statistical fact that the overwhelming number of attacks have often started from one side. The entirety of the north has been undergoing what amounts to a form of low-intensity warfare that fits perfectly with the logic of Global Jihad. The aim appears to be an ethnic cleansing of minority communities in the north through relentless violence, fear and demoralisation.

Some foreign analysts wilfully ignore these realities, in particular, the statistics underlying the slaughter of defenceless women and children in churches and villages that has been a recurrent phenomenon in northern Nigeria since the 1980s. A noted American political scientist and purported ‘Nigeria expert’, Jean Herskovits, recently wrote an article that seemed to whitewash the atrocities of the terrorist insurgents, putting the blame instead, on the government. Her article amounted to an insult to the families of the thousands of innocent souls who have been lost due to Islamist-inspired terror in Nigeria (Herskovits, 2012)²⁴ A few years ago a study from the United States predicted that Nigeria would disintegrate by the year 2015.²⁵ The United States has been in this business of prophesying doom for Nigeria for decades now. The West seems unwilling to lend support to President Goodluck Jonathan because it would not want to offend the Arab-Muslim world by appearing to be taking sides with Nigerian Christians. Some Nigerians see in this attitude a conspiracy to ensure the disintegration of Africa’s largest nation. Few understand that if Nigeria does eventually implode, it would result in the bloodiest civil war in Africa’s history, an economic disaster for West Africa, a political tragedy for Africa and a catastrophic humanitarian disaster for the international community.

Beyond the loss of lives and the destruction of properties and physical infrastructure, terrorism is even more damaging to the soul of the individual

23. An elderly English missionary woman that knew me as a child and taught me Sunday school scolded Christians for retaliating against Muslims. I felt shame and confusion at the same time. I explained to her that as far as I am concerned I could never subscribe to what in the popular parlance is known as ‘reprisals’. At the same, I would not be in a position to preach to those who have lost loved ones in terrorist attacks and who insist they have a moral duty to protect their loved ones.

24. Her article prompted a rebuttal by no less than the Nigerian Ambassador in Washington, Professor Ade Adefuye, who happens to be a distinguished historian in his own right.

25. This prophecy was later revised and the date shifted from 2015 to 2030 (Abdallah, 2012).

and the community. Buildings that have been destroyed can be rebuilt in no time. Infrastructures can be rehabilitated. Traumatized souls, sadly, may take a generation to heal.²⁶

Summary and conclusions

While globalisation has made the world smaller, it has generated new forms of insecurity among nations and cultural communities that had been cocooned from external influences for centuries. Globalisation has compounded the crisis of governance in some developing countries, deepening the tendencies towards state failure while undermining the capacity to govern at national and international levels. All these factors have weakened the capacity of state authorities, leading to the emergence of transnational terrorist groups that are competing for power and influence with established state authorities. Compounding all these challenges is the absence of multilateral institutions that would ensure effective global governance.

Terrorism is nothing less than the ultimate test of the moral fibre of free societies. In the Nigerian and African context, its rise is not only on account of globalisation and its unequalising tendencies; it is also related to the crisis of development and nationhood, and the failure of the state to provide human security and act as a servant of the people. Tackling terrorism requires a fight to regain the hearts and minds of youth and to foster dialogue among communities. Government must become the servant of the people, not their master. Military action will be necessary, but it must be carefully deployed and it must conform to international humanitarian standards. The security agencies must work more closely together and should be more strategic in their thinking and action. The Federal Government also has to work with its ECOWAS neighbours to prevent terrorists from penetrating the country through its porous borders. The strategy we advocate calls not only for bold action in defeating terrorism; it requires expanding the possibility frontiers of welfare while widening the democratic space for popular participation. Government must provide decent jobs for the teeming millions of youth, steering them from a culture of nihilistic

26. In the village of Vwang, outside Jos, a young lad of 11 recounted to me how his uncle lost his only son in Ali Kazaure during a previous conflict. When the next round of violence erupted, the old man came out with a bag full of poisoned arrows. When he brought down his first victim, he crawled to him like a hyena and systematically began to tear off his flesh with his bare teeth. This may not be an isolated case. There have indeed been reports of cannibalism in Jos – of people cooking their enemies and eating them to express their hatred and contempt.

violence to one of tolerance, patriotism and nonviolence. Ultimately, it is about reinventing Nigeria as a compassionate country, a purpose-driven nation with a clearly defined vision of its manifest destiny as the leader of the New Africa.

A generation of Nigerians, tempered by war and tutored by a hard and bitter peace, should appreciate more than any other that civility and restraint are the only true course for the survival of a multi-ethnic and multi-religious democracy. Terrorism is a negation of all civilised values, encouraging as it does such contempt for human life. While violence has been endemic in the Nigerian polity, the leaders of the north have a particular duty to re-examine their readiness to use religion at the slightest opportunity as a weapon of fear against fellow citizens, particularly minorities in the north. The views of Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka may be anathema to some, but his observations on this matter are unassailable:

When I say that the phenomenon has a very long history, I am talking about a movement that relies on religion as a fuel for their operation, as a fuel for mobilisation, as the impetus, an augmentation of any other legitimate or illegitimate grievance that they might have against society. Because of that fuel, that irrational, very combustible fuel of religion of a particular strain, of a particular irredentist strain...All they need to be told is that this is an enemy of religion and they are ready to kill. No matter the motivations, no matter the extra-motivations of those who send them out, they need only one motivation: that they are fighting the cause of that religion. (The News, 7 February 2012.)

Thinkers as wide apart as Franz Fanon and Maurice Duverger have understood that conflict is endemic in human society and violence merely reflects the existential dilemmas of the human condition. If Boko Haram did not adopt the wholesale murder of defenceless people in the name of Jihad, they would probably have had the majority of Nigerian youth on their side by now. The failures of government and the prevailing culture of impunity have alienated the vast majority of Nigerians from the political system.

In their random and indiscriminate killing of women, children and entire families in places of worship in pursuit of their 'soi-disant' Jihad, Boko Haram have placed themselves outside the pale of civility. If their atrocities continue unchecked and succeed in reaching the south, the inevitable reprisals that will follow will shake the federation to its very foundations. Nigeria's future as a political community will be gravely imperilled as a consequence. Indeed, former aviation minister Femi Fani-Kayode – regarded as an alarmist by some -- insists that the current insurgency represents the greatest threat to Nigeria since the civil war (Nigerian Tribune, 1 July 2012). He likens the Nigerian federation to a marriage in which the 'rich wife' is the South and the 'poor husband' is the North.

The marriage has been strained and turbulent. We fought a brutal and

avoidable 3 year civil war from 1967 in which we killed no less than 2 million....Yet today's barbarism and mass killings are far more horrendous than ever and are far better planned, funded, orchestrated and executed by those that are behind them than ever before. The question is how much longer can the "rich wife" and the "poor husband" give and take this sort of thing from one another? For how long can the centre hold before the voices of reason and restraint are completely drowned by the irrational, compulsive outrage that is gradually building up and the uncontrollable outcry for reprisals and revenge? (Nigerian Tribune, 1 July 2012).

To be sure, the insurgents are neither demons nor irrational madmen. They have simply calculated that the payoffs from their activities outweigh the costs. In the words of political scientist David Apter:

Choices by an individual define his moral personality. Choices by governments constitute the moral aims of society and reflect the ambitions of those within it, thus constituting that measure of satisfaction that will lead to a stable order. The efforts to find such a moral condition, however, may lead to the most violent and unstable of human conditions...in such periods, the loftiest human purposes may be expressed in violence. Whatever the situation, it is in such times that men make explicit those core values they hope will lead to both a moral community and moral individuals. Perhaps this is the ultimate secret of political life. (Apter, 1987: 61—62)

Ultimately, Boko Haram may be more about politics than it is about religion. But they have also told us that they are waging a Jihad and have gone ahead to demonstrate it in their praxis. We cannot ignore those realities. But we must not play into their hands. Muslims and Christians are the children of Abraham. Both religions are indigenous to Africa and none can wish the other away. Nigerians will have to learn how to live together or perish. They must therefore create a national system that is all-inclusive and participatory and that encourages the civic virtues of tolerance and social justice. It is said that true love casteth out fear. What the extremists want to do is to impose a reign of fear; fear in turn will force people to retreat to their own tents and prepare for war. Nigerians must deny them the opportunity to render an entire nation captive.

With its vast natural resources, vibrant cultures and energetic peoples, Nigeria has what it takes to be one of the leading nations in the twenty-first century. But she can only fulfil her vocation when she secures a just and lasting peace within her borders, when she is governed by responsible leaders committed to expanding the frontiers of welfare while protecting the liberties of all her citizens without regard to ethnicity or creed. This will entail major constitutional reengineering and reinvention of the very meaning of its nationhood. The ancient Chinese sage LaoTzu famously declared “governing a large state is like cooking a small fish”. It is a delicate art requiring skill, dexterity and wisdom. Governing a country such as Nigeria requires the

qualities of the highest statesmanship. A vision for Nigeria might just be what is currently lacking in the leadership that is insufficiently capable of demonstrating civic virtue and sense of destiny, the ingredients that would make for the building of a great and prosperous republic.

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CHAPTER 11. OF MULLAHS, RADIO AND RELIGION: THE TALIBAN AND TRIBAL SWAT'S WOMEN IN PAKISTAN



Syed Manzar Abbas Zaidi

The security environment in Pakistan has been dominated in recent years by a fast developing tempo of Talibanisation, which has permeated from the tribal to the urban set-up at an alarming pace. Western socio-political ideology has gradually permeated parts of the urban society, but a clear paradigmatic divide remains between the urban educated mainstream elite and a marginalized tribal populace, where modern ideals are still alien to the behavioural configurations of tribalism (Iqbal, 2006). The Swat area in Pakistan is the epitome of such transmigration, where a full-blown Taliban insurgency took hold before being displaced by the Pakistani army in military operations in 2009. Pockets of resistance still continue to smoulder, but the Swat case study is fascinating as a now historical account of what happens to the local populace, especially women, when such movements gain territorial control of an area. In this context, the author carried out a series of studies on the impact of the Taliban on society, particularly women. These mostly longitudinal, cohort and case studies were carried out during the period February 2006 - October 2013, collectively called the Swat White Papers. These findings of these studies were incorporated in various reports from the area, mostly for the public sector. Most of the findings and first person reportage below are from the various Swat White Paper documents.

The appearance of insurgents in Swat

Once considered a haven for tourists from all over Pakistan, Swat has long depended heavily on the revenue generated through the tourism industry (Rehman, 2008). A rough estimate puts the dependence of more than 60% of the region's inhabitants upon the hospitality industry, which has ground to a complete halt in the wake of violent clashes between militants and security forces, leaving almost 1,200 hotels and thousands of people unemployed. The advent of this pervasive movement can be traced back to July 2006, when Maulana Fazlullah came into the limelight. His religious lineage can be traced to a local cleric Maulana Sufi Muhammad of Tehreek-e-Nifaze-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNSM), who is the father in Law of Fazlullah. Sufi Muhammad passed a decree in 1998 declaring military training to be compulsory for every Muslim. Hundreds of TNSM workers, paying heed to this call, reportedly went for military training in Afghanistan. Sufi was imprisoned in 2001 for leading an 'army' of 10,000 men to Afghanistan to fight alongside the Taliban against the US-led coalition forces and the Northern Alliance in the wake of post 9/11 US incursion in Afghanistan. Sufi Muhammad has been in and out of Pakistani jails ever since.

However, the insurgency only reached its zenith under the tutelage of Maulana Fazlullah, who also currently heads the Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the main consortium of anti state terrorist entities in Pakistan. The Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is an organization proscribed by the Government of Pakistan, and is collectively an umbrella body of outlawed militant groups that operate mainly in FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP, the new name for the province of NWFP), but commit nationwide terrorist acts. They operate under leaders who are now household names in Pakistan. The last leader was Hakeemullah Mahsud, who was killed by an American unmanned drone strike, resulting with Fazlullah taking over. Fazlullah was born as Fazl Hayat in 1975; a Babukarkhel clansman of the Yousufzai tribe, he got his early education in Swat. He subsequently joined the seminary run by Sufi Muhammad, who became his mentor and renamed him Fazlullah. He later married Sufi's daughter. This is an aspect of the passive role of women in conservative societies, whereby they unwittingly provide leverage to virtual nobodies like Fazlullah to reach positions of power, through marriage with powerful figures like Sufi Muhammad. Nothing has been heard about Fazlullah's wife since.

Fazlullah, like many other TNSM activists, was arrested after crossing over to Afghanistan in 2001. He was however subsequently released, and took over the organization of his father in law, due to the latter's detention by Pakistani authorities. It seems that he was much more successful than Sufi in concretizing the organization, with the numbers of recruits swelling rapidly. Maulana Fazlullah devised a novel strategy of radical preaching; he

installed an FM radio channel in 2004, which he clandestinely operated. His message was simple; anti US and anti-Government rhetoric, interspersed with calls for support of the Taliban in Afghanistan and the establishment of an Islamic state. The title of 'Radio Mulla' given to him is apt; according to an estimate there were about 30 FM Radio channels operated by him and his cronies in Swat, churning out an indigenous mix of Jihadi propaganda. The Government tried to counter this by stepping up the frequencies of the local channels to block this transmission, but these propaganda machines proved quite effective at covert relocation and transmission. Fazlullah was initially quite popular. News reports coming out of the Swat have gauged his meteoric rise to popularity by the fact that when he gave a call for the establishment of a madrassah on banks of the Swat River, Rs. 3.8 million were collected reportedly within 24 hours, and the amount rose to Rs 35 million within a couple of days. His female followers reportedly contributed most of this amount.

Rapid deterioration of security for women in Swat

The Mulla preached an essentialist and Talibanised ideology. This prompted attacks on CD shops, mandatory shaving of beards, and threats to girl's education, all purportedly based on Sharia law. The threat also materialized in the form of the destruction of women's colleges in Swat, which dealt a crippling blow to the educational prospects of women in that area. This area of the country had achieved the highest female literacy rate as compared to neighbouring districts in the conservative province of KP. Even the religious class was tolerant of women's education. There was large-scale destruction of girls' schools in Swat after Fazlullah took over, because the Taliban are firmly opposed to women's education, considering it un-Islamic. By September 2008 some 105 schools had been destroyed in the district, including 71 girls' schools (The News, 2008). The destruction of such a large number of schools in the scenic valley deprived more than 30,000 female students of education.

The situation took an ominous turn when the Fazlullah-led militants joined Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) formed by top Pakistani militant Baitullah Mehsud in December 2007 in a bid to provide an umbrella to insurgent movements operating in several tribal agencies and settled areas of KP. With this, the movement fell into the hands of tribal-areas-based Taliban, and Maulana Fazlullah lost his authority to make decisions independently. The Swat-based Taliban were previously insisting only on the promulgation of Sharia, but they started making increasingly strident demands of the government. The first peace deal of the Swat chapter of Taliban after being subsumed in TTP was negotiated on 31 May 2008

between the Taliban and the state. It immediately fell to pieces with both sides blaming each other for the failure of the negotiation process. Fazlullah hardened his stance from then onwards, with directions apparently emanating from a more centralized Taliban command and control. Fazlullah would eventually emerge as the TTP's central leader, after the deaths of Baitullah and Hakeemullah Mehsud, both by American unmanned drone strikes.

The area has always been conservative, which is presumably why the pervasion of this phenomenon in the guise of Sharia gained traction. A local that I interviewed during the Swat White Paper study remarked: "It is a question of how you look at things. Jirga has long been a part of tribal tradition and cannot be equated with a parallel government. People in tribal areas were already keeping beards. The women were already in purdah. So, you can't say that a Taliban-like Sharia has been imposed". However, the brutal atrocities, which eventually followed on the heels of Radio mullah's sermons erased any ambiguity in the worldview of Swati society that this movement was a missionary one. Currently, anti Taliban opinion prevails almost universally in Swat.

Women were one of the primary targets of the extremists. Women's educational facilities have never been particularly good in the tribal agencies that make up much of Pakistan's frontier with Afghanistan. The female literacy rate for the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, which include Waziristan and Bajaur, is believed to be as low as 3%. Swat was a breath of fresh air compared to these areas, as it tended to be quite progressive in terms of education as opposed to neighbouring district with respect to women's education. This reputation was destroyed, perhaps irreparably, during the Taliban insurgency.

The Taliban in Afghanistan were strictly opposed to women's education, which they saw as an evil. The Taliban in Pakistan, born and bred in refugee camps in Quetta and Peshawar, were similarly brought up to be wary of women as instruments of the devil, as temptations to be strictly resisted. This is the mind-set that was carried by them to Afghanistan, and the same, which is being replicated by the Taliban in Pakistan. One of the most noticeable features of the initial years of conflict involving the Taliban in tribal Pakistan, particularly in Waziristan and Swat, was the Islamist movement's response to the role of women in society. Pakistani Taliban looks upon female education as a social evil. Maulana Fazlullah of Swat declared in one of his broadcasts, "Education of girls will deviate our generations from the right path. They must be restricted to their homes" (Ansari, 2008). His followers destroyed 40 girl's schools in less than a year from July 2007 to May 2008, interrupted only by his ceasefire agreement with the security forces. When hostilities resumed after the ceasefire agreement failed, 24 girls' schools were bombed or torched within a short span of twenty days. Sardar Hussain Barbak, Education

Minister of NWFP, mentioned at the time that 64 girls' schools had been destroyed in Swat valley alone.

As the only alternative, parents of female students in these agencies and Swat sent their daughters to private schools using their own resources, some moving to suburban cities like Peshawar. There was continuing blackmail on the part of the militants, through handbills thrown in girls' houses and schools warning that "we have decided to bomb the school building. If any student shows up, she will be responsible for her own death" (Ansari, 2008). In the face of such threats it was not possible to resume any semblance of female education, though militants sometimes showed discretion to the extent that they did not kill the students, often only tying up watchmen and setting the buildings on fire. There are many harsher instances as well. In one such instance, a female teacher in Mohmand Agency was shot at random for not covering herself from head to toe. She was in a Hijab at the time, which completely covers the hairline.

Initially, the Taliban in Swat denied that they were involved in these attacks on women's institutions. Mullah Noor Allam, an earlier spokesman for the Taliban in Swat, reiterated many times that the militant group was not responsible for destroying the schools. "We did not burn schools in Swat; that was someone else, probably splinter groups. They certainly do not fight for Maulana Fazlullah," he said in a propaganda video (TTP Swat No. 3, 2006). "In fact we support women having an education, such as nurses and doctors. But there are some fields in which a woman should not work, like the armed forces and engineering." The Pakistan Taliban movement blamed "foreign elements" for the school burnings, which they said were calculated to discredit them as a political movement. "We don't oppose education for women, but (we) want a favourable environment for them. We don't want Western-style co-education without dupatta (veil)," Noor Allam said (TTP Swat No.5, 2006). However, the school destruction campaign was wholly owned by the militants later. Malala Yousafzai, the now universally famous child education activist from Swat, was also shot at by the Swat TTP Chapter who initially denied that they had done it. Later, Adnan Rasheed, one of the major commanders, 'sent' a letter to Malala explaining why she 'had to be shot' (Khan, 2013).

In the grip of fear

This had a deep psychological impact on women throughout Pakistan's tribal areas, even in regions not controlled by the Taliban. "There are no Taliban here (but) I'm afraid to go to school," explains 10-year-old Sehrish, a student at Chukdar High School in the Kurz area of Dir Agency, a tribal area controlled by the government that lies half an hours drive south of Swat. I interviewed Sehrish during the Swat White Paper study. "What if they burn the classroom while we are inside?" he said. It is not just the students who