



**THE ROLE OF SOUTH SUDANESE REFUGEE AND UGANDAN WOMEN IN
PEACE AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION, UGANDA**

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ABSTRACT

This study was guided by two research questions: (1) what explains the current participation or lack thereof of refugee and host community women in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in their communities? and (2) how can women and men be empowered to work together and what are the opportunities and limitations to their participation? The study adopted a mixed methodology approach. An exploratory and constructivism worldview orientation was employed to facilitate participation and understanding the meanings narrated by participants. Data pertaining to the study were collected from respondents comprising refugee and host community women and men through observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions, semi-structured questionnaires, and document analyses.

The study revealed that women of Bidibidi refugee settlement played a major role in conflict prevention/transformation and peacebuilding through information sharing, motherhood and childcare, intermarriages between communities, social support psycho-social and spiritual healing to resolve and transform violent conflict. The study identified several findings: that the inclusion of men into women programs is beneficial as it facilitates relationship-building for sustainable peace; the positive impact of women participation in conflict transformation. The study further revealed that peacebuilding was being undermined by multiple factors including: a lack of resources for women including access to education, gender-insensitive infrastructure in the settlements, a lack of knowledge and skills, cultural barriers that restrict women's participation in public lives, a general lack of focus on peacebuilding and conflict transformation, and an inadequate level of education/training for women. The study concluded that achievements by women in conflict transformation and peacebuilding at grassroots level received little to no attention as they continue to be side-lined by all actors including the humanitarian actors in peace processes in the settlement. The study therefore makes a deliberate call to stakeholders, especially the Government of Uganda and humanitarian actors, to utilise the untapped expertise of women and address these challenges for sustainable peace in the settlement and the country at large. Being a pioneer study in a refugee settlement in Uganda, further studies will need to be carried out to identify appropriate strategies through which these challenges can be addressed in order to achieve meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Keywords: peacebuilding, women in peacebuilding, empowerment, action research, sustainable peace, community-based peacebuilding.

PREFACE

My familiarity and involvement in the various programmes of women in development and peacebuilding gave me the impetus and motivation to strengthen her knowledge in the field related to peacebuilding and women empowerment. After obtaining master's degrees in peace and conflict studies and later in international relations, I have worked with different international humanitarian organisations in different countries including Sudan, South Sudan, USA, Liberia, India, Yemen, the pacific and Bangladesh, and my assignment were to empower women for leadership and respond to conflict and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) coupled with her own experiences of growing as a woman in Africa and working with grassroots women. I developed an interest in women participation in development. This played a pivotal role, not only in equipping me with ample experience, but also in developing my interest to pursue further studies. Subsequently, I thought it prudent for her to register and seek for admission as a student at the Durban University of Technology in South Africa for studies leading to an award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Truly, a journey is made easier when you travel together and indeed, interdependence is better than independence. This thesis is a product of three years of hectic work during which I was guided, advised, and supported by a multitude of people. I now embrace this meaningful opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all of them. I thank those who enthusiastically shared their war experience and memorable secrets with me. They made me accomplish my obligation. In addition, I cannot hesitate to pay tribute to those who taught me the best lessons about the essence of human life. Indeed, I am indebted to all of them, their families, and those who devoted their lives by way of research, education, and advocacy, to expose the plight of women in conflict-stricken areas. It is this scenario that provided me with the opportunity and the inspiration for doing this noble work.

I also thank my colleague and friend, Taraneh Afnan-Holmes, who, despite the challenges of pursuing a PhD, held onto me and consoled with me over the death of my uncle John when I was in my first year of study. I cannot forget her words when she said:

“The demise of your uncle should be a reason for you to complete your study and dedicate your dissertation to him”. These words inspired me to greater heights. I thank you ever so much – Taraneh.

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Last but not least, I am indebted to my nieces and nephews for their faithfulness and dutiful companionship and also for their perseverance during my time for studies. You gave me hope, comfort, and stability as you looked after my home and property.

DECLARATION

I, Irene Dawa, declare that this study entitled:

The Role of South Sudanese Refugee and Ugandan Women in Peace and Conflict Transformation, Uganda is my original work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and duly acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature

Date

15/8/2022

APPROVED FOR FINAL SUBMISSION

DR. SYLVIA KAYE

25/8/2022

DEDICATION

An affectionate family is the most precious gift that God can give to a person. This thesis is dedicated to my family: my uncle, **John Adigawiza**, whose heart never failed to cherish; to my brother, **Williams Ayaa**, whose soul never faltered in his duty; to my mother, **Mariatha Ezaru**, whose smile lingered in my heart till the final day of my study; and to the refugee women around the world whose endurance sustains the world and illuminates the candle of hope.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACCORD.....	The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project
AOU	Organisation of African Unity
AU	African Union
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CAR	Country of Alien Refugees
CARA	Control of Alien Refugees Act
CEDAW.....	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CLADEM	Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CTEN	Community Technology Empowerment Network
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU	European Union
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IRA	Irish Republican Army
Isis-WICCE.....	Isis-Women's Cross-Cultural Exchange
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIWC	Northern Ireland Women Coalition
NRA	National Resistance Army
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ONAD	Organisation for Nonviolence and Development
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
RDC	Residence District Commissioner
RDO	Refugee Desk Officer
RPF	Rwanda Patriotic Front
RWC	Refugee Welfare Council
SCR	Security Council Resolution
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SPL/AM	Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement

SUNA	Sudan News Agency
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDRIP	Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNPFIS	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
UNRF	Uganda National Rescue Front
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR.....	United Nations Security Council Resolutions
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
VHT	Village Health Team
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
YSAT	Youth Advocacy Forum

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Women play a crucial role in peace-making and peacebuilding. However, their inclusion in peace negotiations has been a global challenge despite the United Nations Peace Resolution initiative advocating for incorporation of all the stakeholders in peacebuilding initiatives. This problem could be allayed by means of an appropriate remedy of gender balance in all aspects of negotiations and peacebuilding. The United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR 1325 2000) offers a political framework for women's contribution to peace and security and, according to the World Bank (2017), it is possible to transform conflict to people's advantage by involving all the stakeholders.

The challenge of women inclusion is also affecting refugees who are facing protracted conflicts due to several factors. Most times, refugees, being in a new environment different from their country of origin, face survival-related problems as they find themselves competing with the host communities over the limited resources and service delivery. The struggle for survival ends in conflict, as is the case between Sudanese refugees and Ugandan women in Bidibidi Refugee settlement in Yumbe District who are mostly affected by the conflict and ironically not part of the solution due to structural, cultural and economic challenges that comes with the establishment of the settlement. Therefore, this study sought to examine the role these women can play in transforming conflict and peacebuilding peace and the existing opportunities and limitations to women's participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding and build women/men's capacity together to respond to socio-economic, cultural, and political conflicts in the settlements.

1.2 Background to the Study

The role of women in peacebuilding has attracted global attention and scholars in the 21st century and is reflected in the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) in the year 2000 on women, peace, and security, and is supported by United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolutions: 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, and 2242. Other key reference points are the Beijing Platform for Action of 1995 and the Convention 1997, and the Optional Protocol of 1999 on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), specifically CEDAW general recommendation No. 30 on women

in conflict prevention and post-conflict situations. War draws women into gender-based violence, poverty, sexual abuse, and other forms of mal-treatments that have been common among refugee women who have fled to neighbouring countries (D'Awol 2011: 5; Hove and Ndawana 2017: 2).

1.3 Women and Armed Conflict in Africa

By 1989, Africa had experienced 75% of the world's conflicts between the state and non-state groups (Abubakar and Danjuma 2016: 4, Kisiangani 2018:2-10). At least 24 of the 54 nations of Africa have experienced protracted conflict in one form or another (ACLED 2014: 5). The majority of these conflicts, both intra- and inter-state, have occurred in the Horn of Africa where women have been significantly more affected in terms of deaths, illnesses, physical injuries, displacement, loss of livelihood, and starvation than men (Sylvester 2013: 5 and Sylvester 2011:11). According to Sjoberg (2014: 135) and Ndey (2015: 7), war is not just an experience; it is a gendered experience. This view reflects the distressing plight of women in armed conflict situations.

According to the UNWomen (2019:1), women constitute at least 80% of refugees in most camps, both in the country and out of the country in war zones. Consequently, women are more often depicted as victims and casualties alongside children. According to UNWomen (2013) and Stone (2011: 33-35), women in war act as combatants, peacemakers, or a combination of both. They take up the role of the head of the household following the absence of men who have left for war. Consequently, as women experience the immediate effects of conflict, they are the first to work for peace and are likely to continue doing so as the conflict progresses (UNwomen 2013: 2). This is further supported by UN Resolution 1320 which maintains that women's contribution in peace negotiation and the post-conflict arena is increasingly recognised as a vital tool for recovery and sustainability, which is why the UN has developed resolutions (UNSCR 1320) to defend women for reasons of their inclusion in building sustainable peace. In addition, Resolution 1325 (2000) directs the Secretary-General to appoint more women as Special Representatives and envoys, and to expand the role of women in UN field-based peace operations. It is the reason that the numbers of women soldiers and civilian peacekeepers is increasing, with Bangladesh and India deploying all-female UN police units to peacekeeping operations.

In Guinea-Bissau, women were empowered to analyse the problems causing violence and conflict, to find and propose their own solutions, and push all actors involved to implement

relevant policies and programmes (UN 2010). In Burundi, there has been a commitment to engage women directly in conflict prevention, mitigation, and in building peace, and the forums highlighted the need for UN in-country leaders and women peace leaders to build partnerships to advance the mutual goal of bringing sustainable peace (UNwomen:2016:1-3). In Kenya, as a response to the conflict, after the national election on 29 December 2007, the African Union, led by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, led negotiations between the contesting parties and helped broker a power-sharing deal, resulting in peace. Sixteen women and two men from civil society and community-based organisations participated.

In Sudan, women in Darfur's Open Day hoped for meaningful participation of civil society groups in the Doha talks, and women at the Khartoum meeting urged women's full participation in arrangements for the 2011 referendum (UN 2010:94-99). In many contexts, women noted their own need for capacity building for effective engagement in peace processes, but at the same time, expressed frustration regarding the lack of regularised access for women to national and local opportunities to resolve conflict, and in South Sudan, women have been prone to both internal and external threats to peace and stability (Mutasa and Virk 2017:23-25). Two years after independence, violence broke out from a political rift in the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and assumed a tribal dimension which later spread to other parts of the country (Afriyie et al 2020).

In most conflicts, men in communities under attack tend to abandon public spaces to avoid being conscripted, attacked, or taken captive and as such, women increasingly taking on the traditional male roles and must manoeuvre through existing institutions, navigating between markets to government departments, in order to provide for their family's welfare and security (Reinke 2016: 3; Maina 2011 cited in Maina 2016: 193-194; Opinia and Bubenzer 2011: 1-2; Veldwijk 2011: 157-158; Anderlini et al 2010; African Women and Peace Security Group [AWPSG] 2004; Theobald 2012: 23, Swanee 2015). Subsequently, they are more prepared to confront any challenge in the transitional period (Theobald 2012: 23). According to the research, even though women are prepared to face these challenges, their capacities need to be enhanced in order to keep these skills after the conflict ends and the traditional gender roles are re-established (UN 2018: 18, Sanauddin et al 2015: 141-154). This is further supported by UN Resolution 1325 (2000) which calls for commitments to enable women's contributions to all stages of peacebuilding, peace-making, peacekeeping, and conflict prevention (Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General, 2000).

1.4 Impact of Armed Conflict on Women

There is little information on women's roles and experiences of war and conflict in history books (Sjoberg 2014:14-51, Jacobson 2013: 215-242). This could be because the specific experiences of women and girls with armed conflict is linked to their cultural status (ibid). While the entire community suffers the consequences of armed conflict, women and girls are particularly affected because of their status in society and their sex (UN 1325 2002; Elshtain 1987 cited in Sjoberg 2014:27-29; D'Awol 2011: 54, Cockburn 2001: 13-29). In many countries, a culture of discrimination and violence against women and girls is present prior to the conflict and this leads to exclusion and poverty (Aziz and Moussa 2015: 6-8 and Madu 2012 cited in Madu 2016: 102). These cultures of violence become more pronounced during the conflict (Horn *et al.* 2014: 10) and yet cultural rights are essential to the recognition and respect of human dignity and must include non-discrimination and equality principles (UNHR 2015:4). In January 2012, the United Nations Secretary General (UNSG) Ban Ki-Moon presented the first edition of his report on conflict-related sexual violence including situations of conflict and post conflict such as in the Central African Republic, Chad, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and East Timor (UN Secretary General 2012).

This does not imply that men and boys are not suffering from the conflict but rather women and girls are culturally disadvantaged and suffer twice more than men and boys. Women also suffer in a different way than men (Ní Aoláin and McWilliams 2013: 17); they are mothers, wives, sisters, and give life that alone make woman suffer because their bodies become the battlefield (Dawa 2013: 21). For example, a study by Isis-WICCE (2008) indicates that in Liberia, 62.5% of women reported a personal experience of sexual torture and 80% suffered at least one form of psychological torture. In Sierra Leone, over a million people were internally displaced while another 450,000 sought refugees in neighbouring Liberia and Guinea, and 50,000 lost their lives (Hoff 1999 cited in Isis WICCE 2008: 4). It is also documented that 100,000 people were mutilated and over a quarter of a million women were raped (UNICEF 2004: 3) and most of them were women.

There can be change in gender roles in armed conflict. This means that women often acquire a new status by taking on new responsibilities (Maina 2016: 196). Due to the nature of war, men are away fighting, hiding, or killed in combat and are not able to take care of their family (Anderlini 2010; Opinia and Bubenzer 2011: 1-2; Angom 2018: 4). Women become the head of the household, assume community positions, develop leadership skills, and are part of decision-making processes and this can sometimes be an advantage and can turn to be

disadvantage when the guns go silent, and men want to take back the space (Ochen 2017: 29; Rehn and Sirleaf 2002: 1; Namadi 2011: 166-168; Ndey 2015: 15-20).

It is important to note that when women's traditional roles become challenged by risks not previously experienced, women often willingly transcend the customary boundaries and move beyond safe havens to take on new roles as seen in Liberia and Rwanda. These new responsibilities and skills also challenge existing gender roles (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002: 2; Arabi 2011: 195). This is the reason why it is important that the skills gained by women during war time be continually enhanced after the conflict in order to maintain the newly established gender roles and the establishment of equitable peace (UN 2002: 2; Namadi 2011: 18).

One way to further enhance the capabilities of women is by including them in the peacebuilding process at every level, from grassroots activism to governmental positions, and think of offering trainings to enhance their skills. If women are included in the formal peace negotiations and peacebuilding process, this can eventually "result in gender equality for men and women" and lead to sustainable reconstruction (Anderlini 2010: 5; Theobald 2012: 51-52). However, if not, they remain vulnerable in Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and as refugees with no power to reconstruct their community.

1.5 Armed Conflict in South Sudan (2013-2016)

After decades of civil war, South Sudan became the world's newest nation on 9 July 2011. Unfortunately, the people of South Sudan did not enjoy the fruits of the long-expected freedom (Dawa 2013: 7). However, an internal power struggle within the ruling party, the SPLM, escalated throughout 2013 until clashes broke out in the capital, Juba, in December (Nyadera 2018: 2). These clashes quickly metamorphosed into ethnic-targeted killings against Nuer, the ethnic group of South Sudan's vice president, Riak Machar, who fled into hiding and later became the leader of a rebellion against the President Salva Kiir, an ethnic Dinka (Dawa 2018: 51). This war cantered on political identity. According to Ellis (2015: 1), 'identity politics occurs when ethnicity and religion are highly implicated in the ongoing state of hostility, in other words, movements mobilise around ethnic, racial, or religious identity for the purpose of claiming state power. Since independence, the government in Juba was predominantly of the Dinka tribe which perhaps could be a reason for other tribes to feel marginalised and agitate for war that indiscriminately targeted civilians and civilian structures leading to large-scale displacement (Human Rights Watch 2014: 2-3; Dawa 2019: 5).

During the first two years of the conflict, fighting was localised to the Greater Upper Nile area bordering Sudan and Ethiopia. Subsequently, these countries received an immense influx of refugees. Nevertheless, in August 2015, the parties signed a peace deal to form a government of national unity to end the war (Blackings 2016: 7). Notwithstanding this development, tensions continued to intensify across the country as opposition forces began to gain momentum into other areas, especially in the Southern Equatorial Region, which borders the Central African Republic to the west, Democratic Republic of Congo to the southwest, Uganda to the south, Kenya to the southeast, and Ethiopia to the east. The spill over and eruption of the conflict in the Equatorial Region followed the downfall of the peace deal in July 2016 (Boswell 2017: 10).

The collapse of the peace agreement gave way for enmity between Salva Kiir and Riak Machar who were comrades. A fierce battle ensued between their loyalists in 2016 in a clash dubbed the Battle of Juba which resulted in the death of thousands of people and many more people were displaced. Fierce fighting spread to other states in the country. This renewed and expanded fighting precipitated a large-scale exodus of refugees into Uganda, primarily Equatorials as well as inhabitants of Juba, where clashes began in July. More than a million South Sudanese are estimated to have been made refugees since the war reignited and 65% of the refugees are women and children (UNHCR 2017: 1). According to reports, this influx has affected the gross domestic product GDP growth for the 2013-2014 financial year by 4.7%, which was lower than the projected 6%, and this has been attributed to underperformance (National development report 2014: XV-XIX).

1.6 Uganda Country Context

Because the research is based in Uganda, the country in focus is Uganda. Uganda is a land-locked country located in East Africa and the Great Lakes region. To the east of the country is Kenya, South Sudan is to the north, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is to the southwest, and Tanzania is to the south. Uganda covers an area of 241,038 square kilometres with a population estimate of 34.6 million people (UBOS 2014: 10-19). The country consists of 56 tribes with different cultural practices. The main economic activity of the people is agriculture followed by business. "The country is also sanctuary for approximately 1.39 million refugees" (World Vision 2018:1). It is important to note at this point that the presence of refugees in Uganda has become an integral part of the history of Uganda

1.7 The History of Refugees in Uganda

Uganda has a long history of both hosting and generating refugees. “The presence of refugees in Uganda dates back to the early 1940s with the hosting of Polish refugees at Nyabyeya in Masindi district and Kojia in Mukono district (Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) 2016:1). As a producer of refugees, Uganda, in 1972, expelled its own citizens of Asian origin followed by the political and academic intellectuals. Mass movements, whether forced or otherwise, have long been a phenomenon in the borderlands of Uganda”. Uganda is surrounded by unstable countries and being a relatively stable and peaceful country, it becomes inevitable to receive thousands of refugees every time there is violence in the neighbouring countries. In the case of the border between Uganda’s West Nile and South Sudan, this movement was only officially restricted and termed “cross-border” following the establishment of the boundary in 1914 by the British Secretary of State for the Colonies (Johnson 2010: 102). Since then, civil conflicts, both in Uganda and Sudan, have continued to create forced migratory movement in addition to ongoing migration for trade and other purposes.

According to Ugandan history cited in Mwalimu (2004), the 1955 Control of Refugees from the Sudan Ordinance ‘the Ordinance’ was enacted when refugees began fleeing from Southern Sudan into Uganda, before both countries achieved their independence. The Ordinance was followed by the post-independence Control of Alien Refugees Act (CARA) in 1960, (Uganda: Control of Alien Refugees Act, Cap. 64 of 1960) which represented a restrictive approach to addressing forced displacement that was “based on control rather than protection”, and therefore granted the authorities “wide discretionary power” (Mwalimu 2004: 464). When tens of thousands of Rwandan refugees entered the country in the early 1960s, they were increasingly confined to designated camps, a policy that was primarily aimed at “neutralising their political intentions” and that sought to prioritise “economic development and self-sufficiency rather than political citizenship” (Long 2012: 211-229).

Meanwhile, in 1976, Uganda ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol but with several reservations, and in 1987 ratified the 1969 Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Convention on Refugees. Some of the provisions in the CARA, such as the tight restrictions on refugees’ freedom of movement, contradicted Uganda’s obligations under these conventions. However, in practice, CARA was not fully implemented as the government applied it mostly to situations of mass influx but implemented the practice in respect of individual refugees who were at least partly informed by Uganda’s regional and international

obligations (Uganda Refugees Act 2006 cited in Sharpe and Namusobya 2012). As a results of all these, the Sudanese refugees fleeing the escalating violence in southern Sudan were confined to camps in Northern Uganda. This influx of South Sudanese to Uganda was temporarily halted by the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement signed in 1972 that gave temporal autonomy to Southern part of Sudan.

1.8 The Addis Ababa Peace Agreement (1972)

It is important to understand the Addis Ababa peace agreement as it has direct link to the flow of Sudanese refugees into Uganda and later Ugandans fleeing as refugees into Southern Sudan. The agreement was signed in 1972 between the Southern Sudanese rebels, who had until then consisted of several independent commands united under General Joseph Lagu, and the Sudanese government that would give the South Regional autonomy and the ending of hostilities. The agreement ended the 17-year conflict between the Anya Nya and the Sudanese Army and ushered in autonomy for the Southern Region which would no longer be divided into the three provinces of Equatoria, Baḥr al-Ghazāl, and Upper Nile (Ahmad Alawad Sikainga et al 2020: 1).

The trajectory of displacement was then reversed as events in Uganda unveiled following the seizure of power by Idi Amin in 1971 which led some Ugandans to flee into Southern Sudan to escape from reprisals for their association with the prior regime. A similar pattern was repeated after Amin was ousted by Tanzanian army, along with Ugandans exiles. By the mid-1980s, about 7% of Uganda's population was displaced (Lomo *et al.* 2004: 4), with some 200,000 Ugandan refugees in southern Sudan and tens of thousands more internally displaced (Allen 1996: 226-228). Ugandan refugees eventually returned to Northern Uganda in the late 1980s as the fighting in Southern Sudan once again intensified and their security was threatened (Sharpe and Namusobya 2012: 565). Their return was soon followed by another influx of refugees due to renewed fighting in Sudan.

In 1986, Yoweri Museveni and the National Resistance Movement (NRM) seized power, but internal and external conflict continued as warring parties took up arms against the government from 1986, most notably for example, Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) which devastated the population of Northern Uganda for over 19 years (Amnesty International 2002-2003). At that same time, the ongoing conflict in Sudan created an influx of refugees into Uganda. The Ugandan government's support for the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), alongside the government of Sudan's support for the LRA, strengthened the

two conflicts (Hovil 2001: 6). Consequently, Uganda continued to see multiple waves of displacement within and across its borders until 2005 when Sudan signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) with South Sudan.

Similarly, transnational conflict and displacement emerged in Uganda's South-Western borderlands where thousands of Rwandan refugees joined Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA) during the 1980s and later turned their attention to go back to Rwanda where a civil war broke out in 1990 when the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), which was born in Uganda and led by the current President Paul Kagame, invaded Rwanda from Uganda. This culminated into the 1994 Rwanda genocide and the resultant mass displacement of people into Uganda and neighbouring countries, and by September 2000, there were, in total, an estimated 640,000 internally displaced persons and 202,000 registered refugees in Uganda (UNOCHA 2001).

Since that time, Uganda has been hosting refugees, and as indicated by World Vision Report (2017), there are 1,064,043 refugees and asylum seekers in Uganda. Sixty-eight percent of them, equivalent to 723,550 were from South Sudan (Ekayu 2017). Today, across all the settlements, Uganda has refugees from Rwanda, Burundi, the DRC, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia, and Eritrea, and by late 2017, Uganda had the highest refugee/asylum-seeker population in Africa. Presently, the country has 11 refugee settlements which include: Acholi-Pii settlement, Bidibidi settlement, Impevi settlement, Kampala settlement, Kiryandongo settlement, Kyaka II settlement, Kyangwali settlement, Nakivale settlement, Pagirinya settlement, Rhino settlement, and Rwamwanaja. From the 11 settlements, five are found in the West Nile region. It is estimated that about 68%, equivalent to 723,550 refugees, from South Sudan have been settled in the West Nile area of Northern Uganda, an area which has suffered from high levels of pre-existing vulnerability and under-development. The presence of the refugees has put strains on the existing limited resources and social amenities causing intermittent conflicts between host communities, refugees, and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) responsible for negotiating land for the settlement of refugees (Dawa 2019: 50-52).

1.9 Regional Context: West Nile

The West Nile Sub-Region is situated in north-western Uganda. The name is derived from being located on the western side of the Albert Nile. The sub-region is bordered by the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the South West, by Republic of South Sudan to the North and by the Albert Nile to the East. The town of Arua is the largest in the Sub-Region and

achieved a city status in June 2021. Arua City is found approximately 420 km (260 miles), by road, northwest of Kampala, the capital of Uganda, and the largest city in the country. The West Nile attracted global attention during the regime of the former Ugandan military Head of State, Idi Amin. The location of the West Nile makes it the hub of thriving cross-border commerce and it is undutiful that it is one of the fastest growing economic centres in Uganda (West Nile web n.d).

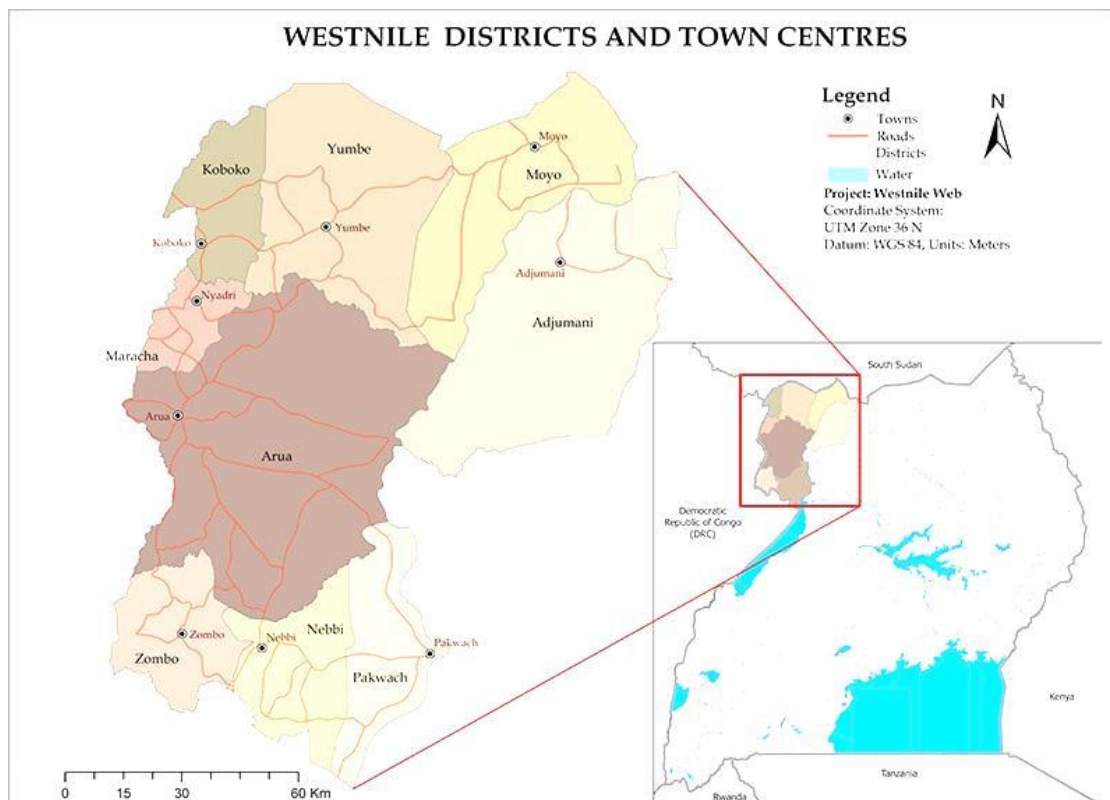


Figure 1.0: Figure 1.1 depicts a map showing the location of the West Nile Region of Uganda (Dawa 2020:40).

1.10 A Brief History of the West Nile Region

During the colonial era, the West Nile was considerably under-developed in comparison to other regions of Uganda. Moreover, the region has a documented pre-colonial past history characterised by slave-raiding perpetrated by Turkish slave traders and ivory poaching by European Christians (Ezama 2018:5). The West Nile was once fought over by the Belgians, French, Germans, and the British, and its fascinating history includes personalities such as Gordon of Khartoum, Henry Morton Stanley, and President Theodore Roosevelt of America. The changing sovereignty over the years witnessed the region administered as part of the

Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (1899) under British and Egyptian condominium administration as part of modern-day South Sudan; as part of Congo Free State and later Belgian Congo during various periods between 1894 and 1910; and as autonomous Lado Enclave (1911-1914). Subsequently, in 1914, the West Nile became part of the British Uganda Protectorate until Uganda gained independence in 1962, when the West Nile became part of the Republic of Uganda. A pleasant account of the history of the West Nile is found in Mark Leopold's book entitled *Inside West Nile Violence, History, and Representation on an African Frontier* (ibid n.d.).

1.11 Population, Ethnicity, and Religion

The population of the West Nile is about 2,988,300 with approximately 500,000 households (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2018). While the household is the primary unit of social life, the village is the centre of local governance throughout the region. The region is occupied largely by the ethnic groups of Lugbara, Kakwa, Madi, and the Nilotic Alur. Other ethnicities include the Ukebu, Kuku, and the Nubians. The West Nile is also a home to a considerable number of other Ugandan tribes, Indians, and other Asians (West Nile web n.d.). Eighty percent of the people of the West Nile live in the rural area. However, in Koboko District and Maracha, 34% and 23% of the population live in urban areas, respectively. The majority of the people (52%) are Catholics, followed by Anglicans and Muslims who constitute only 28% and 18% of the people in comparison, respectively. District variation exists with Yumbe being largely composed of 89% Muslims and Maracha largely being 78% Anglican. Other religious beliefs are also practised. However, cases of religious conflicts are extremely rare, indicating the strong ecumenical lifestyle of the people, and this ecumenical spirit contributed to the end of the war in Northern Uganda as all the religious leaders came together for a peaceful negotiation with the LRA which yielded fruit.

1.12 Economic Activity

Agriculture is the leading economic activity and contributor of GDP in Uganda. The World Bank estimates that the sector contributes to approximately 70% of total employment in the country, most of this being on a small-scale. The sector contributes to a quarter of GDP, recording 24.2% in 2017/18, a slight drop from 24.6% in 2016/17 (Shepard Et al 2016:2. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, the sector accounts for 52% of Uganda's exports. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS 2018) indicate that approximately 68% of Uganda's population is engaged in agriculture, forestry, and fishing. Agriculture has grown at an average

rate of 2.8% per year in the last eight years. It presents immense opportunities for growth in other sectors such as manufacturing especially agro processing. With the exception of Adjumani where there are fewer people as compared to the Uganda national average engaged in subsistence farming, in all the other districts, especially in Yumbe and Nebbi Districts, subsistence farming is the main livelihood activity – this provides an explanation for some of the land conflict between the refugees and host communities and they now share the land which is their livelihood. With increasing urbanisation in the key urban centres, non-governmental organisation activity, and the implementation of decentralisation of the sub-national government, the number of waged employments is rising rapidly. Local and cross-border trade is a key activity in the West Nile. Fishing is practised along the River Nile with the main commercial fishing activities being centred on Panyimur, Pakwach, Rhino Camp, and Obongi.

1.13 History of Conflict in the Context of the West Nile Region (1986-2002)

After the downfall of the late Idi Amin Dada by the then president of the Republic of Uganda, the West Nile suffered political unrest on account of the president being the son of the region. Consequently, the region was cut off from the rest of Uganda by the insurgency of the LRA in Northern Uganda and the activities of the Uganda National People's Liberation Front (UNRFII) that ended with the signing of a peace treaty between the UNRFII and the Government of Uganda in 2002, in the Yumbe District. Historically, the West Nile has been economically disadvantaged in terms of development. The situation has led to a low standard of living for the poor. With over 20 years of insurgencies, the place has been cut off from the rest of Uganda due to the emergency of the UNRFII, who were soldiers who had served in the period of the late president Idi Amin Dada (Mischnick and Bauer 2009: 10-12). Failure of the current government to integrate these soldiers into the National Army was a miscalculation that created a breeding ground for a rebel group that fought a war from the 1980s and finally ended with the peace agreement in 2002 (Mischnick and Bauer 2009: 16-18).

From the early 1990s to late 2000, the West Nile has been and continues to be a sanctuary to thousands of South Sudanese refugees who had fled the civil war of 1983-2005 in their country of origin. After the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement in 2005 between the Sudanese people's liberation army (SPLA) and the Government of Sudan, most of the refugees returned to their country. The independence of South Sudan on 9 July 2011 never lasted. Three years into celebrating its third independence in 2013, war broke out again in

South Sudan causing an influx of thousands of refugees back into Uganda. Because of the high influx, nine new settlements were opened in the West Nile Region in 2016, including Bidibidi settlement.

1.13.1 Bidibidi Refugee Settlement

Bidibidi is a refugee settlement in Yumbe District in the West Nile Sub-Region. It opened in August 2016 and by December of that same year, the settlement was closed to new arrivals. It has an estimated population of 285,000 refugees (Hodgson 2018: 1 World Vision 2018, Wiley and Sons 2013). In 2017, Bidibidi was described as the largest refugee settlement site in the world (Ibid, World Vision 2017). The host community is the Aringa, the indigenous people of Yumbe District. Aringa politicians lobbied for the refugee hosting site, seeking for development and aid resources that they associated with other areas of Uganda's West Nile Sub-Region that hosts refugees.

Bidibidi is founded on a gazetted area of 250 square kilometres of communal land owned by the host community. It was negotiated by the OPM through local officials and local community leaders. The Government of Uganda and UNHCR call the areas where refugees stay in the country "settlements" and not "camps" because refugees in Uganda are not legally restricted to the camps. Instead, they are given plots of land on which to build houses and carry out cultivation, and they are also free to seek employment (Dawa 2019: 51).

Bidibidi is composed primarily of under-utilised "hunting grounds" considered by the host community as unsuitable for agriculture. The area is composed of low, rolling hills and, for the most part, rocky soil. The Bidibidi settlement falls between host community settlements, which border some parts of Bidibidi. The settlement is composed of five zones, and each of these zones is divided into clusters, which are further divided into individual villages. Refugee leadership structures are parallel to Uganda's own local governance model, which is composed of ascending levels of Local Councils. At the village level, there is a Refugee Welfare Council (RWC) RWC1; at the cluster level, RWC2; and for each zone, a RWC3. These are voted for through elections overseen by OPM. The RWC at each level is headed by a chair.

The refugee population in Bidibidi is primarily female, with women outnumbering men by a 3:2 ratio, and most households are headed by women (Dawa 2019: 47). While the refugee population in Bidibidi is ethnically diverse, most of them are Bari speakers from Central Equatoria. The Bari-speaking ethnic groups include the Bari, Mundari, Kuku, Kakwa, Pojulu,

and the Nyagwara. Other occupants are from other areas in Equatoria, primarily Eastern Equatoria, in particular the Ma'di and Acholi groups (ibid). There are also smaller refugee communities of other large groups in South Sudan, including the Nuer, Shilluk, Azende, and the Dinka. Most of the non-Equatorial refugees in Bidibidi were living in Equatoria, mainly in Juba, by the time the conflict escalated in 2016. Today the refugees live side by side with host communities with no hope of returning to their own country in the near future.

1.13.2 Conflict Dynamics in the Settlement

Bidibidi refugee settlement hosts approximately 280,000 Southern Sudanese refugees (UNHCR 2018). However, the majority of these refugees and the local residents are expected to share the available resources and services such as health, education, and water (ibid). The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Ugandan Government ensures that basic services such as the provision of health care and education are catered for. However, the Office of the Prime Minister newsletter, issue 1, December 2017, states that due to an ever-increasing number of refugees from South Sudan, there are inadequate resources and social service facilities such as health facilities, schools, road networks, and water and sanitation, among others, which exerts significant pressure on the limited resources causing conflicts over their acquisition and utilisation.

In the settlements, inter-communal tensions between refugees are common and are fuelled by competition over the limited resources and general misunderstandings due to cultural differences. These inter-communal tensions within the communities are largely seen as tribal and driven by disagreements on land for agriculture and animal grazing. Tension between the refugee communities is a lens through which the dynamics in South Sudan can be observed. This ongoing tension has resulted in members of the Dinka community being settled separately from other refugee groups, yet this could have been an opportunity for peacebuilding if they were mixed because conflict transformation focuses on relationship-building and looking at common issues that connect the different tribes. Separating the tribes is a short-term solution, therefore there is a need to combine efforts to make these tribes look beyond their tribal sentiments and focus on a common goal of building peaceful communities in the settlement.

Inter-ethnic conflicts between the Dinka and Nuer, and the Kakwa and Pojulu often arise at water points, regarding the collection of firewood or materials for construction, and concern over land degradation and animal grazing rights. Uganda's porous border with South Sudan and unconfirmed rumours regarding what refugees may bring in with them creates suspicion

amongst the different tribal communities. There are claims that the Dinka group have carried light weapons with themselves to Uganda. There have been accusations and counter accusations, and statements such as “you are the reason we are here” is a common statement made by the different tribes (OPM 2016). An overall rise in opportunistic crime also breeds mutual mistrust between refugees. These conflicts have a direct impact on the lives of refugee women. Despite their common struggles and traumas of war, these women are trapped in tribal identity conflicts (Dawa 2019: 48-49).

1.14 Problem Statement

Conflict and wars have always impacted men and women in different ways, but possibly never more so than in contemporary conflicts (Asaf 2017: 1; Speake 2013:2; BJARNEGÅRD et al 2014: 101-105). While women remain a minority of combatants and perpetrators of war, they suffer the greatest harm and exclusion (Shekhawat and Pathak 2015:1; Quie 2016:3-4; Westendorf 2018:434, Plassnig 2020:22-23 and Kisiangani 2018:17-31). However, they are sidestepped in peace negotiations as evidenced by the call of UN Resolution 1325 (2000) for commitments to enable women’s contributions at all stages of peacebuilding, peace-making, peacekeeping, and conflict prevention (Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General, 2000). In contemporary conflicts, as many as 90% of the casualties are among the civilians, most of whom are women and children (UNWomen 2015: 2; UNHCR 2017:1; Moore and Talarico 2015:215). Women at the grassroots are mostly excluded from the elite-prone formal peace processes. This is problematic because women have unique conflict experience, knowledge and skills of the effects of conflict on communities and individuals. As noted above, women represent the majority of casualties of war and excluding them from peace processes denies them the opportunity to voice their concerns and issues that have affected them during armed conflict and denies them the opportunity to contribute to peace. Women’s participation contributes to the prevention and resolution of conflicts while the lack of this participation undermines it. Further, women play gender-specific roles in rebuilding the fabric of recovering societies (True 2016:308). Women demonstrate the maximum resilience, cooperation, tolerance, and maintain harmony in the society (Speake 2013:7; Kumalo and Roddy-Mullineaux 2019:2-4; Buchanan 2020:23; Rahmaty and Jaghab 2020:2-5 and Westendorf 2018:433).

Evidence indicates that the lack of equal women’s participation in formal peace processes is exacerbated by sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), social norms, patriarchy, lack of political will and structural inequalities, all of which continue to impede women’s full

contribution to peacebuilding (True 2013:2; Mwambari 2017:67; Peace Support Fund 2016:16-17; Moore and Talarico 2015:215-16; Westendorf 2018:423-4 and Roddy-Mullineaux 2019:2-4). According to research, between 1991 and 2014, there were at least 54 negotiated peace processes and 130 peace agreements, out of the 54 negotiated peace processes only 65% include any reference to women and/or gender and out of the 130 peace agreements, women signed only 13 of them (Ellerby 2016:7 and Krause at el 2018:897). The percentage of peace agreements with gender provisions was 28.6% in 2020, which remains well below the peak of 37.1% in 2015 (UNWomen: 2021:3).

According to research, none of the ceasefire agreements reached between 2018-2020 included gender provisions or the prohibition of sexual violence (PA-X Peace Agreements Database 2021 in UNwomen 2021:3). Ellerby (2016:7) observed that during the peace process in Burundi and Uganda, women participated through the granting of ‘observer status’. In other words, they were not given the chance to be full participants and contribute their views that would be part of the peace agreement. Between 1990 to 2017, out of 664 peace agreements, only 17 (11%) included at least one reference to women (Shekhawat and Pathak 2015:2). From the 504 agreements signed since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), only 138 (27%) included references to women.

In 2015, only 7 out of 10 peace agreements signed included gender-specific provisions (UNwomen 2018: 5). Since then, there have been only 2% women mediators, 5% women witnesses and signatories, and 8% women negotiators (Ibid). Between 1992 and 2011, 4% of the signatories to peace agreements and less than 10% of the negotiators at peace tables were women and 3 out of 11 peace agreements signed contained gender-sensitive provisions in 2018 (UNwomen 2012: 6, UNwomen 2018: 3). Table 1.2 notes the agreements before and after UN Resolution 1325.

Table: 1.2 Peace Agreement Signed Before and After 1325 Resolution (Jan 1990-May 2010).

Particular year	Peace agreement	Percent	Particular	Peace agreement	Per cent	Difference
Before 1325	399	86	Before 1325	42	7	79%
After 1325	186	32	After 1325	50	9	23%
Total	585	100	Total	92	16	76%

Agreements that included references to women						
2015	504	27	2017	664	11	11%

Sources: Shekhawat and Pathak 2015:2. Modified by author to include agreements between 2015-2017.

From the above Table, it is clear that despite the passing of UNSCR 1325, the percentage of women at the peace table remains low and this percentage could even be lower when it comes to inclusion of grassroots women in formal peace processes. Hence, there is a need for practical strategies to reduce this gap and include women at all levels of peace process.

The situation of South Sudanese women is not different from other women around the globe. As noted by Adeogun (2018:84), South Sudanese women were not allowed to participate at decision-making levels during the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement. Westendorf (2018:433) noted that:

the exclusion of women in South Sudan can usefully be seen as a canary in a coal mine, a highly visible marker of the much broader exclusivity of peace processes, and the complex dynamics of the political marketplace and consequent elite capture of war- and peace-making. Exclusion as a deliberate strategic tactic of elites that extends from the war into peacetime. The exclusion of women was not in and of itself a contributing reason for the failure of South Sudan's peace process, but rather the product of elite ownership of the peace process and the structure many peace processes take, which facilitates and rewards such ownership.

In El Salvador, Ellerby argued that the process was considered “successful peace process because both the government and rebels respected the ceasefire and disarmament” (Ellerby 2016:2), however, if success was related to the degree to which women and women's interests were included in the process, the evaluation of El Salvador's peace would be less positive. To elaborate on her point, Ellerby, quotes Clara Murguialday (Murguialday, in Ellerby 2016:2):

Neither in words nor in spirit is there any reference to women, despite the fact that they represent 52.9% of the Salvadoran population, 30% of the 13,600 FMLN combatants that were verified, and more than 60% of the civilian population that supported the guerrillas during the armed conflict.

In other words, the El Salvador peace process focused on the interest of the government and rebels, forgetting the immense role that women had played in the war. This undermines the sustainability of any peace. Scholars have emphasised that for sustainable peace to occur there is need to ‘consider the role of gender equality as pivotal to effective peacebuilding processes. Scholars such as Adeogun and Muthuki (2018: 4); Ellerby (2016:5) and Krause *et al* (2018 2018:990) have argued that gender equality and women's political participation

goes beyond numerical representation of women in peacebuilding processes or peace agreements, it also means inclusion in policy making and implementation. Women's voices must be recognised and well represented at all levels because there is a strong link between the political inclusion of women and the sustainability of peace. This is also because research indicates that gender inequality is a strong predictor of armed conflict as there is a connection between women's security, the political participation of women, and sustainable peace.

Research also shows that women are excluded in all aspects of peacebuilding and conflict transformation including disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). Shekhawat and Pathak (2015:6-13) provide a detailed account of the DDR processes of several countries and found that the DDR process were not different from other aspects of peacebuilding. They looked at several aspects, including policies, in several DDRs and if women were included in the initiatives:

1. In Mozambique, women were excluded from DDR initiatives due to 'one gun one fighter' policy of reintegration, and also women and girls' combatants were allegedly discharged prior to the initiation of DDR process. In Zimbabwe, only 1.48% of female ex-combatants were demobilized, neglecting their role before, during, and after conflict, compared to their male counterparts.
2. In the Philippines, women were not included in decision-making bodies or in lobbying for the rights of women and girls in peace and security processes.
3. In Sierra Leone the one man, one gun policy aimed at disarming only male ex-combatants, though women were also associated with insurgency but during DDR program, women and girl ex-combatants constituted merely 6.5%.
4. In Darfur Peace Agreement, no women worked as the official negotiator and mediator in Doha Peace Negotiations.
5. In Colombia, one of the longest civil wars in the world, the DDR processes for women was based under the premise that war is among men and its solution must be among men as a result, demobilized females were twice disadvantaged. It was considered that women disobeyed traditional gender norms (going to war) and many women ex-combatants lived in fear of retaliation from their former male-counterparts who regard them as traitors (Shekhawat and Pathak 2015-6-13).
6. In El Salvador even though the women were involved to wipe out dictatorial rules, 70 to 80% women were neglected during the entire DDR process. Women were also absent from the UN-supervised formation of both a new National Civil Police and the Armed Forces Reserve System. The 25 to 30% of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front were female combatants, but only 4,500 (17%) female soldiers of the 26,000 demobilized. In Angola, Women were not allowed to raise their voices against sexual violence, inhumane and degrading treatment by both state security

and rebel forces since the peace agreement made 13 amnesties that prevented prosecution for atrocities committed during the armed conflict.

Feminist scholars such as Adeogun (2018: 84), Mwambari (2017:69), Muthuki (2018:84) and Ellerby (2016:3) have highlighted some key arguments for women involvement at the formal peace negotiations. First, both conflict and the consequences of peace agreements affect women; second, the need for inclusive social justice and third, the presence of women determines that issues brought to the table can be included in formal peace processes. This argument was affirmed by Prof Jok Madut Jok of the Sud Institute (telephone conversation 20 May 2019), stated that neglecting women's voices ruins the little chance of addressing their safety and general security which is mostly lost during war but should be expected to be addressed during the peacebuilding process. Peace scholars such as Krause et al (2018: 991), Pattenholz (2014:74-6) and Roddy-Mullineaux (2019:5) argue that when women and civil society groups are at the peace-negotiating table, they not only broaden societal support for the peace process, but they also inform the negotiations on specific issues and agendas that can lead to the inclusion of provisions for shaping socio-political reform.

UNwomen notes that the inclusion of women in peace processes increases the chances of an agreement lasting at least 15 years by 35% (UNwomen 2017: 2). This means that if women are at the peace table:

- their voices can be heard, and their concerns will be addressed, leading to sustainability in peace;
- women know their communities better because most times they live inside and observe the daily events, thus not only can they voice issues that affect women, but they can also voice issues of general community concern that are sometimes not seen in the big picture.

The situation of the refugee and host communities in Uganda is not different. In Uganda, the refugees are settled in pieces of land allocated by the OPM. The tribal nature of the South Sudan conflict creates tensions between the different tribes: Nuer versus Dinka, Kakwa versus Pojolu. The OPM and UNHCR decided to settle these refugees according to their tribal identities to avoid conflict escalation and violence. However, the available limited resources such as water, firewood, and in access to social amenities such as hospitals and markets, force these women into conflict in an attempt to earn their living. The camp authorities and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) such as RWC have endeavoured to manage conflicts through working jointly with other partners to address issues among the refugees. Unfortunately, this structure is male dominated with a few women serving in subordinate roles. For example, there is only one position reserved for women in the RWC structure.

The implication is that women were excluded by the male-dominated structure based on cultural beliefs (Jok 2005, cited in Hove and Ndwana 2017). This seems to be manifested in the current situation of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda. South Sudan is a notably patriarchal society relegating women to a lower status in the family and community and perpetuating and enforcing a number of customs and traditions that are harmful to women including Gender-Based Violence (GBV) (Small Arms Survey 2014: 2).

During interviews on 7 May 2019, MSF and IRC staff confirmed that apart from the tribal conflict, there are also issues of GBV and domestic violence reported in the settlement. In South Sudan, domestic violence is considered a private family matter that should be dealt with by the couple. Stern (2011, cited by Hove and Ndwana (2014:4-5), puts forth an explanation for this:

Marriage is one of the fundamental traditions determining society, creating bonds between families and communities, and guaranteeing stability of the South Sudanese lifestyle and customs. Failure by women to be submissive to their husbands attracts some level of condoned violence. The violence is meted upon women by their husbands in most ethnic cultures in South Sudan, and it is accepted by society.

Such condoned violence is based on “bad behaviour” or women’s failure to fulfil their duties (Small Arms Survey 2014: 4). Besides being acceptable to men, many women accept it as a normal practice (Stern 2011 cited in Hove and Ndwana 2014: 5). It appears that this practice in South Sudan is manifesting itself in the settlements in Uganda. Despite the efforts by implementing partners to educate people about the dangers of domestic violence, adding to the government efforts to put structures and policies in place to respond to these problems, little has been achieved. In the settlements, there are police posts established to respond to any form of violence. Most of the officers are men, which again creates fear in women who are not sure of the response that they will get if they report domestic violence. A report by MSF (2017:4) indicated that 33% of their patients experienced sexual violence in South Sudan, 23% during the journey to Uganda, 19% at the border area, and 18% in the refugee settlement or reception centre. In an interview of the Refugee Desk officer (RDO) from OPM 5 June 2018, it was stated that women in the settlement are also threatened to conceal cases of SGBV by their husbands.

The problem of women exclusion is aggravated by the fact that there is no partner organisation focusing on peacebuilding in the settlement that could help with specific responses or skills for these women. During the polit study in May 2018, the OPM that is supposed to lead the peacebuilding and conflict prevention sector lacked the resources needed to support women

with skills (Interview with OPM, 5 June 2018). Incorporating women into peacebuilding activities by humanitarian actors could help to reduce the problem and enable more inclusive peace processes and a gender-sensitive environment, which will lead to more sustainable peace (interview with Ayikoru, May 18, 2019).

1.15 The Aims and Objectives of the Study

This study was designed to examine a mixture of gaps, challenges and opportunities that existed among women in the settlement to respond to conflicts. Further, the study was intended to develop ways to enhance the capacity of women and men together to respond to socio-political and economic conflict affecting their lives in the settlements. Using a mixed methodology, I hoped to narrow the gap of knowledge on women's manifold roles in conflict transformation and peacebuilding scenarios, and promote women as agents and stakeholders in peacebuilding, and not reproduce the image of women as inferior victims.

The study has two major aims:

1. To examine the existing opportunities and limitations to women's participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding;
2. To build women/men's capacity together to respond to socio-economic, cultural, and political conflicts in the settlements.

The purpose of the study had the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the roles and capacity of women in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in the Bidibidi refugee settlement in Uganda;
2. To identify reasons for the limited participation/exclusion of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation and to establish approaches for engaging women and men together in addressing women's lack of participation/exclusion;
3. To implement peacebuilding and conflict transformation interventions through action research, focusing on building the capacity of 20 women and men in responding to conflicts in the settlement.

1.16 Significance of the Study

It is very difficult to point to when UNSCR 1325 originated, as its roots lie in women's rights activism for many years, mainly starting in the western countries. Theoretically, it is viewed that the origin of UNSCR 1325 lies in the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, signed by 189 countries, and in particular from its chapter on women and armed conflict. Conflicts during the 1990s prompted further global policy developments including the

Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action. The founding of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) that established one of the most influential women's organizations campaigning for peace, contributed this landmark resolution of UNSCR 1325 (UNwomen 2018:1).

The twenty-first century presented unprecedented challenges to the world with several wars taking a toll on the lives of women and girls. The world was faced with ethical and moral dilemmas and obligations to respond to this crisis. The member states of the United Nations, civil society organisations, and many rights groups felt the need to address the gap of women in peacebuilding structures and the long-term impact of armed conflict on their lives. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) on 31 October 2000. The adoption of this resolution was a historic landmark on the road towards peace and security as it recognizes women's key role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. In Resolution 1325, the Security Council called upon governments and other parties to take steps toward the implementation of the eighteen actions outlined in the resolution concerning women's participation, protection, prevention, relief and recovery in conflict and post-conflict settings around the world (Miller et al 2014:4).

While this call for WPS is for global action, women at the grassroots, including refugee women, are most times marginalised from being actors of peace and conflict transformation. Kofi Anan (2002:1) states that:

We can no longer afford to minimize or ignore the contributions of women and girls to all stages of conflict resolution, Peace-making, Peacebuilding, Peacekeeping, and reconstruction processes. Sustainable Peace will not be achieved without the full and equal participation of women and men.

Equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but a necessary condition for women's interests to be considered. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and Peace cannot be achieved (Somodevilla 2015 cited in UNwomen 2017: 5).

This statement applicable to the context of Africa. Africa has been a "home for some of the worst wars and conflicts for decades" (Harbom and Wallensteen 2010 cited in Brounéus 2014: 126). The wars in Liberia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, and Sudan, to mention a few, led to the defining agreement of Resolution 1325 on "Women, Peace, and Security" in 2000 (Cockayne, Mikulaschek and Perry 2010: 1). The proclamation was designed to address not only the disproportionate impact of war on women, but also the critical role that they can play in

sustaining peace. While Resolution 1325 was initially supported more in theory than in practice, there had to be a pragmatic follow-up with declaration 2242 (2015) urging each country to develop a comprehensive National Action Plan (NAP) to implement the resolution's goals (UNSC 2015: 1).

It is worth noting that since then, some countries have made progress and implemented the NAP. For example, in 2017, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) data indicates that 74 UN member states (38% of all UN member states) have UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans (NAPs). The report indicates that despite this progress, of the 73 NAPs adopted to date, only 17 (23%) include some allocated budget for implementation. In addition, the WILPF analysis shows that "despite some of the countries' recent history of conflict, there is an inadequate analysis and consideration on the connection between disarmament, gender equality and violence" (WILPF 2017: 6). This percentage is a testimony to the ratification of these international resolutions, but also not a guarantee that countries will live up to their responsibilities.

Uganda and South Sudan are signatories to most international resolutions/instruments that support the participation of women in peacebuilding and decision-making processes. This includes UN Resolution 1325 and the related resolution including Resolution 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009) that focus on preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence (UN 2010: 2). These resolutions came after the realisation that women were not taking part in reshaping the future of their countries after armed conflict. It was then clear that the exclusion of women in peacebuilding after war could be a global threat to peace and security because if women are part of the conflict, then their participation in the peace process and post-war construction is inevitable. In a special expert assessment report, Rehn and Sirleaf (2002) recommended that the needs and priorities of women after war should be taken into account. This can be clearly seen in the history of wars, for example, in Liberia, El Salvador, and in Northern Ireland, where women engaged different warring parties to find a solution to the war (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002: 76-77, Snyder and Stobbe 2011:1-10). Twenty years later, from the existence of these resolutions, women's participation in peacebuilding continues to be problematic, as exhibited by UNwomen in 2017, with the conclusion that "involving women at all levels of conflict resolution, peacebuilding and recovery leads to sustainable peace" (UNwomen 2017: 2). Data gathered between 2010 and 2018 in which UNwomen studied women participation in different countries indicate that when women are included in peace processes, there is a 35% increase in the possibility of an agreement lasting at least 15 years

and the reverse is true when they are excluded (Katarina Salmela and Chiao-Ling Chien 2019: 3).

Evidence shows that women's meaningful participation helps with the conclusion and implementation of peace agreements, contributing to sustainable peace. Women are powerful agents of change, and they have often driven community recovery after conflict through their contributions to the society and the economy. During the 25th African Union (AU) Summit in June 2015, the AU Heads of State and Government resolved to "develop, implement, and report on National and Regional Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 to accelerate the Women, Peace and Security Agenda" (AU 2016: 49).

During a UNSCR meeting, the secretary general stated the following:

I am concerned about the continued slow progress in women's participation and representation in peace talks, including of provisions for promoting women's and girls' rights in peace agreements and in increasing women's representation in elected and appointed posts. I am also concerned about the persistence of serious protection gaps, obstacles to women's and girls' access to justice and the slow change in the share of budgets allocated to women's empowerment and gender equality in post-conflict contexts (UN 2012: 1).

This statement confirms that despite the effort of the UN and other regional organisations, there still exists a gap in women participation at all levels that needs to be addressed. The study of refugee women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation has not received the scholarly attention it deserves. Hence, a grey area exists concerning the knowledge, resources, and opportunities that refugees could bring along with them. In addition, there are only a handful of articles written on the role of African women in peacebuilding, especially by African scholars (Cheldelin and Mutisi 2016; Theobald 2012; Ndey 2015; Angom 2018). Therefore, this research was intended to advance knowledge by firstly, contributing to the field of refugee women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation; secondly, the study will add to the existing body of knowledge regarding the role of African women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation; and thirdly, the findings will bridge the gap in peacebuilding initiatives in refugee settlements in Uganda and other countries and complement the programs focusing on gender-based violence and service delivery with respect to the aspects of protection, education, water, and sanitation.

The study further illuminates the statures of conflict transformation and peacebuilding and social inclusion from a theoretical point of view regarding the discourse on women, peace, and security. It highlights the relevance of the theories to the study of women and peace. It also underscores the usefulness of the conflict transformation theoretical lens in understanding

sustainable peacebuilding through an inclusive approach (Lederach 2003, Lederach et al 2007, 2010; Galtung 1967, 1969, World Bank 2013). Furthermore, this study responds to the persistent calls for more studies by acting as a frontier of knowledge for future scholars who would be interested to explore the issues regarding women exclusion, especially refugee women of the world in broad terms and in African refugee contexts such as that of Uganda in particular (Anderlini et al 2010; Angom 2018; UNwomen 2017: 2).

The next chapter considers the theoretical framework underpinning the study in relation to women, peace, and conflict transformation. It begins by elaborating on the history of the theories on which the study leans. Subsequently, the different concepts involved in peacebuilding and conflict transformation theories are explained, and the theory of social inclusion is considered. The objective is to allow the reader to understand the theories and the different concepts and how they have evolved over the years.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This study is anchored on three theories: peacebuilding theory, conflict transformation theory, and social exclusion theory. The foundation of these theories was laid down by the following scholars: Lederach (2003, 2007, 2010), Galtung (1967, 1969, 1975), Gidday (2009), Steger (2005), and Luchsinger (2010). The peacebuilding theory gives the underpinnings of the process of reaching peace. It highlights detailed information on the different stages of peacebuilding and how sustainable peace can be achieved, while conflict transformation theory is premised on the idea of transforming relationships after conflict disrupts it. It details the different stages of conflict transformation and discusses other concepts of conflict management and conflict resolution that are used together with conflict transformation. The social exclusion theory, discussed in the last section, reinforces the two theories for sustainable peace. It discusses inclusion as a basis for stable and maintainable peace.

2.2 The Concept of Peace

Peace is not simply the absence of violence; it is a synonym for stability or equilibrium (Caparini et al 2017: 214; Oshadhi 2016: 106). "Peace also refers to internal states of a human being, it denotes the person who is at peace with himself or herself" (Galtung 1967:6). It means minimising or resolving conflict, but also creating a material condition that offers the common man a certain level of security, economic welfare, psychological well-being, as well as the capability to have control of political processes that affect their lives (Madu 2016: 195), in other words, peace is about the meaningful participation of all stakeholders. According to Galtung (1967: 12), peace is divided into three categories: peace as a synonym for stability or equilibrium; peace as the absence of organised collective violence; and peace as a synonym for all other good things in the world community, particularly cooperation and integration between human groups, with less emphasis on the absence of violence. Positive peace is a condition in which individuals have the fullest possible opportunity to meet their potential unrestricted by political, social, and economic inequality (Cremin and Bevington 2017 cited in Yazdani 2020: 9), for example, if a ceasefire is ratified, a negative peace will ensue. Peace is positive when something undesirable, such as violence and oppression, stops happening and when there is fair distribution of power and resources where people can actually explore and

attain their true potential without any forms of direct and structural resistance (Galtung 1961 cited in Oshadhi 2016: 106-107; Shields 2017: 6-7).

According to Galtung, there are two forms of peace outcomes: 'positive peace' and 'negative peace'. Negative peace is the absence of violence and refers to the quality of the peace (Galtung 1996: 2). For example, people living in periods of instability during a contested election or a constitutional crisis under oppressive or non-violent authoritarian rule, in fear and even in the shadow of ceasefires enforced by foreign peacekeepers are living in a negative peace (Caprini 2016: 215). In this type of peace, the 'shadow of the future' looms large, time horizons are short as people live from day to day, and vicious cycles of disillusion and distrust fuel instability (ibid).

Positive peace is a thriving peace, one that is collaborative, complex, and inclusive, and allows, in Galtung's words, for "the integration of human society" (Grewal and Galtung 2003 cited in Caprini: 214). A positive peace is self-sustaining; it creates virtuous cycles where actors are willing to work towards a common future, because they expect to share the outcome. In other words, where there is 'negative peace', actors may also be less likely to collaborate and more likely to defect from cooperation. In considering this definition, it is probably difficult in current times to imagine positive peace because negative peace and positive peace can exhibit several forms, often dependent on the conditions, context, legacy of conflict, and access to resources for conflict including weapons, institutions that can be used to resolve conflict, and many other factors that are studied in peace research (World Bank 2011: xv-xvii). In other words, when people trust each other and their government, they have the chance to sustain and work towards achieving positive peace, but when they don't trust each other, and their government peace becomes impossible. Therefore, the term 'positive peace' is relative and depends on the context and the angle in which someone views it, and it is a dream that I think is far from being achieved without the commitment of those in power.

2.3 The Genesis of Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding became part of the official discourse in 1990, when the United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali introduced the concept of post-conflict peacebuilding in his peace agenda. The history of the agenda came on 17 June 1992, following the presidential statement adopted by the Security Council at its summit meeting on 31 January 1992. The Secretary-General submitted a report to the Council entitled *An Agenda*

for Peace: preventive diplomacy, peace-making and peacekeeping. In the same agenda, the Secretary-General noted a comprehensive list of peaceful means for the resolution of conflicts. In the report, the Secretary General called attention to the power of the Security Council, under Articles 36 and 37 of the Charter of the UN, to recommend to member states the submission of a dispute to the International Court of Justice, arbitration, or other dispute-settlement mechanisms. The agenda specified four areas of action relating to preventive diplomacy which consisted of peace-making, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding (UN 1992: 2-6). As noted by Reyhler (2010: 1), since then, two important documents helped in bringing about peacebuilding to the mainstream context – the documents are: the 2000 Brahimi Report, a response to the failures of complex UN peacekeeping in the 1990s, and in the larger context of freedom, towards development, security, and human rights, which led to the establishment of the peacebuilding commission.

At the UN level, the concept of peacebuilding has evolved since the 1980s from its inception as light ‘footprint’ interventions with quick exit strategies, usually after the first democratic election. For example, in 1986, the UN helped guide Namibia through a successful, largely non-violent transition to independence from South Africa. In the 1990s, the UN started the peace operations that began around 1991, largely in response to the failures of the liberal peacebuilding model. The UN in Angola, for example, used the same model as in El Salvador and Namibia but the electoral process failed to sustain peace. The UN then moved to the deployment of special political missions to Afghanistan and Iraq, areas of complex and protracted conflicts, which led to another wave of institutional evolution across a third generation of peace operations from 2000 to 2008. These missions encountered challenges related to deep social grievances and fragile state institutions that created conditions for “no war, no peace” (Ginty and Firchow 2016: 5).

The fourth and the last stage where the UN is now working in is the shift away from the international administration of peace processes with international organisations assuming authority over the state, and towards “local ownership” and “bottom-up governance” (Fletcher 2017:6-10, Korosteleva & Flockhart 2020:166-171). This development in the UN systems indicates the complexities of conflicts and mistakes that have been made based on globalising peacebuilding definitions and activities as opposed to using local resources which involve bottom-up and top-down approaches for peace. A good example was the EPI project which was carried out by Ginty in Uganda, South Sudan, and Zimbabwe. This approach begins with caution that outside actors can never fully understand the experiences of others. It is used as an approach inspired by the warnings on the conceit of understanding other people’s realities

(Chabal 2012 cited in Ginty and Firchow 2017: 7). The set of indicators that emerged were different standard indicators that international organisations and NGOs would set at local levels and inclusion at different levels was on the list (Ginty and Firchow 2016: 78).

Since then, many scholars have also looked at the concept of peacebuilding but in different manners as their definitions reflect the complex contexts in which peacebuilding is mostly practised. For the purpose of this study, peacebuilding was conceptualised from the point of view of John Paul Lederach (2003) and Johan Galtung (1967), the pioneers of the concepts of peacebuilding. Peacebuilding theory is relevant to this study because both theories underscore the importance of peace at the local level which this study intends to explore. Peacebuilding is explored as a framework linked to peacekeeping and peace-making. Therefore, in this chapter, I have discussed the different concepts and how they complement each other.

2.4 Theory of Peacebuilding

The theory was propounded by Galtung in the 1970s; According to Lamb, it refers to projects that involve “concrete action” towards peace (Lamb 2018: 1). It is a “process of building structures and systems that support the ‘Self’ in all aspects” (ibid). The theory postulates that structures must eliminate root causes of violence and give better alternatives to war in conditions where war is likely to occur (Galtung 1967: 6). In addition, Clements argues that peacebuilding is as much about “unmasking the powerful, and equalising unequal relationships as it is about solving present problems” (Clements n.d.). In support of the argument, Galtung (1975), in his first book entitled *three approaches to peace: Peacekeeping, Peace-making and Peacebuilding*, emphasises the creation of peacebuilding structures to promote sustainable peace by addressing that which he referred to as the “root causes” of violent conflict and supporting native capabilities for peace management and conflict resolution. This relates to the views of other researchers who suggest that armed conflict creates deep social grievances and long-lasting inter-group fears, and that addressing these problems systematically can resolve security dilemmas and build durable peace (Galtung 1995).

Similarly, peacebuilding is viewed by Lederach as an all-inclusive concept that “encompasses, generates, and sustains the full range of processes, approaches, and steps desirable to change conflict towards a more acceptable, nonviolent relations more than postaccord reconstruction” and “is understood as a comprehensive notion that encompasses, generates,

and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict towards more sustainable, peaceful relationships” (Lederach 2010:6-10). It does include a broad variety of actions that both lead and follow approved peace treaties.

Peacebuilding works in tandem with peace-making aiming at a voluntary settlement between parties in armed conflict while peacekeeping refers to the interposition of international armed forces to separate fighting parties by addressing structural issues and long-term relationships (Ramsbotham *et al.* 2011: 25). In order to reach ‘positive’ peace, Galtung contends that a strategy that integrates the whole society as opposed to merely ending direct violence, which is usually the primary focus once conflict breaks out, and the cessation of hostilities lead to ‘negative’ peace since society cannot be peaceful unless the unjust structures and relationships are addressed and removed (Galtung 1964; Ramsbotham *et al.* 2011).

Lederach (1997, 2003) considers peacebuilding as a broader term encompassing strategies such as conflict management, resolution, and transformation and which is linked to other concepts such as peace-making and peacekeeping. He sees it as a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains a full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict towards more sustainable peaceful relationships (Lederach 1997: 20). UNSG (2004: 2), in *Agenda for Development*, maintains the view that peacebuilding requires sustained, cooperative work on underlying economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian problems, while in the *Agenda for Peace* (1992), Boutros-Ghali proposes responsibilities and responses for the United Nations and the international community in dealing with contemporary conflicts. The proposal includes four major areas of activities: *preventive diplomacy, peace-making, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peacebuilding* (UN 2002: 1).

Lederach further supports the view that peacebuilding is necessary for the transformation of relationships between people. In addition, Mani (2002: 15) suggests that peacebuilding is both a political process as well as a social process, which is aimed at rebuilding relationships. This view was further amplified by Fukuda-Parr and McCandless (2009: 216-217) who contend that peacebuilding should comprise holistic, conceptual strategies and approaches in order for them to be effective. Initially, peacebuilding was considered a necessary step once peace-making had established the framework for a negotiated settlement and peacekeeping had ensured that warring factions would not re-engage in armed conflict (Cornwell *et al.* 2010). The concept was broadened in the 1990s to include, apart from rebuilding in post-conflict

settings, conflict prevention, conflict management, and post-conflict reconstruction efforts (Cornwell *et al.* 2010: 3).

Since then, peacebuilding has occupied a central position in international intervention in post-war societies. Boutros-Ghali, the former UN Secretary General, introduced the concept as crucial to successful preventive diplomacy, peace-making, and peacekeeping (ibid). It involves a wide range of activities and functions that both precede and follow formal peace accords. In this view, peacebuilding is not limited to the signing of peace agreements or the cessation of hostilities. It is an ongoing, multifaceted, and holistic concept that should be linked to a society's social, cultural, political, spiritual, and economic and development fabrics. It is a complex, long-term process aimed at creating the necessary conditions for positive and sustainable peace by addressing the deep-rooted structural and cultural causes of violent conflict in a comprehensive manner (OECD 2011: 21). Therefore, the three concepts, having developed over time within the UN system, point to Galtung's theory that recognises violence at different levels, namely, direct, structural, and cultural (Galtung 1990: 291-292), and each of the three concepts is used at a different level to respond to a different type of violence.

Therefore, peacebuilding aims at achieving protracted peace through strategies that create cultures of peace and that do not depend upon the use of violence, but rather promote nonviolence and a sustainable world as a way to avoid the horror of war. Peacebuilding addresses the root causes of violence and works at the structural level to create conditions for positive peace (Bevington 2017 cited in Yazdani 2020: 5). An important strategy of peacebuilding is education for peace that aims at a transformative approach for the transmission of knowledge and skills that have relevance for keeping, making, and building peace (Yazdani 2020: 6).

From the above definitions, it is difficult to agree with one author who focused on “social *inclusion* relationships *building*, *social construction*” and postulated that conflict affects social relationships, when relationships are disrupted, communities get torn apart and yet peace is built if a community is connected. If relationships are unstable at the community level, then the society will be prone to conflicts, suffice it to say that a community that is unstable is a potential threat to a country. A good relationship is the umbilical cord of peaceful communities. In a traditional African context, a relationship is built at different levels. For example, marriage between two warring tribes can change a relationship because the focus changes to uniting both tribes through the lens of marriage which holds together the former war opponents.

Notably, the present-day conflicts have changed the way cultural norms influence the way in which communities deal with conflict at all levels.

In the present context, peacebuilding is a strategy to rebuild the broken relationships, to meet basic human needs including security, protection, access to quality education, and access to basic health which can lead to the promotion of stable and sustainable peace; political, social, and economic empowerment; and prevent a return to violence (Schirch 2004: 10-11; Call 2015: 2-5). It is a process that is directed at building structural and cultural peace (Galtung 1969: 39), since culture belongs to and defines how they operate and respond to social upheavals. In this sense, cultural inclusiveness is part of peacebuilding for sustainable peace and development. This is because if the culture, structures, or institutions in which peacebuilding activities take place are not inclusive of all stakeholders, one cannot reach the goal of sustainable peace. Therefore, participation of all stakeholders, including men and women, throughout the peace process needs to be a precondition for designing peace initiatives.

However, most times, involvement at the political level excludes women especially in the decision-making; this can poison the good intentions aimed at peacebuilding. Banerjee and Duflo (2011: 235) assert that “sometimes well-intended and well thought policies if they are not implemented well can result in creating more gaps”. This could also be true of responsible people who stand in the way of the implementation of policies, and, in this manner, certain vital issues can easily be overlooked. Anderlini (2000: 5) reminds one that the inclusion of women to participate in the peacebuilding process is important because women are likely to bring/put gender issues on the agenda, introduce other conflict experiences, and set different priorities for peacebuilding and rehabilitation, and may also generate wider public support for peace accord.

Peacebuilding theory, as with any other theory, has its strengths and weaknesses. Theorists such as Richmond (2006: 105) argue that peacebuilding is about exporting a particular version of peace into the conflict environment. Merlingen and Ostrauskaite (2006 cited in Angom 2018: 8) added their voice in stating that peacebuilding involves pastorship which may leave heavy footmarks in the affected societies. These arguments have a common denominator as they suggest that the model of peacebuilding brought forth is of a different context and mostly “Western”. I think that perhaps the definition of peacebuilding should be contextualised in the mode of its operations as it will be seen later in this paper where participants defined peace in their own context. The people affected should define the desired peacebuilding activities to

reconstruct their society or country. It is worth noting that interventions must be determined by the needs of these communities and peace ought not to be prescribed by an outsider because, as is the argument, the insiders know what peace looks like from their daily experiences.

Today that which is seen as peacebuilding is concerned with intervention by the elite, including at the decision-making level. It sometimes involves people who have the power to stop military actions, but peacebuilding needs to rather focus on the social, economic, and psychological environment of ordinary people at the grassroots level which is critical for the study of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation that considers grassroots initiatives. During the research team's intervention training for this research, the team asked participants to define peacebuilding in their local language and context and this is what the team compiled. Peacebuilding is never a once-off activity; it is a process. When interviewed 11 August 2019, Mr. Lam Cosmas an expert of peace and conflict defined peace as a set of activities that engage communities to mitigate/reduce violence. It involves actions undertaken deliberately to build relations and peacebuilding to help restore people's humanness; it addresses issues of democracy, human rights, the environment, protection etc.; it is a proactive process; and one does it before the problem comes.

2.5 Peacebuilding Process

According to Schirch (2004), peacebuilding calls for different approaches and the nexus adopts four different groups: waging conflict non-violently, reducing direct violence, transforming relationships, and lastly, capacity building, in other words, peacekeeping, peace-making, and peacebuilding, which are discussed as follows.

Waging conflict non-violently advocates more for peace, and at this stage, effort needs to be geared to target connectors of peace and work with them. These could involve NGOs and individuals who are working for peace. At the stage of reducing direct violence, efforts are needed to look at those issues that provoke violence and systems put in place to protect victims. This could mean putting peacekeepers in place to stop further suffering and once direct violence is stopped, issues that strain relations can then be identified, and it can give support to trauma victims and advocate for justices for those affected by violence. The last stage is capacity building of all actors. This can be done through education and training aimed at strengthening the capacities that already exist locally (Schirch 2004 cited in Peacebuilding Initiatives 2013: 5). It is important at this stage to identify local capacities for peace and build on them, as recommended by Anderson in her seminal book entitled *Do No Harm: How Aid*

Can Support Peace – or War, where she argues that relationships in war can be complex as there are gains and losses during war, hence one has to be careful to separate the “dividers” and connectors and work with them (Anderson 1999: 14-15). The main aim of this last process is to build a just structure that supports a sustainable peace culture (Schirch 2004: 25). Figure 2.1 presents an illustration of the peacebuilding process.

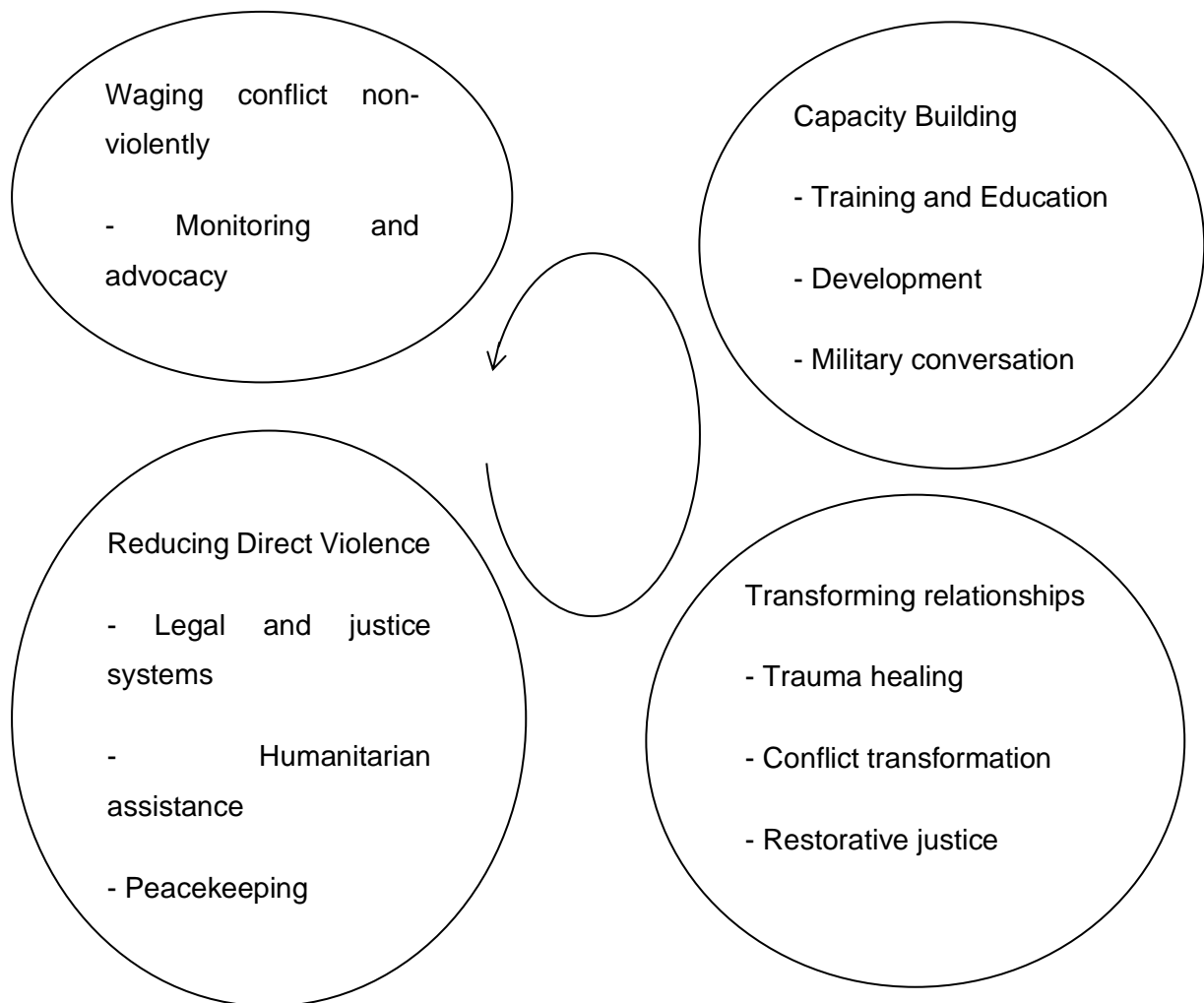


Figure 2.1: An illustration of the peacebuilding process, adopted from Schirch (2004: 26).

In the section regarding the peacebuilding process and transformations of relationships, the I have made adjustments to include dialogue in the list of transforming relationships. This is because dialogue is a prerequisite to knowledge of people’s common stories in conflict and a starting point in appreciating one other, a step towards building relationships. Dialogue is the tool used to explore conflict, with one party at a time, making no effort to ‘win’ or persuade: it

is an ongoing brainstorming process in which time, questioning, and answering are shared equally; it means being honest, outspoken, tactful, careful, and 'normal'. Respect for conflict dialogue partners is essential (Galtung and Fisher 2013: 59, Schirch and Campt 2007:10). In conflict situations, people do not listen to each other because everyone is looking for ways to survive and justify their actions. There is also a level of mistrust during conflict that is too high for one to listen to someone else. However, when there is a chance and a safe place for people to share their stories with each other, they start to relate their stories and appreciate the other person's story. This is in line with that which was stated earlier that peacebuilding works with other concepts at different stages. The next section looks at other concepts and terminologies used together with peacebuilding in the field.

2.6 Terminologies and Concepts

2.6.1 Peace-making

The United Nations (n.d) defines peace-making as an action to bring conflict parties to an agreement through negotiation, mediation, reconciliation, and arbitration. This is purely a diplomatic effort targeted towards ending violent conflict by the use of a non-violent approach. This process includes the intervention of third parties who are supposed to be recognised by the conflicting parties (UN 2002 cited in Mugoni-Sekeso et al 2014: 32). This implies that peace-making aims to resolve conflicts without the use of force and involves communication, persuasion and dialogue, mediation, empathy, and reconciliation, while Galtung (1990: 13) refers to peace-making as an "intervention that categorically produces either negative or positive peace". Galtung's definition suggests that peace-making is mostly determined by the third parties who are not necessarily within the wish of the conflict parties; this is how it can result in negative or positive peace and can involve mediations and negotiations that can take a political stance.

The above definition can be elaborated upon by considering the recent peace-making process in South Sudan where one condition to the resolution of the conflict on 10 September 2015 was the UNSCR 2206 (2015) that created a system that imposed sanctions on those engaging in, inter alia, the scope of permanent ceasefire and transitional security arrangements that had created dissatisfaction among the warring parties. Before signing the agreement, President Kiir was quoted as stating:

[W]ith all those reservations that we have, we will sign this (ARCSS) document ... some features of the document are not in the interest of just and lasting peace. We

had only one of the two options, the option of an imposed peace or the option of continued war (Vhumbunu 2016: 4-6).

On the other hand, the opposition leader, Riak Machar, was quoted as stating that “we dropped our reservation in favour of peace, and he (Kiir) has his reservations he should keep them to himself like we kept ours to ourselves” (Vhumbunu 2018: 6). These reservations by the two parties to the conflict reflect the fact that the core issues that possibly drove them to fighting were not, in effect, properly addressed; rather, they were given options that did not necessarily reflect their need or interest for a final agreement to which they consented. However, one year later, the peace agreement collapsed, and South Sudan returned to war.

The resumption of the war in South Sudan raises the question whether the reservation of the parties was taken into account by the mediators before the agreement was signed. This scenario offers an example of how peace-making by third parties can lead to negative peace and informs one that peace cannot be rushed, and that peace needs time for reflection and decision-making, and requires genuine commitment from the parties in the conflict. Otherwise, the relationship that is already fragile can become complex. However, this peace-making in the context of South Sudan took place after protracted conflict and after diplomatic intervention had plummeted. UN peacekeeping efforts have been present in South Sudan since 2013, but this diplomatic effort has not been able to bear fruit in terms of relationship transformation between the warring parties. The peacekeeping comes when there is a crisis in order to stop civilians from suffering. When diplomatic efforts have failed and human rights violations continue, then the international community (UN, AU, and EU) can decide to send peacekeeping troops.

2.6.2 Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping is defined as the “deployment of armed and civilian personnel in a conflict zone so as to save lives and arrest the fighting between belligerents by intervention of military, police and humanitarian workers” (ACCORD 2014: 110-111). Since 1990, peacekeeping has been a common conflict prevention tool used during violent conflict mostly by the United Nations and other regional bodies such as the African Union. Over the years, the UN has had to deploy peacekeepers in Darfur in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, West Timor, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Liberia, and recently in South Sudan to stop warring parties and protect civilians. The concept of peacekeeping has not received much attention from scholars. However, over the years, there have been some meaningful endeavours by the UN to look at its peacekeeping operations which emanated mostly from the UN resolution that called for the inclusion of women in all peace processes (Resolution 1325) and also the accusation

regarding the UN peacekeepers committing atrocities in Haiti and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Peacekeeping can be defined in different terms depending on the mandate, for example, as “Militarily (manage and cessation of hostilities, safeguarding the environment, etc.), in political terms (the reinstatement of lawful administration/government), and economically (development and humanitarian assistance)” (Hansen et al 2004:8-9).

Peacekeeping aims to respond to violence immediately and stop it from escalating. At the macro level, military forces control violence by acting as peacekeepers, and at the micro level, for example, a security guard would break up fighting and work as a peacekeeper in the location to which he/she is assigned. While peacekeeping suppresses conflict, it neither addresses the cause of the conflict nor does it establish long-term peace among the disputants (Yazdani 2020: 4). Therefore, it is virtuous to note that peacekeeping should not be treated as an instrument of conflict management because it fails to address the underlying causes of conflict. Nevertheless, it can be used to resolve conflict because of its dual goal of containing violence to pave the way for peacebuilding initiatives.

Different frameworks for peace, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, and peace-making have been discussed. The common denominator with these concepts is their emphasis on ending violence and addressing the root causes of conflict. Peacekeeping is seen to be more of an effort in preventing direct violence than addressing the root cause, but in either case, the synergistic effect of peacekeeping and peace-making is their contribution to sustainable peace. They need to be systematically used at different stages of conflict, for example, commencing with peacekeeping if there is direct violence, then peace-making, and finally peacebuilding to systematically look at all the underlying issues, stop violence, and design both long- and short-term interventions that can then bring about conflict transformation. Before progressing into the theory of conflict transformation, a brief understanding of that which conflict and violence entail will be given.

2.7 Understanding Conflict and Violence

2.7.1 Conflict

Conflict can be violent; it can also be nonviolent depending on the stage it has reached. Lederach states that it is a time when changes happen in the “natural” discourse of our relationships. When conflict starts, everything changes, and it can easily be realised that something is happening. This changes relationships that can become very difficult (Lederach

2003 cited in Dawa 2019: 1; Lederach 1993: 23). Conflict involves the 'incompatibility of goals. In other words, conflict is the misunderstanding between two or more persons or groups of people who think that they have incompatible goals, and the actors may effectively be the same actor, who then is in the situation where he/she does not have the same access to the resources as others do, and these can be political, tribal, or religious groups (Galtung 2004: 4, 1967: 61; Quincy 1971 cited in Ajayi 2014: 140; Albert 2001 cited in Ajayi 2014: 141). This means that when people are in conflict, their minds are cloaked in their own point of view; they do not see other persons' views as offering an alternative. According to Cooper (2008: 85), conflict is "an ineradicable part of the human condition and it occurs when the interests of one party come by accident or design into engagement with those of another or others". I would like to add here that not all incidences of conflict occur by accident; sometimes people know that that which they do will hurt others, but they continue to go ahead with that plan, in other words, some conflicts are intentional.

It is a phenomenon that transforms events, the relationships in which conflict occurs, and indeed its very creators. It is a necessary element of transformative human construction and reconstruction of social organisation and realities (Lederach 1995: 17; Ajayi et al 2014: 139). In Africa, conflict is traditionally defined or regarded as a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralise, injure, or eliminate their rivals (Onigun, Otite and Albert 2001 cited in Ajayi 2014: 139). However, conflict may generally exist wherever or whenever incompatible activities occur and may result in a win-lose personality. The resolution, transformation, and management of conflict may also produce a win-win situation.

In other words, conflict is part of the normal process that takes place in human relationships; how one perceives and deals with it is what makes it destructive to human relationships. As mentioned above, conflict impacts people at different levels. The definition above views conflict from a constructivist point of view of understanding conflict transformation. Conflict changes over time and hence needs to be seen in a specific context such as culture and religion, which will help in defining the most effective transformational approach to conflict. The major characteristics of conflict are that it is *unavoidable, intrinsic, and omnipresent* in everyday life, and conflict is largely informed by attitudes, behaviours, and contradictions: "the ABC triangle" (Galtung 1996: 14). Lederach argues that conflict can be constructed and deconstructed by the people whom it is affecting. Expressed in a different way, the decision and power to transform a conflict non-violently essentially depends on the parties involved. Therefore, the way in which one responds to conflict defines the end result of the conflict. To

put it differently, the end justifies the means of transformation of conflict. Since conflict is normal, one needs to respond to it in a constructive manner, and then the end result will be positive. The way in which people respond to conflict is also dependant on the context. It is important to note that if conflict is not managed well, it can be devastating at different levels and bring more suffering depending on how it is approached.

In the context of the current study, one clear example that comes to mind is the incident of Rhino Camp where, on 18 June 2018, the research team witnessed the negative impacts of conflict when violence broke out in Rhino Camp Refugee Settlement between the Nuer and the Dinka that led to the death of six people, an entire village being burnt down, and properties worth millions of shillings being destroyed. The event did not come as a surprise to anyone who is familiar with the conflict dynamics in South Sudan. This tribal conflict in South Sudan has crossed over to Uganda. In Uganda, these conflicts became latent but never resolved for better relationships to co-exist in the refugee settlement in Uganda. There was no appropriate response designed from the beginning to address the root causes of these conflicts. As mentioned in the problem statement, focusing on life-saving interventions which are well-intentioned end in causing conflict because they bring together people who regard themselves as enemies. The response of UNHCR and OPM of separating the conflict parties by taking one to another settlement has put the conflict back to “*latent leading to negative Peace*”, If not monitored carefully, one might see recurrences of violence.

2.7.2 Violence

Violence is any physical, emotional, verbal, institutional, structural, or spiritual behaviour, attitude, policy, or condition that diminishes, dominates, or destroys others and oneself; it involves those actions, words, attitudes, structures, or systems that cause physical, psychological, social, or environmental damage, and/or prevent people from reaching their full human potential (Galtung 1969: 168). Galtung argues that violence “presents itself when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realisation” (Galtung 1969: 168). This definition sounds theoretically vague, but it gives some necessary parameters within which one can understand violence and how it can be deeply structured into the system of relationships, within socio-economic and political arrangements, and even in the culture of a society and of a global system. Therefore, systemic violence can in turn be a root cause of conflict, as well as a behavioural response to a specific conflict situation.

According to Galtung, violence can be either direct or indirect (Galtung 1990: 291-305). Most times, people see violence in covert or overt forms because it is visible. In a conflict situation, *overt* refers to the more direct forms of violence whereas *covert* refers to the indirect forms of violence. Direct or overt violence is physical or verbal and is largely discernible, while indirect or covert violence is structural and largely imperceptible.

Galtung (1969) made a clear distinction between structural violence, cultural violence, and direct violence. These ideas are connected to his distinction depending on how it operates between three inter-related forms of violence (structural-cultural-direct), where structural violence is at the left end and cultural violence is at the right end of the base of a triangle invisibly, while direct violence is on the vertex visibly. According to Galtung's Violence Triangle (1969 cited in Drago 2015: 59-60), cultural and structural violence cause direct violence, and structural violence reinforces cultural violence. It is important to note that direct violence, physical and/or verbal, is visible in actions and behaviours.

Structural violence exists when some groups, classes, genders, or nationalities are assumed to have, and in fact do have, more access to goods, resources, and opportunities than other groups, classes, genders, or nationalities, and this unequal advantage is built into the very social, political, and economic systems that govern societies, states, and the world. These tendencies may be overt, such as the Apartheid regime in South Africa, constitutional privileges, job reservations, and financial support in the name of the welfare of the tribes or backwards women cannot own property (Ayikoru May 2019). Cultural violence involves the whole system, and an actor or a person cannot be singled out. It is embedded in political, economic, and religious structures resulting in the occurrence of avoidable violence, most commonly seen as the deprivation of basic human needs. For the purpose of the study, one will see how culture has contributed to building structures that justify structures excluding women without being noticed. When people migrate, they move with their cultures and slowly learn new cultures as culture is not static. In the case of South Sudan, masculinity manifests in a patriarchal society that favours men in decision-making (Bubenzer and Stern 2011).

During an interview in April 2016, Betty Ogwaro told the global observatory that:

The only problem with men particularly in South Sudan is that decisions are not made at the table. Decisions are made under the table. Decisions are made at night. Decisions are made after working hours, where women do not go. Even if they can influence decisions, it is difficult for them to do so when they do not know, because a decision is made when they are not there. Information is power. And husbands do not share information with their wives (Stoddard 2016:7).

The above scenario emanates from patriarchy. It results from the power and authority of masculinity (Shepherd and Laura xxiii cited in Theobald 2012: 20) and deliberate interaction of men and women, and losses and gains in the patriarchal divide are unequally distributed between social groups and the beneficiaries have an interest in maintaining the unequal structure (ibid: 21). Figure 2.2 illustrates the different types of violence.

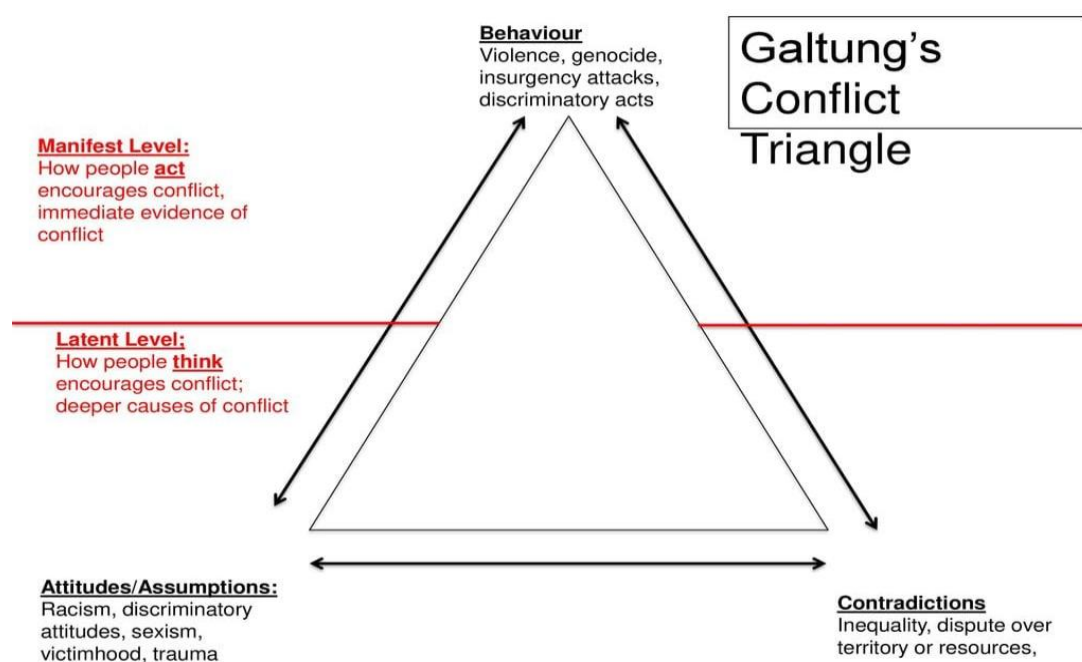


Figure 2.2: An illustration of different types of violence: Direct violence – Behaviours (destructive/constructive), with 'A' representing attitudes, 'B' for behaviours, and 'C' for the contradictions (Source: Galtung 1966 cited in Hernandez 2019: 4).

From Figure 2.2, it can be seen that one's behaviour can be destructive. Often, one does not know about the contradictions and incompatible goals, because violent conflict creates self-dynamics that blind one and make one forget about the root causes. One does not know anything about the attitudes and feelings of the conflict parties. However, a conflict is always defined by these three aspects, and as conflict workers, one always has to keep them in mind. One shortcoming of peacebuilding in my point of view is that often one only focuses on one of these three aspects. Lederach states that there is a process structure gap in peacebuilding. Some peacebuilders are process-oriented but not outcome-oriented. Thus, they mainly try to transform behaviour and attitudes and believe that this is sufficient to find a solution, an overarching goal for all conflict parties; they even go so far as to state that there is no solution

but only transformation. Peace is the process of transforming conflicts from violence to dialogue. Some peacebuilders think that a new structure will resolve the conflict, without looking at behaviour and attitudes and realising that imposed structures could be accepted. However, the truth is that for sustainable peace to take shape, one needs a process and structure-oriented approach. The terms *attitudes*, *behaviour*, and *contradictions* are expanded on as follows:

- Attitudes: this is simply the way in which people think or view matters, and it may also include feelings and emotions. This can lead to fear, anger, sadness, powerlessness, and blaming others, and this can lead to violent action towards another person as the person feels frustrated.
- Behaviour: this is the way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others. In violent conflicts, behaviour is normally violent though only for an extreme minority of those in the community in armed conflict, this can lead to rape, killing, abuse, shooting, hurting, harming, torture, beating, inflicting suffering, bombing, kidnapping, attacking, sabotage etc. Behaviour can also include actions such as withdrawal, turning away, doing nothing, and not getting involved. These kinds of behaviours allow/perpetuate more violent conflicts.
- Contradictions: these are ideas that contradict each other; this can include defining the conflict and that which the conflict is truly about: major fault lines, exclusion, unmet basic needs, deep structures of violence, and a lack of participation. This is often that which is most ignored by the media. It may be addressed by NGOs, but often only indirectly and in a fragmented way. Cease-fires do not deal with the *contradictions*, but only with the *behaviour* (bringing an end to the violence). Unless the contradictions are constructively transformed, the conflict and the potential that it has to break into violence remain. Having understood violence and conflict and how it affects human relationships, one can then turn one's attention to discuss how these relationships can become peaceful. The next chapter discusses a theory of conflict transformation that sets the tone for transforming broken relationships during conflict.

2.8 Theory of Conflict Transformation

The theory of conflict transformation was first advanced by Lederach (2003) and, just as in peacebuilding theory, it is grounded in the common understanding of conflict as a usual social occurrence the transformation of which from the violent relationships into peaceful ones is indispensable. In other words, all conflict parties, including men and women, have the potential to work collectively to transform their relationship. Conflict transformation theory upholds the inclusion of women in peace processes as a critical component to understanding the geneses of war and violence and also aids to develop creative, "sustainable solutions that can help built sustainable Peace" (USIP 2012: 1).

Conflict transformation theory postulates that the consequences of a conflict can be modified for relationships and social structures to improve rather than be harmed (Lederach 1998: 44). “The theory maintains that conflict creates life, and through conflict we respond, innovate and transform our nature, conflict can be a vehicle of change” (Lederach 1997: 18). According to Lederach, emphasis is placed on rebuilding destroyed relationships with a view to focus on reconciliation within society and augmenting societies’ potential in peacebuilding; he contends that the answer to transformation is a ‘proactive bias’ towards seeing conflict as a potential catalyst for positive change and that this change will entail a balance of power in relationships through which all parties are involved and recognised in new ways that will lead to increasing the voice of the less powerful in addressing their needs to legitimise their disquiets (Lederach 2003: 15, 1997: 65).

Over the decades, several scholars have argued in favour of conflict transformation for sustainable peace (Lederach 1997, 2003; Kelman and Fisher 1972; Freire 1970; Galtung 1994). These scholars concur that conflict transformation is about transforming the very systems, structures, and relationships that give rise to violence and injustices. The authors focus upon relationship building and power inequities that exist at social and political levels and that generate more conflicts. In this context, exclusion of refugee women in conflict transformation and peacebuilding is to turn a blind eye to the realities of the vital role that women play in times of political turmoil. Consequently, this research seeks to explore whether conflict transformation can be used to change relationships through addressing issues of stereotypes, marginalisation, social norms, and beliefs as they lead to exclusions.

A peaceful community requires transformation of power imbalances and unjust social relationships that marginalise the voices of certain groups, such as women, in decision-making processes from their very roots in society. Conflict transformation also addresses the wider social, political, and cultural sources of conflict and hence does not only focus on addressing the behavioural and attitudinal manifestations but also on the deeper structural origins (Miall 2004: 4-5). In this context, conflict transformation can lead to a process of locally owned, bottom-up approaches to building positive peace. Conflict transformation does not work in isolation; it works with other approaches such as conflict management and conflict resolution, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

Lederach is one of the theorists who believed that conflict transformation is the best way of dealing with any type of conflict, especially at the community level. In his book entitled *the little book of conflict transformation*, he defines and elaborates on empirical studies from the field

(Somalia and Nepal) that give details on the effectiveness of conflict transformation (Lederach 2003: 14). It is important to note that the conflict transformation approach emphasises relationship building and Lederach focuses on the dynamic aspects of social conflict. At the centre of the transformational approach is a convergence of the relational context, a view of conflict as opportunity, and the encouragement of creative “change processes”. It requires skilled personnel through capacity strengthening and advocacy and emphasises that a transformational approach recognises that conflict is a normal and continuous dynamic within human relationships (Lederach 2003: 18-21).

Reflecting on Lederach’s approach is extremely pertinent to this study in order to give a clear picture of a better relationship between women of different ethnic groups from South Sudan who currently reside in the settlements in Uganda. The relationship aspect of conflict *is* important because of its potential to make or disrupt any efforts towards community peacebuilding. For example, there have been several peace accords signed in South Sudan between the warring parties, as evidenced by the July 2018 negotiation which was facilitated by the president of Uganda and the president of South Sudan. That which the world saw on social media was the interaction of four men signing an agreement without a single woman being present as a witness. However, women have been part of this war and form the majority of refugees and Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs) in South Sudan. This type of patriarchal political system undermines social and economic efforts made at the grassroots level for peacebuilding.

The way forward for successful transformation is by maintaining a broad conception of conflict transformation and peacebuilding and by not looking at a single story but rather at broader and multi-layered stories. There is a need to focus on promoting justice that will help to reduce violence and restore relationships – this can be done by initiating opportunities capable of promoting conflict transformation, conflict management, a holistic view of conflict transformation at all levels (individual and institutional), pursuing social empowerment that will nurture the individual and community, and lastly understanding the entire process as a way of life rather than as a technique and outcome, and as a commitment to truth and sustained restoration rather than as agreements or results. This approach may provide a holistic framework for the process of conflict transformation. It provides the basis for mapping the long-term and short-term causes of the conflict and the actors who include those who are mostly invisible – the women and youth. This practice sets the stage for addressing the personal and systemic issues of conflicts and leads to the building of relationships through

embracing truth, reconciliation, forgiveness, and justice which are critical ingredients for sustainable peace.

In designing creative strategies for achieving the desired change, one needs a good understanding of the conflict and the necessary skills to move towards the horizon. In the case of the settlements in Uganda, not only are women excluded but generally peacebuilding is not taken as an important aspect of the humanitarian responses to the refugee crisis. There is no long-term strategy on how to deal with conflicts in the future. This has led to a vicious cycle of cultural and structural violence and a lack of capacity to respond to such community shocks. This, in my view, is the departure point combined with the research finding to develop an intervention. Lederach's viewpoint demonstrates that change is not linear: it reminds one that the "journey from the present point toward the wanted/desired future is not a straightforward line, but rather a set of dynamic initiatives that set-in motion change processes and create a sustained platform to pursue long-term change" (Lederach 2003: 34). Such a structure emphasises the challenge of how to end something undesirable and build one that is desirable. Since conflict is not a dynamic process, one has to adopt a dynamic transformation process. Figure 2.3 presents an illustration of conflict transformation.

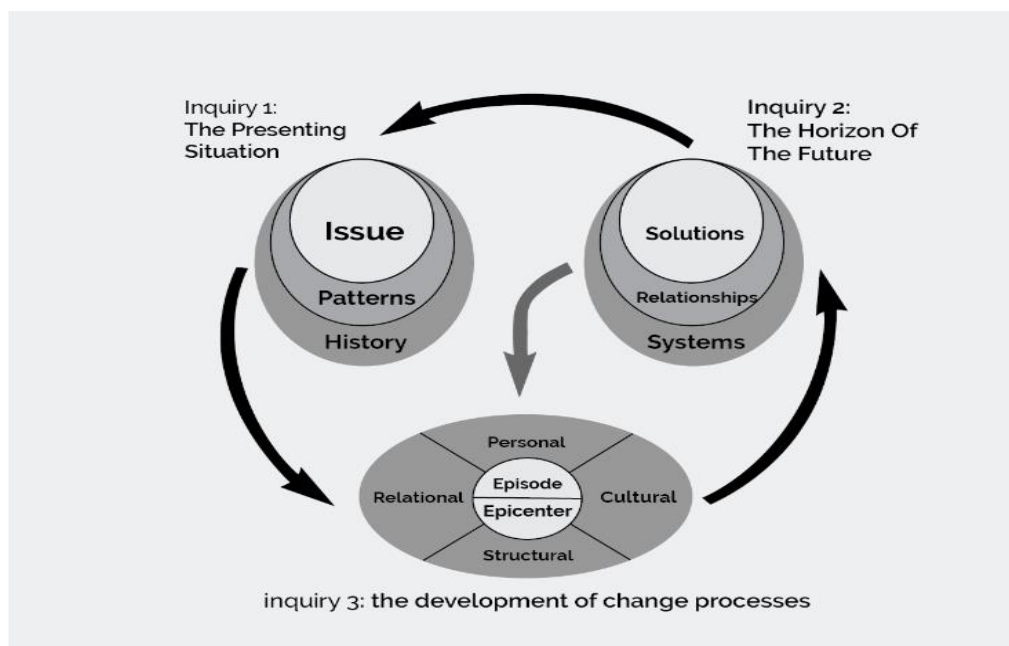


Figure 2.3: The big picture of conflict transformation, adapted from Lederach (2003: 35).

Figure 2.3 is a schematic illustration of the elements of conflict transformation showing the interconnections between issues, solutions, and episode. In the diagram, Lederach demonstrates the conflict transformation process by first considering the part of the inquiry

that, according to him, calls for parties or practitioners to carry out a thorough mapping exercise followed by a conflict analysis exercise involving all parties and seeking to determine the main actors to the conflict by looking at the history, the root causes, the drivers, and the effects, among other aspects, and the progress at a particular point. Suffice it to state that the history of the conflict is important as it helps the understanding about progress and links events as they follow the different stages. This will help to set the horizon for the desired outcomes and the future.

The aspect of horizon shapes common beliefs and emphasises that there has to be ownership of the processes. The horizon will derive from the relationship patterns as well as systems (both social and governance) that are put in place in order to address the conflict, followed by the development of change where the peace practitioners must develop the strategies for change. At this stage, Lederach (1999) suggests that “change processes must not only promote short-term solutions, but also build platforms capable of promoting long-term social change”. The change must be cognisant of the four dimensions of conflict, namely, personal, relational, structural, and cultural. Transformational platforms also require building an ongoing and adaptive base at the epicentre of conflict. Lederach (2003:46) gives the image of a platform which “includes an understanding of the various levels of the conflict, the ‘big picture’, processes for addressing immediate problems and conflicts, a vision for the future, and a plan for change processes which will move in that direction”. From this base, it becomes possible to generate processes that create solutions to short-term needs and, at the same time, work on strategic, long-term, constructive change in systems and relationships. This change process is illustrated in Figure 2.4.

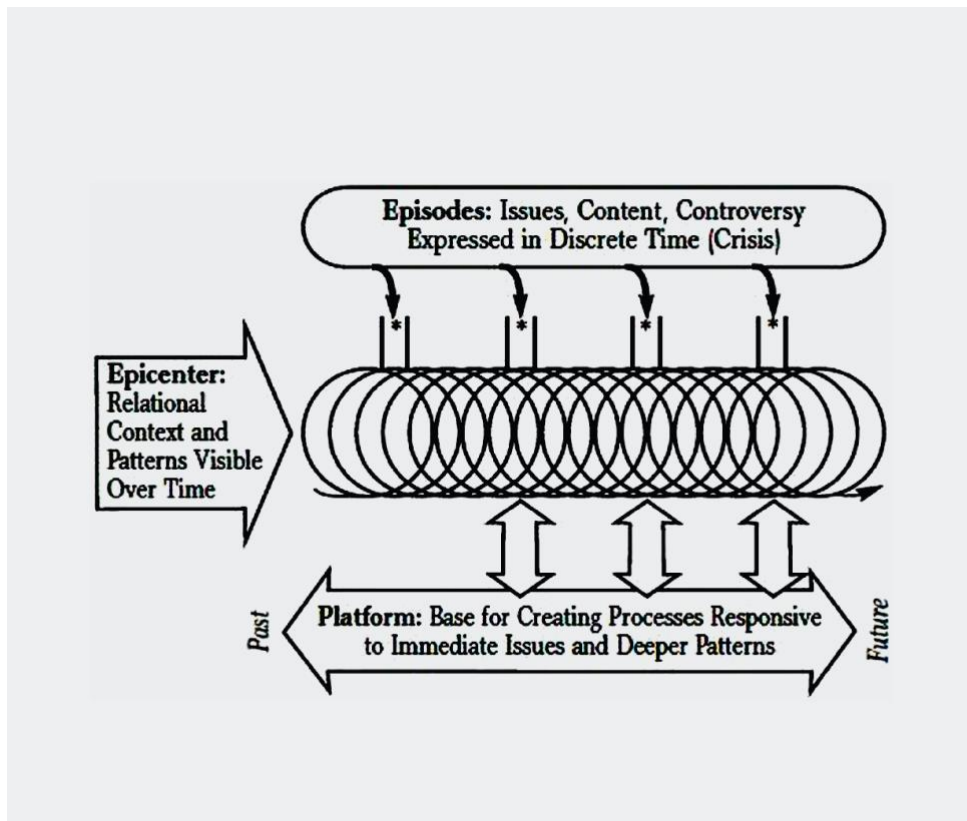


Figure 2.4: Transformational platform, adapted from Lederach (2003: 46).

The theory of conflict transformation leads to the inclusion of marginalised groups through transforming relationships, and the end product is sustainable peace that can be achieved through peacebuilding processes as discussed above. An inclusive peace process leads to inclusive participatory development and hence gender equality, and where there is gender equality, justice and human rights are respected (Brounéus 2014: 128). Therefore, peace promotes the equality of women and men, economic equality, and the universal enjoyment of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, which transform the existing conflict and relationships of communities.

As mentioned earlier, conflict transformation does not work in isolation; sometimes, before conflict transformation, there might be several stages such as peace conflict management and conflict resolution. Therefore, the next section discusses other concepts in an attempt to respond to conflict that can be used side-by-side with conflict transformation.

2.9 Key Concepts in Conflict Transformation

2.9.1 Conflict Resolution

Bercovitch and Jackson. (2009:119-136) define conflict resolution from “the perspectives of those working in the field as “specific kind of work”, such as engaging in mediation in a particular manner. Other scholars consider conflict resolution as “ways of settling or ending conflicts that entail joint efforts to reach mutually acceptable agreements” (Ibid). It can also be seen as the stages of conflicts and encompasses relatively constructive ways of conducting and transforming conflicts and then maintaining secure and equitable relations. According to Lederach (2003: 29), the pioneer of conflict transformation theory, conflict resolution is construed as follows:

[This involves] finding a solution to a problem. It guides our thinking toward bringing some set of events or issues, usually experienced as very painful, to an end. There is a definitiveness and finality created in the language when we add “re” to “solution”: We seek a conclusion.

The seminal writing on conflict resolution by authors such as Azar (2008: 159), Banks (1984), Burton (1993, 1999), and Sandole (1987: 97-99) reveal that conflict has roots that can be traced in order to end the conflict. Similarly, Botes (n.d) notes that conflict is “finite and can be effectively solved by addressing the root causes”. However, many scholars who are interested in studying peace, including Lederach and Galtung, have criticised conflict resolution as being very unrealistic as it only considers the root causes of conflict, leaving out the dynamics of conflict which change. I tend to agree with this argument for the reasons that conflict is a human phenomenon and in nature, human beings are dynamic. Therefore, merely speaking about resolving g conflict will weaken the evolving process and the issues that have changed as the conflict has evolved over time. Thus, there is a need for a process to see in which way and where the conflict has started and that which has happened since the start, to arrive at a holistic and sustainable solution.

In the context of this study, there are strata of issues that include tracing the origin of ethnic conflicts, exploring the current social pressures in the settlement, looking at the cultural norms and dynamics that influence attitudes and behaviours, and considering the structures that have been framed by the NGO politics in conflict settings, to mention a few. If one focuses on the root causes of the conflict that, in most cases, manifest themselves as an issue between the Dinka and the Nuer, one will lose sight of the focus on strategic women inclusion which might change the tides to transform relationships not only between men and women but also for these women to transcend tribal barriers to build peace in the settlements. Even though

conflict resolution may not be the ideal methodology to change conflicted relationships, it offers some good tools and processes that can be integrated with other frameworks such as conflict management and conflict transformation.

Conflict resolution is more solution-centred and pays more attention to the problems that need to be addressed at a particular time. The difference with the conflict transformation school of thought is that in conflict transformation, relationships are vital and are located at the centre of every conflict. In conflict resolution, there is less attention on the structural issues that feed into the conflict and upset relationships. However, there are some similarities in the two approaches. For example, both approaches focus on the fact that conflicts are rooted in some long-term causes and that the only way to deal with the presenting situation is to understand the long-term causes. Table 2.1 presents some of the differences between conflict resolution and conflict transformation, as defined by Lederach (2003).

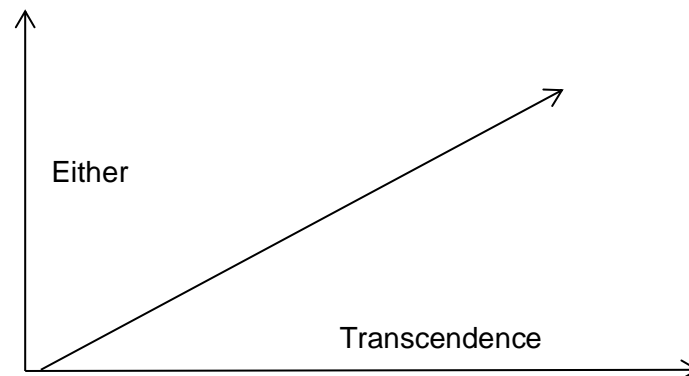
Table 2.1: Conflict resolution and transformation: A brief comparison by Lederach (2003).

Areas to compare	Conflict Resolution Perspective	Conflict Transformation Perspective
The key questions	How do we end something not desired?	How do we end something destructive and build something constructive?
The focus	It is content-centred	It is relationship-centred
The purpose	To achieve an agreement and solution to the presenting problem creating the crisis	To promote constructive change processes, and to open up life opportunities and new opportunities for everyone
The development of the process	It is embedded and built around the immediacy of the relationship where the presenting problems appear.	Concerned with responding to symptoms and the institutional and structural causes of conflict and how to transform them so that they serve the needs of the people
Time Frame	The horizon is short-term relief to pain, anxiety, and difficulties.	The horizon is mid- to long-range and is internationally crisis-responsive rather than crisis-driven.
View of conflict	It envisions the need to de-escalate conflict processes.	It envisions conflict as ebb and as a natural part of relationships. Advocate transitional approach.

Source: Lederach (2003: 33).

From Table 2.1, it can be seen that conflict resolution and conflict transformation are different and yet complementary to each other. In addition, Figure 2.5 illustrates how I construct conflict resolution would look like.

Figure 2.5: Possible outcomes of conflict resolution (Source: Lederach 2003: 3).



Or Compromise or Withdrawal (neither Withdrawal nor Compromise is a win / win)

Transformation does not necessarily mean that the parties obtain that which they fought for, they do not reach their original goal, but they could define a new goal, and ideally, they obtain even more than they fought for, or obtain something that makes that which they originally fought for less interesting. The last concept that works with conflict resolution and conflict transformation is conflict management. Therefore, the next section discusses the concept of conflict management and its differences and similarities with the other two discussed above.

2.9.2 Conflict Management

Conflict management mostly occurs at the diplomatic and political levels. When one considers Lederach's (1997: 39) actors' approaches to peacebuilding, one sees the actors placed at different levels (top leadership, middle leadership, and grassroots) and conflict management takes place at the top leadership level. The outcomes are usually in the form of peace accords or political agreements, ceasefires, and so forth. Conflict management happens before the resolution and transformation process starts. According to Bloomfield and Reilly (1998: 18):

[Management is] the positive and constructive handling of difference and divergence rather than advocating methods for removing (it) addresses the more realistic question of managing conflict: how to deal with it in a constructive way, how to bring opposing sides together in a co-operative process, how to design practical, achievable co-operative system for the constructive management of difference.

Although conflict management largely appears to be applied at the diplomatic and political levels (macro-levels), it also works in the community at certain levels (meso-levels). For conflict management to succeed, it requires a higher-level neutrality and impartiality on the part of the negotiators. There have been many conflict management initiatives across the world. In the context of the South Sudanese refugees in Uganda, one of the ways in which the partners are managing conflicts is by setting RWC structures that monitor and report to the OPM and UNHCR all conflict issues, although their neutrality and impartiality raises some questions. The second method is putting police stations in all the different villages to monitor any criminal activities and to respond if needed, and the setting up of community-based protection personnel in the settlements. The last mechanism used is by separating the conflict parties. For example, the Nuer tribe were relocated from Tika village to Omugo village for safety from the Dinka tribe (peacekeeping). All these different structures coordinate and report to each other. There is what is termed the reporting mechanism designed by the UNHCR and OPM which is introduced in all the villages and people are expected to know how to and where to report in the case of any conflicts.

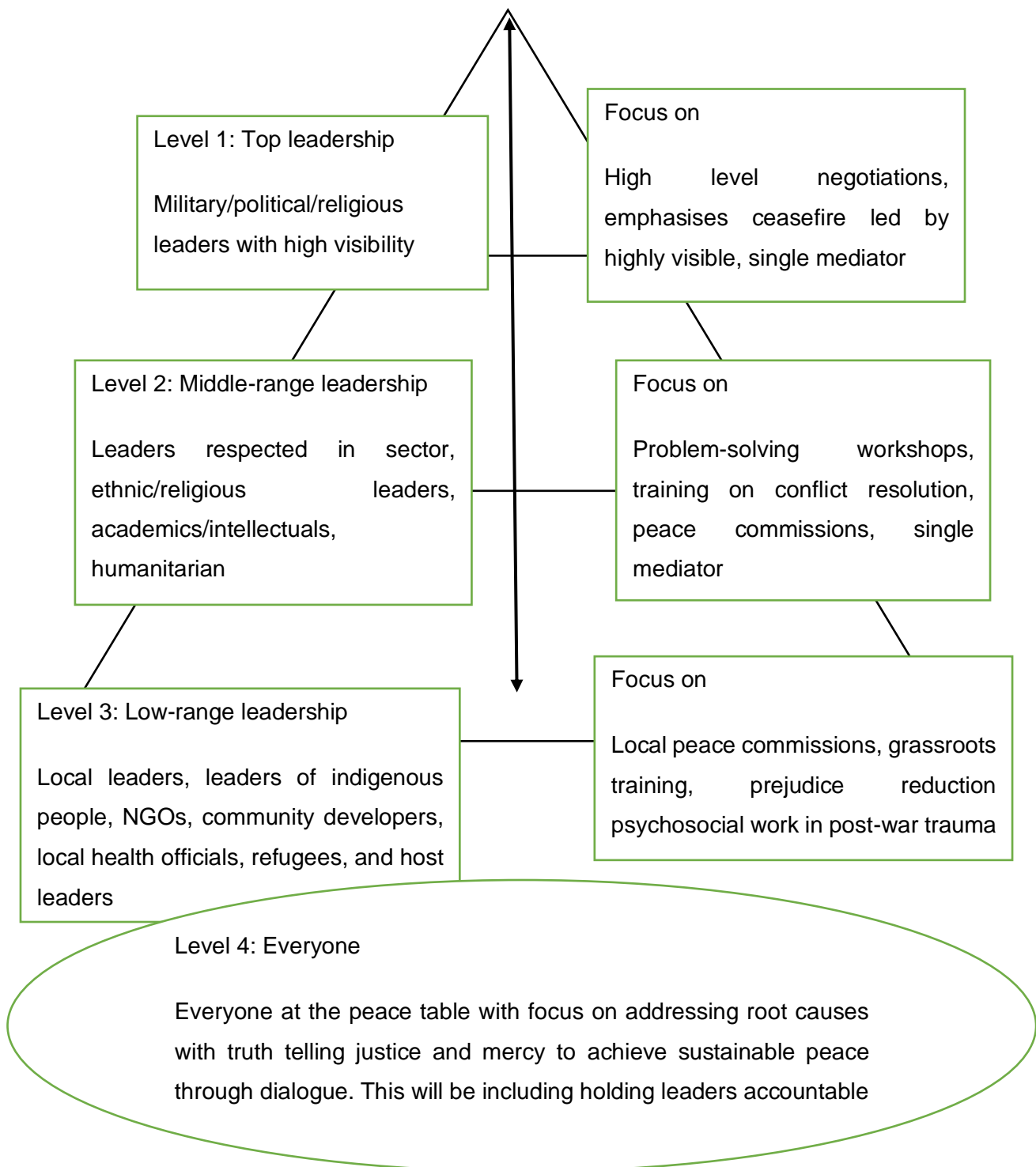
In extremely violent conflict situations, conflict management can also be in the form of peacekeeping. The United Nations sends peacekeepers, often with an element of civilian peacekeeping as well as military representation, to manage the warring parties by ensuring that they are kept apart, and in the case of the settlements in Uganda, the local police are used to intervene. During armed violence, it is important to keep the fighting factions engaged in diplomatic offensives meaning peacekeeping until the violence subsides thus paving way for more sustainable and transformative initiatives from negative peace to positive peace. Conflict management in this context is used to pave the way for the actors to find alternatives and initiatives that can support peaceful conflict transformation aiming at sustainable peace. Conflict management is an attempt to separate the conflict parties as well as to ensure that the set rules of engagement are followed without prejudice (Cooper 2008: 86; Galtung 1969, 1975).

Even though conflict management theory may appear to be too limited in scope, it remains a very important entry point for longer-term conflict transformation and peacebuilding initiatives. Nevertheless, Lederach (1995: 17) has censured the module for its effectiveness in the conflict context. However, in reality, in every conflict, there must be an entry point from where to start. While I with Lederach's views on conflict management I am also of the view that it might just be an issue of terminology rather than its effectiveness in the conflict context (as certainly many times it still serves the purpose for which it is normally used), it is noteworthy that the

effectiveness of a methodology used justifies the means of success inasmuch as most conflict is rooted at the structures in which decision-making people occupy space.

Lastly, I looked at Lederach's (1997) holistic peacebuilding model and conflict management which appeals more to the top leadership. This model, as Lederach presents it, does not offer direct communication between the top level and lower levels of actors working towards peace. In view of this, I remodelled the actor's framework for peacebuilding to include dialogue as a channel of communication that flows both vertically and horizontally. This means that the framework should take care of communication at all levels and all sides. This is to avoid issues of bottom-level actors not having access to the top level and this is where information often becomes entangled and the people at the lower level can only be heard through the middle-level people. The reason why this way is better is because first-hand information is always clearer. For example, women in Liberia demanded that they meet with the top diplomats at the negotiating table such that their voices can be heard. They used different ways to arrive at the point that they wanted regarding reaching an inclusive and sustainable peace, for which the vertical and horizontal dialogue approach needs to be adopted. Figure 2.6 depicts Lederach's framework for peacebuilding.

Figure 2.6: Lederach's framework for peacebuilding: Types of actors in community peacebuilding/dialogue (Source: Lederach 1997: 39, modified by researcher of this thesis).



I have modified Lederach's actors' peacebuilding framework and named it 'types of actors in community peacebuilding/dialogue' by using double-headed arrows pointing from top to bottom (levels 1 to 4) to include direct communication between actors from the lower level to the top levels (levels 1, 2, and 3), and level 4 suits the envisioned peacebuilding framework in the refugee settlement which is relevant for this study. In my view, all the actions in the three levels can be carried out but to achieve sustainable peace at one point, the top level and lower level need to sit at the table to dialogue which is inclusive, and if this approach is carried out with justice and truth, sustainable peace can be achieved. During conflict, communication breaks, and before any attempt to restore peace, there must be communication/dialogue between the actors – a key to building relationships.

Dialogue has unique and highly valuable properties. It can “strengthen relationships and trust, forge alliances, find truths that bind us together, and bring people into alignment on goals and strategies” (Weller 2013 cited in Dawa 2020: 55. Wegs et al 2016:1-23). Structural dialogue between men and women, as argued by Madu (2016: 104), would create a framework within which they could generate ideas for nonviolent resolutions of conflicts that arise from gender inequality. When people cannot communicate, relationships break. Dialogue generates a range of options of which parties were probably not previously aware because they were not communicating; it builds respect for opponents, and it has the potential to transform gender relations for the better (ibid).

It is therefore important that since conflict transformation focuses on relationship building, then communication/dialogue is a key aspect that must be included in this framework. The gap with the previous framework as mentioned is that the lower people cannot communicate directly with the actors at the top (politicians), and they sometimes access middle levels. The middle level is where international NGOs and the media are located – they are experts from foreign countries who do not understand in the first place the deep issues”. I have had also added the grassroots women in the lower-level list of actors to emphasise the women who will be targeted for the purpose of this research. A holist peacebuilding framework must include both vertical and horizontal communication with all actors. This direct communication will contribute significantly to peacebuilding efforts. Having considered different methodologies to responding to conflict, one can turn one's attention to another theory that is important to the study, that is, the social inclusion theory which, in my opinion, underpins the justification of conflict transformation that leads to just peace.

2.10 The Theory of Social Inclusion

The concept of social inclusion dates back at least to the nineteenth century sociologist Weber who advocated for the importance of social cohesion. In terms of more recent history, the term is more readily identified through its counterpart, social exclusion. This can be traced back to the 1970s French notion of “les exclus” – those excluded from the social insurance system (Hayes, Gray and Edwards 2008:4, Tangcharoensathien et al 2018:1-7, Bulger, 2018, Sugiyama 2018: 490-502, Koller 2018:1-13). The concept spread through Europe and the UK throughout the 1980s and 1990s. It is surfacing in Blair’s government, culminating in a Social Exclusion Unit; and catalysed Australians used it in South Australia in 2002, and more recently, via the Rudd government’s Social Inclusion Board which was inaugurated in 2008.

Social inclusion can pertain to a variety of areas of social groupings. These include demographic differentiation with respect to socio-economic status; culture and primary language, including indigenous groups; and those for whom gender, unemployment issues, and sexual orientation matters. It can be understood as pertaining to a nested schema regarding degrees of inclusion (Gidley et al 2010:1). The narrowest interpretation relates to the neo-liberal notion of social inclusion as access, a broader interpretation regards the social justice idea of social inclusion as participation, while the widest interpretation involves the human potential as seen through the lens of social inclusion as empowerment (Gidley 2009 cited in *Gidley et al. 2010: 8*, Habermas 2018). Figure 2.7 depicts the spectrum of ideologies underlying social inclusion theory and policy.

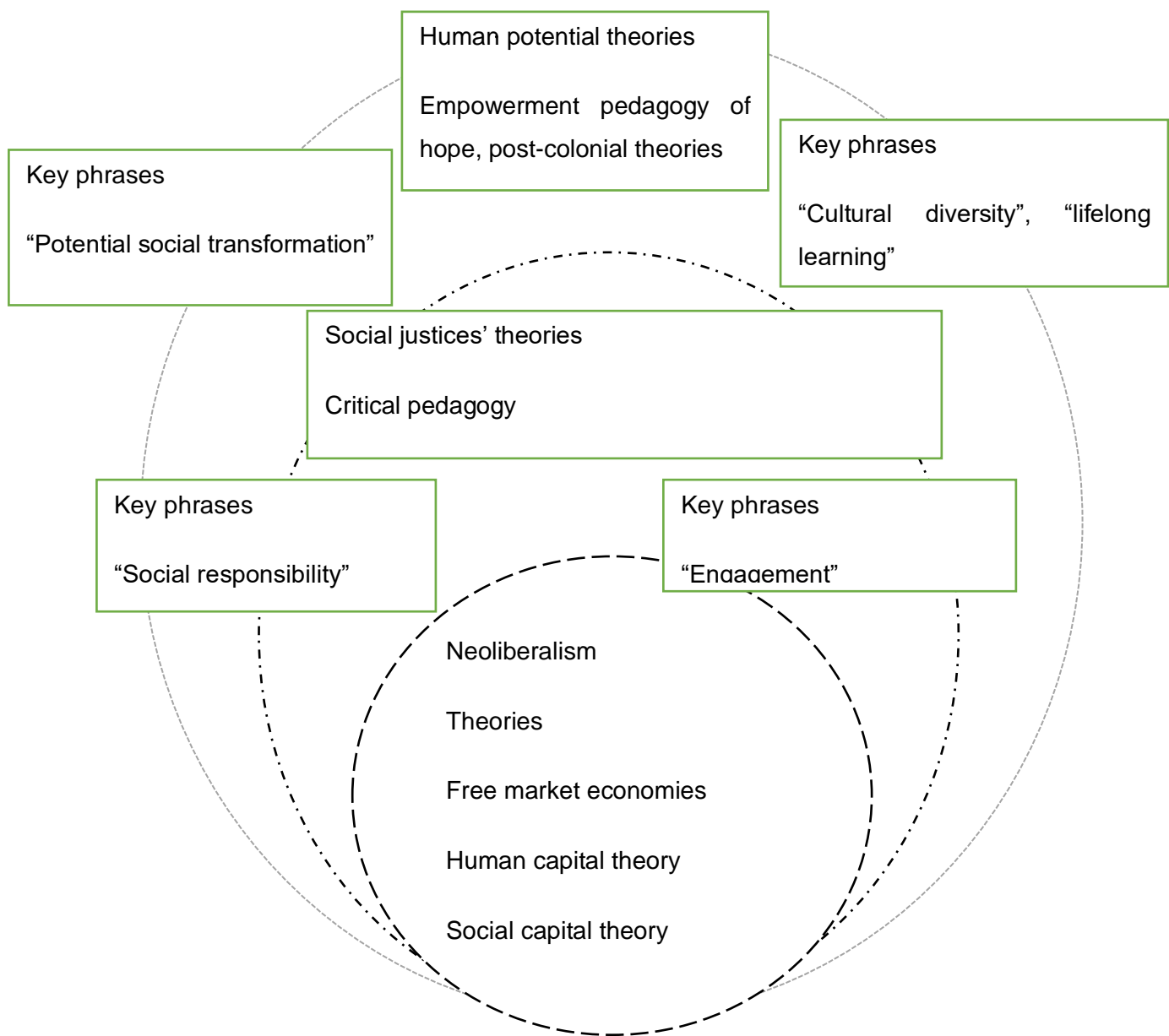


Figure 2.7: Spectrum of ideologies underlying Social Inclusion Theory and Policy (Source: Gidley 2009 cited in Gidley *et al.* 2010: 8).

Levitas (1998 cited in Smyth 2017: 5) noted that "the term social exclusion is intrinsically problematic. It represents the primary significant division between an included majority and an excluded minority". In other words, one realises social inclusion by understanding it. Social exclusion is a dynamic that has always existed for minority people and many people are trapped in a loop of exclusion (ibid). The 21st century history has witnessed countries and international legitimate systems moving in the direction of social inclusion. In peacebuilding,

emphasis has been put on understanding the dynamics that help to move people towards social inclusion and those that restrain people's progress, and further help people to practise social inclusion. Social inclusion contributes to the sustainability of humanity by aiming to integrate into society people who have been traditionally excluded from the opportunities and resources of a healthy world (ibid), facing massive global and local problems such as poverty, inequality, wars, discrimination, and conflicts. Social inclusion may be the greatest chance at connecting society and ensuring the well-being of the whole.

Similarly, there is currently no consensus definition of social inclusion. Often, the term is used in research and policy without a definition, with the primary description of social inclusion as a means of 'addressing' social exclusion. Kummitha (2017: 13) state that social inclusion "is meant to address the multidimensional deprivations that are caused by social exclusion". Furthermore, the authors discuss a human rights approach to understanding social inclusion, stating that "though the meaning of social inclusion is dependent upon the conditions and circumstances, it subsequently seeks secured social settings in which everyone is included on the basis of race" (ibid). In addition, Krishna and Kummitha (2017: 12-15) and Silver (2015: 3) provide a meaningful working definition of the outcome of social exclusion as "a state of individuals and populations precluded from participation in various aspects of life in their surrounding society" which "includes populations excluded from society for reasons such as racism, discrimination, and poverty", while Haron (2013: 55) adds that social inclusivity encompasses issues of segregation, inequality, and poverty which geographically affects isolated minority groups.

Allman (1957 cited in Smyth 2017: 2) further argues that societies are always organised into hierarchies of some kind, and invoking Pocock, he highlights "inclusion and exclusion as being features of all hierarchies" – they are, in other words, that which Smyth calls "not an inevitable or natural state of affairs they come about because of choices made about the way societies are constructed". Allman (2013: 9) refers to it as a "sociological lens" from within which to view that which he refers to as "sociology of inclusion".

Owing to global challenges, there has been an increasing awareness of the impact and prevalence of social exclusion, and researchers and policy makers have begun to explore the idea of social inclusion, once again led by scholars in the European Union and also those emerging in countries across the world. Rather than addressing challenges of social exclusion as separate problems, a social inclusion lens calls on scholars and practitioners to think holistically, positively, and anticipatorily. For example, when thinking globally and holistically,

the United Nations has included the importance of social inclusion in a number of their sustainable development goals declaration on people's shared principles and commitments (UNSDG 2015: 8).

There exist only a handful of researchers who have aligned with the process framing of social inclusion in their empirical studies contexts including Bates and Seddon (2008) who looked at the practice of social inclusion within a mental health practice context, identifying components of the social inclusion puzzle including the roles an individual takes on, ambitions and goals, as well as opportunities to contribute and participate. In addition, Florian and Rouse (2009) explore practising social inclusion in an educational setting, emphasising the importance of distributing the work of social inclusion to everyone in an organisation or institution. The National Social Inclusion Programme 2007 focused on the social inclusion of people with varying mental health in England and created a list of capabilities for organisations and practitioners interested in the inclusive practice of mental health (Filia et al 2018:183).

In addition, Drucza and Toffin have looked at horizontal inequalities and group-based exclusion which contributed to the conflict in Nepal (Drucza 2017: 63-64; Toffin 2014: 220) and, as noted in the context of Nepal's National Development Plan (NNDP), "inclusion became a project of overarching importance that affects the structure of society and its primary social ties". According to the NNDP (2007-2010), the purpose of social inclusion is:

[T]o fulfil the physical, emotional, and basic needs of all the people, groups, or castes. It has to be achieved by respecting their dignity and their own culture and also reducing disparities between excluded and advantaged groups and by reducing the gap in the existing opportunities and access. In addition to this, it is to help build a just society by ensuring rightful sharing of power and resources for their active participation as citizens (Drucza 2017: 64).

Matras and Robertson (2017 cited in Marácz and Adamo 2017: 2) focus on language as a tool of social exclusion. In their article, they discuss language and social policies employed in a British university setting. The authors illustrate how initiatives for awareness of language diversity can sustain a development towards a more inclusive society. A perspective and framing that may help to bridge this divide is the framing of social inclusion as not only an outcome but also a process or practice.

Bariga (2018: 17), in his report of conflict mapping in a Ugandan refugee settlement, found that ethnicity and language played an important role in promoting social cohesion and social inclusion among refugees and host communities in Uganda. For example, in Lobule refugee settlement in Koboko District, there were very low levels of conflict as opposed to those

settlements where refugees and host communities did not have a common language of communication. In this regard, social inclusion may refer to a process of encouraging social interaction between people with different socially relevant attributes or an impersonal institutional mechanism of opening up access to participation in all spaces of social life (Silver 2015: 3).

The report attributed the fact of low conflicts to the fact that the majority of the refugees in that settlement are of the Kakwa ethnic group from the Democratic Republic of Congo. The report also elaborated on the relationships in terms of ethnicity between the Kakwas of Uganda and those from the DRC, arguing that the common language and culture significantly contribute to the low level of conflicts, stability, and peace in the settlement. In this context, working towards social inclusion in a conflict setting such as in refugee settlements calls for strong leaders who are not swayed by popular opinion but rather leaders who can identify the common connecting points such as cultural practices, languages, and so forth, as opposed to focusing on issues that will be confronted with their own unconscious bias and understand criticism as resistance to change. Therefore, the RWCs and Ugandan authorities need to take a conscious decision to work towards including more women in their structures for sustainable peace.

Finally, I recognise that the achievement of social inclusion is no easy matter as dominant social groups will look to maintain their advantage. As Kabeer (2006:44-74) suggests, “dominant social groups as they visualise, seek to impose dominant values, or routinely devalue and disparage certain categories of people”, and structural factors, religion, and ethnicity play a significant role in social inclusion. For example, in the case of Nepal, Drucza (2017: 71-72) states:

I think the international community has very slowly realized how important religion is in this country. Just because people might say that they are liberal and do not really go to a temple, caste and Hinduism is immensely important here. And so, we start talking about religious minorities.

Krishna and Kummitha (2017: 13) elaborate that:

Social inclusion requires opportunities and resources that are necessary to ensure the participation of those who have been excluded in economic, social, political, and cultural life. It should then be able to provide them with a standard of living and well-being which is considered normal in the society in which they live.

Social inclusion ensures that the voices of those who have been left out are respected in any decision-making process which affects their lives, and this was the focus of this study which focuses on the inclusion of women as a social group in all processes for sustainable peace.

For this reason, social inclusion can be stated to be a systematic process that rescues a person or communities from the risks or uncertainty of exclusion.

The initial findings from the emerging social inclusion literature support the argument of this regarding sustainable peace through conflict transformation and an inclusive approach. This research indicates the importance of supporting participation, education, employment, creating connections between people and from people to resources, and advocating on behalf of excluded populations (Jessner and Mayr-Keiler 2017: 1; Amath 2015: 30). It is known that words and language are deeply related to perceptions of social inclusion (Marácz and Adamo 2017: 2-4; Barigye 2018: 17). Social exclusion and inclusion are multi-dimensional, and there is a gap between this awareness of multi-dimensionality and specific knowledge about what these dimensions are and how they can be operationalised in practice (Frazer and Marlier 2007: 11). It is known that participatory planning processes can help facilitate social inclusion (Brownill and Carpenter 2007: 620-630) and that these planning processes can be contradictory in nature (Brownill and Carpenter 2009).

It is important to address structural-level concerns when creating social inclusion, for example, by allowing for more equitable and inclusive educational opportunities in the education system or ensuring equitable, strength-based job opportunities for people who have previously been excluded from the job market (Goodwin-Smith and Hutchinson 2015: 174). Considering this, this study found that women are less educated and hence have fewer job opportunities in the settlement.

Even so, the idea of social inclusion on its own is inadequate to fully address the challenges of social exclusion (Amath 2015: 30-31). In order to bring social inclusion to realisation, there needs to be a vehicle through which the process of social inclusion can be delivered. Governments and initiatives across the world have created a variety of vehicles for social inclusion, from initiatives focused on creating employment to initiatives focused on overhauling the educational system (Goodwin-Smith and Hutchinson 2015: 174), and the challenge is the actualisation of these policies rather than keeping them on paper.

To briefly review the theory of social inclusion, I would then argue that excluding women from the process of designing peace agreements and recovery frameworks will result in insufficient attention being paid to redressing gender inequalities and women insecurity. This then leads to achieving negative peace. As such, the needs of women are not met, and their capacity and potential to participate in peacebuilding and recovery remains unutilised. UNwomen (2017: 2) argues that the chances of achieving sustainable peace are diminished by the under-

participation of women, yet they form a half of the population, and one cannot achieve sustainable peace if one is leaving out half of the entire population in the cold.

In conclusion, looking back to the introduction of this chapter, I mentioned that three theories stand out in examining the phenomena of women exclusion in the peace process – these are the peacebuilding theory, which gives the framework for understanding how sustainable peace can be achieved; the conflict transformation theory, which gives the structure for addressing conflict by focusing on relationships that have changed as a result of conflict; and lastly, the social inclusion theory, which gives the perspectives to understand the social phenomena leading to exclusion and how one can reach inclusion. When there is no inclusion, there will be no relationships and without relationships, one cannot achieve any peace. In the next section, a synopsis of the relevance of these three approaches to the study and specifically how they relate to women in Uganda and South Sudan, is given.

2.11 Relevance of the Peacebuilding, Conflict Transformation, and Social Inclusion Theories to the Study

This section starts by illustrating how these three theories could be portrayed if placed correctly. In this illustration, the order of the theories will be changed, starting with the social inclusion theory which is at the core. This is because inclusion must start at the family level which is the foundation of a society. When people feel included at this level, then one can guarantee inclusion at the top level. It is at the lower level that issues of culture and structures should be handled because when they arrive at the top, they will be normalised. The conflict transformation (transforming relations) is then as a result of social inclusion. When people feel included and listened to, their relationship improves automatically, and communication starts to open. The next is the peacebuilding theory, and one cannot speak about peacebuilding if one has not included every stakeholder and has not worked to have better relations. Once people are included, relationships are transformed and one starts launching community-based peacebuilding activities at all levels, where everyone will be participating and sharing ideas on how to reconstruct a broken society. At this juncture, one sees the community becoming organised and stable, and hence working towards sustainable peace. Figure 2.8 gives my illustration of arriving at sustainable peace. I have decided to design my own pyramid to illustrate the different stages and also emphasise their importance.

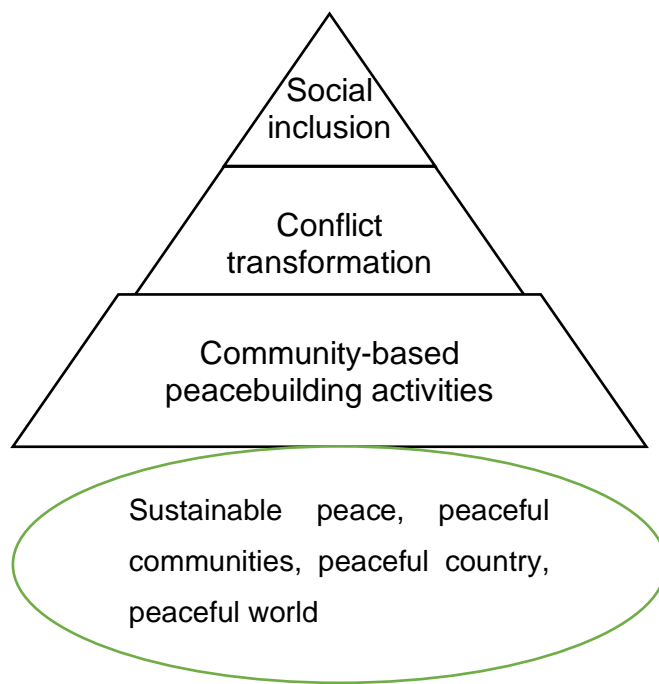


Figure 2.8: Irene Dawa's pyramid of sustainable peace through social inclusion, conflict transformation, and community-based peacebuilding: $SI+CT+PB=SP$ (Copyright @ Irene Dawa 2020).

Figure 2.8 shows a hierarchical model of achieving social inclusion with the community at the base; it depicts that attaining the first stage leads to the next stage in a progressive manner to the apex of the pyramid where social inclusion rests. The relevance of these theories is grounded in the contention that peacebuilding and conflict transformation lead to relationship building in society that in turn leads to social inclusion which relates to affirmative action to change the habits that lead or have led to social exclusion. Illustrated by the definition of World Bank (2013), social inclusion is the process of improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of people who have been disadvantaged on the basis of their identity to take part in society. This provides the basis for action such as the women quotas in politics, and lower selection criteria, among others. It denotes deliberate interventions, and more so from the government institutions. This is exemplified in Rwanda, for example, where the participation of women is considered among the highest in the world (Mzvondiwa 2007 cited in Iloh et al 2019: 31: 5 Uwineza 2016: 205-227). The success of such a country emerging from conflict can be attributed to deliberate interventions aimed at increasing the number of women, especially at the decision-making level during peace processes (Mulamula 2019; OECD 2018: 15-17).

2.12 Relevance of Women

In this section I talk of women from different contexts particularly Uganda, South Sudan and Afghanistan to illustrate the relevance of the research problem to women in different countries

2.12.1 Ugandan Women

Lessons learnt from Uganda are also not different, and scholars such as Mahmood Mamdani, a Professor and Director of the Makerere Institute of Social Research in Kampala, in a reflective paper, lamented that when the National Resistance Movement (NRM) seized power in 1986, it introduced a reform in a “broad coalition of government by allocating a number of seats in the new legislative body” for groups that have been historically disenfranchised: women, youth, and workers (Mamdani 1990: 370). Given the tendency to see rights simply as a gift from above, new members of the legislature were captured by the ruling power. For the representatives of youth and women’s groups, they felt “so thankful and beholden to the ruling power” that they functioned less as representatives of the disfranchised groups who have won political rights through a political struggle and acted more “as the regime’s “representatives’ to women and youth!” (ibid). This type of action can be called capture, divide, and conquer rather than a pure act of affirmative action. Uganda and South Sudan seem to have similar strategies in their responses to women issues.

During the LRA’s insurgency, women took an active part in rescuing girls who had been abducted by the rebels and creating infrastructures for rehabilitating child soldiers including child mothers – this is a normal reaction of women as mothers, and it is the traditional role that is expected of a woman. However, scholars such as Angom have reported that when it came to the peace negotiations, such as the Juba peace talk, the participation of women was not taken seriously, and there was no funding to support women efforts to lobby for the peace talks. Despite the efforts of women such as Alice Auma Lakwena, Sr. Rechele Fassera, Angelina Atyam, and Betty Bigombes’ peace initiative, women’s efforts were not publicly recognised and documented (Angom 2018: 148-168). This kind of legacy of women not being treated equally contributes to more marginalisation and creates a culture of silence and hence exclusion.

2.12.2 South Sudanese Women

As in many war-torn countries, South Sudanese women bear the burden of war and violence (HSBA 2012) and many of them have fled out of the country of origin to seek refugee status. A study by Oxfam in 2017 considered the decision-making power among women and girls at the household and community levels in South Sudan. Within the household, the research showed that most women have little or no involvement in decision-making. In contrast, most male respondents considered themselves as 'decision makers' (Oxfam 2017: 12; Walender 2016: 159).

However, scholars all agree that sustainable peace requires involvement of all stakeholders including women as a prerequisite and therefore some scholars have argued that in the context of South Sudan, where *women* make up more than 60% of the population today, it is unjustifiable to decide on their behalf (Women Concern International n.d.; Zambakari 2013: 5; Bubenzer and Lacey 2013: 14). Prevailing cultural norms, especially in the countryside, marginalise women from participating at any level of political activity or decision-making. However, since independence, there have been some changes in national policy and laws on gender equality or, in other words, inclusiveness. The Transitional Constitution and Bill of Rights (2011) provides guarantees for the equality of men and women. It recognises the historic inequalities between women and men in South Sudan and sets out a 25% Affirmative Action quota for women in legislative and executive bodies. Women currently comprise 26.5% of the National Legislative Assembly (Zambakari 2013: 1; Lopidia 2019: 61; Bubenzer and Lacey 2013: 13).

Regrettably, reports on South Sudan indicate that when it comes to peacebuilding and conflict transformation, women in South Sudan, similar to other parts of the world, are largely underrepresented. For example, throughout the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-led peace process from early 2014 and the 2017 High Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF), women activists tirelessly lobbied to be accredited to the process and called on parties to include women in their delegations. However, reports from the UN and regional bodies indicate that women activists faced entrenched opposition by some mediators and warring parties (Soma 2018). Such a scenario is common in South Sudan; since the CPA days, repeated requests from civil society and women groups for formal or observer status in the negotiations have been rebuffed (Young 2012: 109).

In an interview with the Organisation for Nonviolence and Development (ONAD), a civil society organisation that works to transform the country through nonviolence action, women played a

key role during the referendum. South Sudanese women were mobilised around the world to educate community members about the referendum in addition to leading voting centres in registering voters and ensuring that the election was transparent, fair, and credible (Interview with ONAD, 13 May 2019). In the same conversation, the organisation warns that the recognition of these roles has been slow to arise. Today, much is still desired from the South Sudanese women and yet little legal, economic, and political recognition is given to that which these women are already doing to make South Sudan a healthy state (ibid). The question which remains unaddressed is: which women are involved? Of specific interest to this research is the role of the grassroots women and to what extent these women are included or even consulted in the process of any decision-making. What role do refugee women play in conflict transformation in their countries of refugee status? Have they had their share in the peace process as the primary victims of conflict in their daily lives? Some of these questions were answered in the fieldwork.

2.12.3 Afghanistan Women

In Afghanistan, in 2019, peace talks between the Taliban and Afghan government, facilitated by the USA, started. There was clear evidence of the exclusion of women at the peace table. The Afghan women had their own concerns that they wanted to voice in the peace talk. According to Nordland *et al.* (2019: 2), one women activist, Laila Haidari, stated that “We don’t want to be the victims of the peace process with the Taliban”, and another woman, the head of the Afghan women’s peace network, was quoted as stating “we don’t want a peace that will make the situation worse for women’s rights compared to now”. She continued to state that:

No one needs to sell Afghan women in order to bring an end to the bloodshed. They have buried far too many husbands and sons and brothers. But they fear that a peace that empowers the Taliban may herald a new war upon women, and they want negotiators not to forget them.

Another woman stated that “Afghan women want peace too ... But not at any cost” (Nordland *et al.* 2019: 2).

Keeping in mind the theories underpinning this study, one could be a step forward in challenging gender norms that exclude women. The inclusivity of women in the peacebuilding processes is something that continues to generate debate across the globe, in the UN, and in other regional bodies such as the AU and the European Union (EU). Peacebuilding does not only suggest peace agreement, but it is also both a long- and a short-term process which happens at all levels of society depending on the specific set objectives. The more the

inclusion of women at the peace table, the more peaceful societies there will be around the globe. This appeals for a change in strategy and policies at all levels. Notably, there is a need to advocate for funding for women's initiatives at the grassroots level and elite women linking with grassroots women. As one has already seen in many international platforms, many women, predominantly elites, have struggled to climb the ladder to higher political positions. The women who have created the environment for these women to succeed are the grassroots women who sacrifice to maintain peaceful communities every day. They bear the burden of war and are still left in the refugee camps and as IDPs. It is these women who are in need of resources for capacity building and skill development, and it is these women who were the focus of this study.

In order to do that, we need to work towards making their relationships better. This can be done through working and normalising relations and reconciling differences between women and men, there needs to be keen attention to dealing with the underlying causes of conflict. Peace scholars have asserted that peacebuilding must focus on both long- and short-term frameworks for building relationships. In the short term, it must focus on elements such as emergency relief and the control of violence, while the longer-term focus should be on development, conflict transformation, and social change (Paris 2004 cited in Angom 2018: 8). If both long-term and short-term approaches are considered from the planning stages, I believe that sustainable peace will be achieved as these approaches involve addressing the root causes of conflict at different stages and responding accordingly.

2.13 Summary

This chapter has made an attempt to explain the theoretical frame within which this study is grounded. I subscribe to Lederach and Galtung's theoretical frame which views peacebuilding and conflict transformation as a long-term act of transforming relationships after conflict. To make these theories more relevant, I have added the social inclusion theory with a stance for inclusive peacebuilding at all levels. These theories assert that transformation has multiple forms and stages and has to start at the grassroots and if one wants sustainability, one must start to be all-inclusive in one's approach to peacebuilding. The theories further argue that in order to better understand the participation of women, one must consider the historical, social, cultural, political, and economic contexts within which women find themselves, as these aspects influence women's level of participation.

I have also explained that her analysis draws on Lederach's notions of conflict transformation. According to Lederach, conflict is normal in human relationships, and conflict is a vehicle of change (Lederach 2003: 6). Conflict, as both destroyer and creator, is potentially dangerous, both now and in the future, because of the violence on one hand, but on the other hand, is a golden opportunity to create something new (Galtung and Fisher 2013: 59). Therefore, this means that conflict transformation has multiple stages that shift according to how communities are positioned in socially constructed power relations. Lederach clarifies that transformation is a proactive bias towards seeing conflict as a potential for growth (ibid: 15) and there is no alternative to transformation: changing violent attitudes/behaviour and applying creativity to contradictions (Galtung and Fisher 2013: 60). In other words, Lederach's theory is nuanced on the assumption that the process of building peace must rely upon and operate within a framework and time setting defined by sustainable transformation (Lederach 2010: 75). Transformation is putative in nature, and it can then, in principle, happen at all levels of conflict: global, social, inter- and intra-personal (ibid). In other words, as a motor of change, conflict could lead to a change in attitudes towards women, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital and social power.

Furthermore, I explained that this study also draws on the knowledge and theoretical perspective which views peacebuilding from community to global efforts through projects that involve "concrete action" towards peace (Transcend media service 2018: 1). In addition to articulating the theoretical frame, I reviewed the literature on the inclusion of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation ranging from the global to local perspectives, on the basis of which she has argued that the inclusion of women may have great potential for peacebuilding, but that the realisation of that potential will largely depend on the dynamics of the local context. The next chapter explains the research methodology that was employed to collect and analyse the data that inform the research findings, action research, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

The next chapter reviews the literature relating to women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. It begins by describing key frameworks and the historical involvement of the study of the subject. It then proceeds further to broadly examine the range of perspectives that different scholars hold on the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation including in the Great Lakes region and indigenous women. The chapter also looks at case studies from Northern Ireland, Northern Uganda, and Liberia. The chapter proceeds to present empirical evidence on where women stand as of now and concludes by looking at the legal frameworks that support women's participation. The objective is to give the reader a complete

understanding of the issue that this research study is dealing with so as to link the theory and literature to the findings from the field. In the next chapter I look at different scholarly literature with evidence on women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation around the globe.

CHAPTER THREE: REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. It presents a literature review of a range of issues related to women in peacebuilding: the effects of conflict on women; women's role in peacebuilding and conflict transformation; the exclusion of women at the peace table; the rationale for the inclusion of women; and a description of women from traditional Africa, particularly the Great Lakes region of East Africa, and indigenous women. The review considers the role of media in women and peace, the role of donors in peacebuilding funding and how that affects women's inclusion/exclusion and that which women have done globally in contemporary conflict. Subsequently, the chapter considers women's exclusion from the formal peace process, the rationale for their inclusion, empirical evidence on women's participation, selected case studies of women peace efforts, and concludes with the legal documents supporting women in peacebuilding.

3.2 Background

Conflict and wars have always impacted men and women in different ways, but possibly never more so than in contemporary conflicts (Asaf 2017: 1; African Union Commission [AUC] 2016: 8 ;). While women remain a minority of combatants and perpetrators of war, they increasingly suffer the greatest harm (Eriksson 2011 cited in Asaf 2017: 1; AUC 2016: 8, Kuehnast and Hernes 2011). In contemporary conflict, as much as 90% of the casualties are among the civilians, most of whom are women and children. Women in war-torn societies often face specific and devastating forms of sexual violence and other forms of violence which are sometimes deployed systematically to achieve military or political objectives (UNwomen 2014: 1; World Bank 2016; Leatherman 2011: 9;).

In today's warfare, the strategy of armed conflicts is changing, and women are frequently victims of these conflicts. Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) has become recognised as a weapon of war. It involves rape, forced impregnation, forced abortion, trafficking, sexual slavery, prostitution, and the intentional spread of sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS (Anderlini et al. 2010: 12; Amnesty International 2004: 4-17; Ndey

2015: 6-7, Ali 2011: 111-133). Next to the burden of ongoing SGBV, women also have to bear the losses of their husbands or family members. Furthermore, their caretaker role is a burden during the conflict, because due to the spread of diseases and the absence of the men, their paternal role increases (Anderlini 2010; Tawiah 2020: 1; Dawa 2019;¹).

During war, women are the first to be affected by infrastructure breakdown, as they struggle to keep their families together and care for the wounded and the sick. War fetches poverty, which in turn may force women to be sexually exploited in order to survive and support their families. Sjoberg (2014: 35-36) and D'Awol (2011: 5) note that during war time "economies can be a double-edged sword for women in the workplace" as jobs open for women when men go to fight.

However, these opportunities also make women vulnerable (Tawiah 2020: 1). Women may be asked for sexual favours by those in authority or those who have the power to offer them jobs. Wartime affects women's standard of living, especially in refugee camps, as well as their health and that of their families, and for women, whose resources are very scarce, finding additional assistance when traditional means of supporting families disappear can be an unending pain and desperation blurs the societal norms of right and wrong (Banerjee and Duflo 2011: 5). Consequently, many women turn to illicit trade including prostitution and forced sex (Sjoberg 2014: 35-36; Veldwijk and Groenendijk 2011: 79-96). Therefore, it is vital to acknowledge the vulnerabilities of women during wartime and to intervene to prevent additional harm and trauma.

Another crucial area to investigate is the impact of wartime SGBV on women's lives. Sexual Violence (SV) results in unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and infections, and social stigmatisation (Albutt *et al.* 2016: 2). Along with the physical harm, the mental trauma significantly haunts their lives. Widespread sexual violence itself may continue or even increase in the aftermath of war as a consequence of insecurity and impunity (D'Awol 2011: 54 Isis Wicce 2007:5-15). Coupled with discrimination and inequitable laws, sexual violence can prevent women from accessing education, becoming financially independent, and

¹ The finding from the field for this research confirmed that due to the war, most women are heads of the household and the burden on them has increased and has greatly changed their traditional gender roles. See finding in Chapter IV for more details.

participating in governance and peacebuilding. Additionally, wartime GBV rape leads to the “rejection of women by families and friends” at home, and as more women are left to survive the “atrocities of war, they may carry a heavier burden of war-related memories in their bodies and minds” (Sjoberg 2014: 46; Albutt *et al.* 2016: 4-6;).

Evidence from several countries on the effects of armed conflict on women are noted here. The first empirical study on this subject between 2001 and 2002 after the passing of UN Resolution 1325 was done by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) that deployed the first expert consultants, Rehn and Sirleaf, to the field to establish empirical evidence on the effect of armed conflict on women and how their lack of participation in post-conflict reconstruction can lead to their issues not being adequately addressed. The experts, in their one year of fieldwork, produced a report which focused on two aspects:

- The experiences of women who have lived through war, displacement, and the struggle to rebuild their societies
- The impact of armed conflict on women and women’s role in reconstruction in a post-war country

The experts travelled to 14 countries affected by armed conflict: Bosnia and Herzegovina; Cambodia; Colombia; the Democratic Republic of Congo; East Timor; the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including Kosovo; Guinea; Israel; Liberia; the occupied Palestinian territories; Rwanda; Sierra Leone; and Somalia.

The authors collected first-hand data and testimonies from women victims and survivors of conflict; women directly involved in the peace processes; activists; and eminent leaders from civil society, and then concluded that “in all of these areas, militarization of society breeds new levels of violence and impunity for these crimes becomes endemic”. They also reported on a continuum of violence that shattered women’s lives before, during and after conflict. The staggering numbers of women in war who survived the brutality of rape, sexual exploitation, mutilation, torture and displacement; the unconscionable acts of depravity; and the wholesale exclusion of women from peace processes (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002: 2-5). Such evidence is a classic example of women’s experience of war, bringing in the justification for their inclusion.

Much as there is advocacy for women’s participation in war-related work, this has sometimes led to significant suffering including divorce by their spouses leading to more stereotypes (Veldwijk and Groenendijk 2011: 94; Albutt *et al.* 2016: 6; Brounéus 2014: 130-131; Quattrochi *et al.* 2019: 2). Because of these stereotypes, feminist researchers have argued that women’s efforts in setting and influencing the agenda for peace in many societies has generally been

treated as a “token of goodwill” and not a significant cornerstone in the peace process (ibid). Women, as is commonly stated, tend to occupy peripheral and informal roles and are rarely given recognition because they are not seen as equal victims in the conflict or equal stakeholders in the peace process as the male fighters are Angom 2018: vi; Sjoberg 2014: 45; Bouta *et al.* 2005 cited in Theobald 2012: 57). The authors also maintain that when women are included in peace negotiations, their “ideas are not given due weight because they are seen as either inexperienced in conflict or idealist or possibly both” (ibid). Even if women’s ideas are taken seriously, only unrepresentative subsections of women are included in peace negotiations (Angom 2018: 45; Sjoberg 2014: 45).

In agitating for women’s inclusion at the peace table, the evidence from studies shows that despite all their struggles during war, women continue to be poorly represented in the formal peace process, although they contribute in many informal ways to conflict resolution. For example, it is reported that in the recent negotiations, fewer than 8% of women are official participants and fewer than 3% of those are signatories. Besides this, women have never been appointed as chief or lead mediator in UN-sponsored peace talks (UNwomen 2018: 4). Such exclusion invariably leads to a failure to adequately address women’s concerns, such as GBV, women’s rights, and post-conflict accountability, hence the need to have women at the peace table to voice women’s specific issues (UNIFEM 2017; Pankhurst 2000 cited in Ndey 2015: 8, KARA 2013: 435-460 Paffenholz et al 2016: 1-15). In stressing the importance of women at the peace table, Liberata Mulamula, visiting scholar and associate director for the Institute for African Studies, George Washington University, United States, emphasised this notion with specific reference to African women and asserted that:

The complexity of many of Africa’s conflicts necessitates a strong regional approach, underlining the role of women because women play a critical role in breaking cycles of violence and genocide, citing the adage “if you want to get something done, give it to a woman, and if you want it well-said, give it to a man” (UN SC 8633rd meeting, 7 October 2019: 4).

This reflection by experts echoes the significance of women as being action-oriented while men are good at talking but less involved in action. This adage of men being considered as stating matters in a ‘well-said’ manner also reflects the failure of the international community to adequately implement the many resolutions calling for women participation. Despite the challenges faced in realising women’s full participation, I still hopeful that good policies put in practice with political will can make this become a reality.

3.3 Women in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation

It has been twenty years since the UNSC passed resolution 1325. Through resolution, it is globally recognised that women are key actors in peace and conflict transformation. The UN through this resolution invited states to include women in all aspect of public life including peace process through the national action plan (NAP). It is known that women are most at the frontline of war and violence and therefore it is important to have their voices heard if we want to achieve sustainable peace. “Nothing about us, without us! Local Ukrainian women raise their voices for the implementation of UNSCR 1325” (UNwomen 2018: 21).

Reflecting on the call of Ukrainian women, Olga Bothy, from the organisation of Mothers of Soldiers in the Kherson Oblast, Ukraine, stated: “The big difference between women and men in Ukraine is that men plan while women implement” (UNwomen 2018: 1). This is similar to Liberata’s saying that “if you want to get something done, give it to a woman, and if you want it well-said, give it to a man” (UN SC 8633rd meeting, 7 October 2019: 4).

In another reflection on the importance of women participation, Pamela Matakana, professor at Africa University in the Institute of Peace, Leadership and Governance, wrote:

Whenever we talk about women’s roles in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction, it means we want to repair a broken window. The starting point is the ability to identify that broken window. What is the broken window? (UNwomen 2015: 3).

The broken window is the broken society, the issues that the community at war is facing, the issues that women and children are facing, and the disabled and the elderly people affected by war. Many times, it is women who know these issues because they are insiders. These statements highlight the fact that the exclusion of women at the peace table can be a threat to global peace and security because many issues that are known by women can be missed and not addressed at the peace table, and the end product will be a fragile peace deal as one has seen happening in South Sudan. They also highlight the lack of a clear roadmap that identifies the issues (the broken window) by men. The statements emphasise the opportunities that are present when women are given the chance. The challenge is not in whether the women are at the peace table, but rather which role is given to them at the peace table and if they are given a chance to present their issues.

One needs to take advantage of the developments since the 1980s, when the international community, mainly the UN, became aware that including women in the peacebuilding process would potentially result in a more sustainable peaceful outcome. This recognition by the UN

has led to a growing call by both international policymakers and feminists to do more to include and uplift women in peace and security efforts (Chang *et al.* 2015: 11; Anderlini 2010, 2011; Angom 2018; Gbowee 2009; UNwomen 2017: 2). In support of these scholars, the international community asserts that women must not only be seen as victims of conflict, but also as agents of change, who could influence society in a positive way (see United Nations peacebuilding support office report of 2009). This awareness resulted in the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), which established the inclusion of women in peacebuilding processes. This resolution was a starting point for gender-sensitive reforms in relation to peacebuilding processes.

Over the years, waves of positive changes have swept across the globe which have opened the door for women to occupy political positions. From the election of President Hellen Johnson Sirleaf in Liberia in 2005, to Joyce Hilda Banda as Malawi's president in 2012, to the election of Shale-Work Zewde as the first female president of Ethiopia, this is something women have to be proud of because it is a testimony to the success of women in gaining power and authority and in expanding the political space.

In addition, some governments have also focused on empowering their women, for example, Uganda had a vice president, Dr Specioza Naigaga Wandira Kazibwe, from 1994 to 2003, and currently, the speaker of the parliament of Uganda is also a female, Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga – these are positive developments in Uganda. Some countries believe that having women in decision-making positions brings more peace, for example, the Ethiopian prime minister has stated that “an appointment of a female head of state not only sets the standard for the future but also normalises women as decision makers in public life” (BBC, 25 October 2019). On 16 October 2018, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, for the first time in history, nominated ten women to the Ethiopian cabinet, which meant that women would hold 50% of the country's cabinet seats. The prime minister stated that “women were less corrupt than men” and “would help restore peace and stability” (ibid). Some of the women, for the first time, have been appointed to key positions such as the heads of defence, trade, transport, and the ministry of peace. The Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed argued that having women in positions of authority would tackle the wave of ethnic violence that has swept the country. He went on to state that his move was to “show respect” to women's participation in nation building and to disprove the adage that women cannot be leaders (BBC 2018).

This acknowledgement by a Head of State of the role of women reflects on the acknowledgement of the traditional role of women as peace makers, especially when Abiy

Ahmed states that “women are less corrupt than men” and “would help restore peace and stability” this is not only in Uganda, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Burundi but also recently Sudan. After months of a revolution led by women in Sudan, a respected veteran Sudanese Supreme Court Judge, Nemat Abdallah Kheir, was confirmed as Sudan’s new Chief Justice. This is also the first time for a woman to hold the position and follows only a handful of other women in Africa to head judiciaries. In the same month, Asma Abdalla was also confirmed as Sudan’s first female foreign minister by the Sudan News Agency (SUNA) on 10 October 2019. This was significant news considering the recent history of Sudanese democracy and is welcomed news for the continent. Over the century, these countries have seen women rise to powerful political positions and there are signs that this trend is likely to continue. Perhaps that which one should not forget is where the ordinary women are positioned in this positive development.

There are more success stories from other regions in Africa. For example, some countries have reserved seats for women at the local level. In an Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) report of 2005, 30% of all local election divisions were reserved for women in Lesotho for the 2005 local elections, and in the end, over 50% of the elected representatives were women. However, this figure decreased to 22% in 2017. In Sierra Leone, five of the ten locally elected representatives of Ward Development Committees must be women and the figure stands at 29% (IPU 2017: 2), and in Namibia, party lists for local authority council elections with ten or fewer members must include at least three women, and with 11 or more members, must include five women (ibid).

In regions of Africa, customary governance institutions have also provided space for women to participate in political life. For example, in the Great Lakes region, there are still women who are members of these traditional institutions such as the Gacaca courts in Rwanda. In Uganda, the Mato Oput of the Acholi has space for women. Even though their role in Mato Oput centres revolves around preparing the different requirements for the ceremony, cooking the necessary food, and serving the food to participants, the fact is that without this food, the ceremony would not take place. Food is central to community restoration process, and it is what Zehr calls restorative justice (Justice and reconciliation project 2012: 6, Zehr 2002).

In the Lugbara customary marriage, the women do the same; they do the cooking, but this food has to be paid for by the groom. Before the food is eaten, the women will be invited to meet the groom. This normally happens after the men have finished their negotiations. The women will fix an amount of money that has to be paid before the food is served. I have witnessed this negotiation of the food which is tough, and one sees the power of women in

this process. Normally, the groom is not advised to refuse their prices. That which he can do is that if he does not have all the money in cash, he can accept a loan that he must pay after a certain period. However, during the general negotiation, there is always a women's representative who sits with the men and who is the last to speak. This woman is called the *Wacho* (the paternal aunt of the bride) – she gives advice to the couple and recommendations for the closure of the meeting, and the men will not deviate from that which she recommends. It is believed that deviating from her advice and demands could lead to misfortune for the bride (Interview, 10 August 2018).²

These trends show some progress on women's status in public life and especially as it relates to UNSCR 1325 (2000) and the related Resolution 2122 (2013) that act as the roadmaps for the increase of women's participation in public life, although women still continue to be underrepresented and marginalised in decision-making processes, especially in post-conflict settings as shown by the evidence from the above-mentioned studies. Also, the role of ordinary women in rural areas is still not well-recognised and appreciated because of the culture and structure in which women operate their daily lives.

For peace to be sustained, attention is needed on the responses to conflicts. The conflicts in Bidibidi refugee settlement are complex - refugee vs refugees, refugee vs host community, host community vs government of Uganda. The trauma of war and suffering from war in South Sudan causes anger and frustration. For these issues to be addressed, it is important that multitrack approaches to peacebuilding and conflict transformation is considered. According to Federer et al (2019:7), a multitrack approach is a way of considering different peacebuilding initiatives taking place at different levels of society, with the intention of leveraging the positive impact of linkages between initiatives, while preventing or mitigating any negative impacts. In other words, inclusion of different stakeholders (women, men, youth, children, government, media, business) doing activities aimed at promoting peace (mediation, negotiation, reconciliation, etc. with different actors, objectives and timeframes from all levels of society to figure out the needs and facilitate communication between all level (Mada et al 2019:200; Federer et al 2019:14).

² This interview was done with the Lugbara prime minister of the Lugbara kingdom (Lugbara kari), Mr. Tukua Ismail.

As stated by the authors, varieties of initiatives at different levels of society are needed to build sustainable peace. Formal peace negotiations may operate in a short-term time frame with a specific objective, while initiatives on other levels of society usually aim for middle- and long-term contributions to the broader process of building sustainable peace (Ibid). I would add that having initiatives at different levels could be an excuse to exclude women at the formal peace process, which mostly takes place in track 1, 2 and 8 (described below) and this is where at most times women are missing. Women are mostly active in tracks 7, 6, 4 and elite women are seen in track 3 and 9 and 5. The figure below shows the different tracks and their actor/possible initiatives.

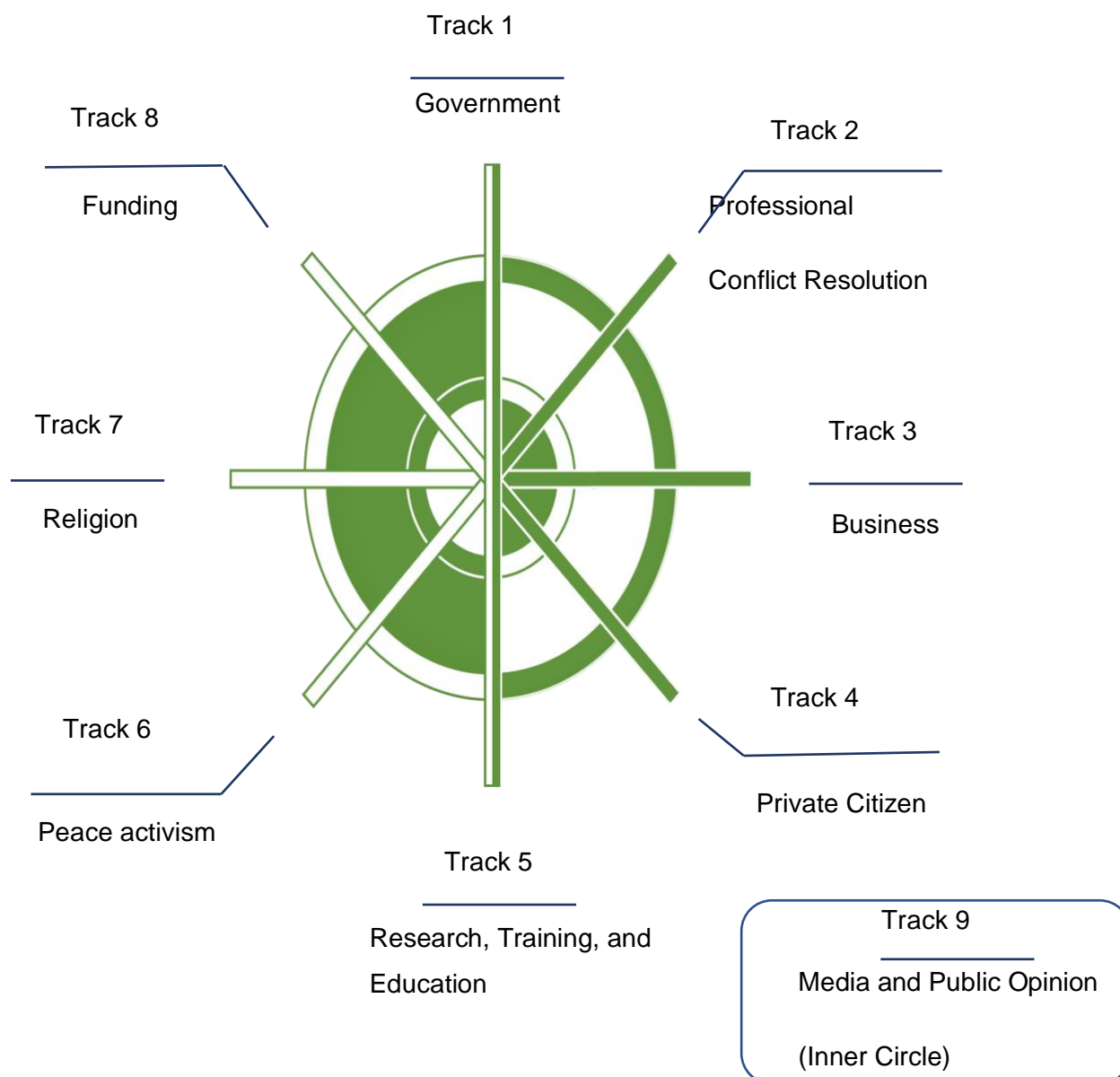


Figure 8.9: Source: Diamond and McDonald's multitrack diplomacy model (Diamond and McDonald 1996 in Palmiano et al 2019:8).

As will be shown later in this thesis, this research found that women in the Bidibidi are mostly active in track 7 (as religious leaders, and volunteers) and track 6 (informal peace processes like forming women saving groups and supporting each other, offering counselling, taking care of their families). Very few also do small businesses to support their families. At the level of

track 1, efforts are made to end armed conflicts between fighting factions (for the purpose of this research and the women of South Sudan who in Uganda, this process took place in Addis Ababa Ethiopia) and no single woman from the refugee settlement was consulted and invited to be part of the negotiations. Some of these women were part of the armed groups, they fought and had to leave their country for safety, this means they are victimised twice by being fighters and being excluded in a process which they should be part of. It would have been important to take their needs and viewpoints into consideration at this point (track1). Taking the needs of women and all other stakeholders at this level is important because these needs are translated into different initiatives that will get funds through track 8 and these funding can be used for actions in track 2 (conflict prevention, reconciliation, peace education etc.). Linking initiatives to the different tracks should be done both vertically and horizontally in a conflict sensitive way by conducting conflict analysis and actor mapping before initiatives are operationalised, otherwise well-intended initiatives may end up causing more conflicts to a community that is already torn apart by war.

3.4 Gender in Conflict: Why it matters for Peace

One essential question regarding gender and conflict is: How are men and women affected differently by conflict on account of their roles, needs, priorities, status, and access to power? It can be argued that gender roles and needs may reflect biological differences, but in reality, most gender roles, priorities, types of status, and access of women and men are determined by society. For instance, in many cultures, boys are encouraged to adopt the male ideals of toughness, strength, bravery, and aggression, and they are given cars and balls with which to play, while girls are given babies and utensils with which to play.

The boy and the girl start to orient themselves with the toys given to them and start to identify their gender role. These ideals promote the male status of warrior and the preparation for war as a core component of manhood. Girls, on the other hand, are often expected to take on caretaker roles, to raise families, and to be active in local communities rather than on the national political stage. Such expectations are reinforced by institutional norms and attitudes. However, what is critical to understand is that gender is about the learned roles and expectations as the result of being a man or a woman (Theidon et al 2011: 75). According to Moser (1993 cited in Dawa 2013: 23), gender refers to the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, and relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis.

There is sparse literature available that focuses specifically on individual conflicts, examining the role that gender has played in them. Evidence on the gendered impacts of particular conflicts and the importance of gender equality in peace-making processes is far more common. However, it is possible to find references to the gendered causes of conflict within literature that is primarily focused on the impacts of conflicts. Research on gender and conflict shows that countries with high levels of violence against women and girls (including domestic abuse, early marriages, and sex-selective abortion) are more likely to experience conflict than those that do not (Herbert *et al.* 2014b cited in Birchall 2019: 5, Dawa and Genene 2022:313-323). The I have singled out South Sudan for early marriage and domestic abuse, and India for sex-selective abortion and intimate partner violence. Having worked in these two countries, I have heard first-hand horrifying accounts of women who have suffered because of being a woman and somehow, this GBV is institutionalised and becomes normal in the society, with some of the women vowing that they will never want their girls to suffer in the same manner. That which happens is that such kind of treatment flares up at a certain period, and especially when such countries get more and more of their citizens educated, they start to reject such treatments and oppose the systems. Hence, this creates an inevitable conflict.

Existing evidence shows that roles and norms around femininity are implicated in violence and conflict. Additionally, discourses of women as weak and defenceless are used to prop up and perpetuate masculinities that involve men as protectors, using violence if necessary (Cohn 2012; Wright 2014). However, in some countries such as South Sudan/Sudan, women in some cases have played a significant role in supporting these discourses by encouraging male family members to participate in forms of violent communal conflict such as cattle raiding, and deriding men who refuse to do so (Wright 2014; El-Bushra and Sahl 2005 cited in Birchall 2019: 6).

During a baseline survey in Kuron in South Sudan, a participant relayed to me that “when the Murle boys go for cattle raiding and also manage to abduct children we celebrate as a community because they have brought not only cows but children for us” (Interview, 17 December 2016).³ Women have been actively involved as combatants in some conflicts.

³ Murle is a tribe in South Sudan that is said to have been affected by syphilis years ago and this has been present for generations – as a result, they are not able to reproduce and fear that their generation

However, Wright (2014: 15-16) points out that “When women do take up arms, they are usually considered to be transgressing traditional gender roles, because a willingness to use violence is considered a masculine, not a feminine, trait”. Empirical evidence shows that “patriarchal gender relations are seen to be intersectional with economic and ethno-national power relations in perpetuating a tendency to armed conflict in human societies” (Cockburn 2010 cited in Birchal 2019: 7). This means that gender is embodied in societal structures and cultures, and in this context, gender deconstruction is not a matter of carrying out research and making recommendations, but much advocacy is needed to change those structures, and this will take time.

Recent scholars (Schirch 2013; Graybill 2002; NíAoláin 2011, NíAoláin and McWilliams 2013) acknowledge that the post-conflict peacebuilding approaches do not adequately and completely capture the experiences of different genders, especially the experience of women or the documentation of the critical nature, varied nature, and complexity of women’s participation in conflict and post-conflict peacebuilding initiatives.

These experiences debatably should inform post-conflict planning approaches, frameworks, and initiatives, as these may help in valuing women’s strengths and resilience. Moreover, there is also a widely held view among scholars of women’s participation in conflict that many post-conflict rebuilding and development initiatives including Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) do not effectively involve and embrace women or their views (Stone 2011: 40-46). Eliatamby, in quoting the former UNSG Kofi Anan, states that “Women combatants are often invisible, and their needs are overlooked during DDR” (Eliatamby 2016: 65).

However, Alagar argues that since the 1980s, women have played a role in peacebuilding and conflict transformation, but that this has mainly happened at the “grassroots and informal level and was unnoticed” by the peacemakers (Alaga 2011: 10-13). Peace negotiations were seen as a male domain, just as war-making was also seen as masculine (ibid). A gender analyst has suggested that “stereotypical notions of masculinity are relied upon to do fair amounts of the work to convince men both to risk their lives and to commit acts of brutality” (Sjoberg 2012:

will be wiped out. They abduct children from other tribes to increase the number of young people. The women sing war songs as the men/boys go to raid other communities.

260). This is the role that social pressure plays to reinforce gender stereotypes. Kemal Cengiz, in a column in the journal *Zaman* in Turkey, wrote that the understanding of the “ideal man is a citizen soldier, a protector of the state and of women and children” (Cengiz 2010 cited in Sjoberg 2012: 68). This means that men should do what is needed to achieve that socially ascribed role no matter what is required.

If the social expectation of men is to be masculine and/or come into manhood, and the path to manhood is military service, then men are often pressured to become soldiers not only for their countries and for their families, but also for themselves and their masculine reputation (Cengiz 2010 cited in Sjoberg 2012: 69). Feminist scholars have argued that the existing perception of gender roles reinforced by the supposed dualism of men waging wars and peacebuilding eventually makes women passive and hence victims rather than actors (Sjoberg 2014: 70; Badmus and Alain 2009 cited in Theobald 2012: 26).

The literature also illustrates that women obtain new responsibilities and capabilities during conflict. Women become aware of the fact that they can positively influence society (Melinda 2005 cited in Theobald 2012: 69; Arabi 2011: 193-202). These new roles challenge traditional gender roles within their society. In a country where violence is present and where women’s participation in public life is not appreciated, women’s roles in public life are not respected or acknowledged (Hudson *et al.* 2011, 2012). Most times, that which happens to women in male-dominated countries in the post-conflict period is that they are forced to surrender their newly acquired authority roles and their voice in peacebuilding (Angom 2018: 4).

I suggest here that countries that are emerging from violent conflict could be potential sites of positive change for women. This is not a hypothesis but rather an argument that originates from empirical studies of countries emerging from wars where women have played a pivotal role, such as in Liberia and Rwanda. I would like to maintain the argument that wars create more female heads of households and force more women to become active in informal markets such that their families can survive (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002: 1-2; Mulamula 2017: 2). Over the years, studies have shown that post-war reconstruction offers countries the opportunity to take a new look at the constraints that women face in building businesses (United States Institute of Peace 2011; Ndey 2015; Theobald 2012; Angom 2018; Sjoberg 2014), and arguably these countries could use these experiences of women and build on them to further empower them, but this does not seem to be the case in most countries.

Apart from Liberia and Rwanda, my own work and previous research experience (which also influenced my interest on the study) in Northern Uganda shows that a number of women

served in high government offices during and after the conflict but later, these roles were taken away from them by men. Studies from Northern Uganda have shown that women and men worked together during the armed conflict and used negotiations and dialogue as a means of conflict resolution (Angom 2018: vii). An empirical study in Northern Uganda and South Sudan confirmed that during the periods of war, many young men found themselves fighting in armed groups such as the LRA and SPLA. This left a productivity vacuum in their communities which women had to fill (Maina 2012 cited in Maina 2016: 193; Stone 2011: 25-49). To cope with the situation, the women left behind took on household and financial responsibilities including looking for daily food for their loved ones. This led communities to become dependent on women to ensure livelihoods and the sustainability of families (Veldwijk 2011: 139-152).

Sadly, Maina notes that at the end of the conflict and during the reintegration and peacebuilding process, these economic responsibilities and leadership roles, including property ownership, which the women had taken on were conferred back on the returning men, thereby undoing the labour advances that women had made during the war (Maina 2012 cited in Maina 2016: 192). This is a clear indication of reinforcing masculinity even after women have played an important role in holding the communities during war. This confirms that men are afraid to lose their position in the community because the society expects certain roles from them, and this must be the way that it is. The post-conflict reconstruction did not take into account the contribution of these women.

Ideally, that which is expected in this case is that women should have been supported and their capacity enhanced, through training, and have had advocacy to continue supporting their families and subsidise the men. Men should have also been encouraged to support the women in their new gained roles, and this kind of approach would build more supportive families rather than emphasising the notion of the 'head of the family' which is mostly misunderstood to mean 'I am the boss and decide everything'. Perhaps if the women were provided with the resources to enhance their newly acquired skills and authority, they would have maintained their positions and continued with the peacebuilding initiatives that they had started. Therefore, it is important to appreciate the profound effects of war on gender roles, including women's participation in labour previously seen as male roles, in starting to transform their communities. This can be done through training, advocacy, offering new opportunities such as self-help life skills, and using the media as a medium to empower communities.

3.5 Women in Conflict and the Role of the Media

Another aspect to look into is the media and how it portrays women. The media is often stated to be a double-edged sword. However, the media can be an important ally in public campaigns aimed at promoting women's participation. Today, millions of people around the world have become connected through social media, which has made it easier to mobilise for collective goals. The Arab spring was stated to have succeeded, thanks to the social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) that the activities used to campaign (Wolfsfeld *et al.* 2013: 117-118). The experiences of women in Liberia were however different, as in the early 2000s, social media was not common and not many people, especially in Africa, had access to social media. During the violence, women organised themselves to end the war. As narrated in the film *Pray the devil Back to Hell*, Abigail Disney (2008) confirms how the media did not pay attention to the women but rather stereotyped the women of Liberia. In an interview with Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) in 2015, Lynn Sherr recounted how difficult it was to obtain the stories of women struggling for peace in Liberia:

We could not get footage of these women protesting because they did not seem to be like anything that mattered ... It was easy to get footage of killing and soldiers shooting ... when I tried asking other journalists; they told me "Yeah ... we saw the women but they are just so apathetical and so there was no point in shooting them" (Interview, 2015).

Rehn and Sirleaf (2002), in their independent report for UNIFEM on media power and bias, quoted Rafeeuddin Ahmed, Chef de Cabinet to UN Secretary-General, Kurt Waldheim:

In retrospect, I realize how much of my perception about women in war was influenced by the media. The incessant images of desperation and victimization tell only one part of the story. The other part, the strength, courage, and resilience, is rarely captured (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002: 103).

These are examples of how women's efforts have been overlooked by the media. However, as asserted by Muvingi (2016: 107), women have not been "naïve or inarticulate" as the popular media often portrays them. The media is stated to be interested in the "big story", the men's story. The men's stories are the ones of killing, raping, politics, and the military, as stated in the Zainab Salbi Ted talk of 24 November 2010. In speaking about women, wartime, and the dream of peace, Salbi acknowledged that that which is missing in these stories is how women have existed and lived in war (ibid). In Africa, there is one common theme in telling women's stories that can be seen by the omission of many important and influential women by the media. The women who have made history on this continent are mostly not given the coverage that they deserve. One example is the Liberian woman, Ruth Sando Perry, who is not featured in the history books of Africa while she was the first female head of state of the

continent and also significant in the governance of Liberia (Kituo 2013: 3). Ruth Sando, as a member of the Nelson Mandela committee, played a crucial role in convincing the warring factions to hear the cries of the ravaged population, and to embark on a path of reason with the support of the women of Burundi (UNwomen 2012: 9-11).

Today, in the media and African history, Ellen J. Sirleaf is considered the first African female head of state. This is how rapidly women's achievements can be swept under the carpet and disregarded in the societal building of Africa by the media and also by academia. The media plays a large role in this biased reporting of women as victims of war (Sadiki 2010: 13; Arabi 2011: 208; Rehn and Sirleaf 2002: 103-109). It is known that in Africa, women's efforts started at the grassroots level during colonial times (Berger 2016: 70-74). However, very little is known about these women in their grassroots. That which is known is their suffering in war and conflict. It is therefore important that African scholars and journalists fulfil their role as advocates to tell a balanced story of the continent. However, it is sometimes difficult for scholars to obtain funding to carry out particular research that might impact their societies because most universities have their areas of interest, and one has to research that which they want regardless of the message and impact. Journalists are also trapped between the public and the owners of the media houses whose focus is to have news that sells, and it is well-known that 'bad news' sells. While training journalists in the West Nile on conflict-sensitive journalism, one journalist relayed to me:

I hear what you are saying, but I think if we produce the news the way you have said, no one will be interested, we get in trouble with our employer and lose our job ... This is the truth I have to tell you; it is not that we do not see the problem, but we are caught up and want to protect our jobs (Training on 9-13 July 2018).

A study entitled *How Media Covered "Arab Spring" Movement: Comparison between the American Fox News and the Middle Eastern Al Jazeera* concluded that the motives hidden behind these prejudiced broadcastings are notably differentiated and based on the different network conditions; the Fox News opinion seems to be dictated by the network's conservative and religious audience (Alalawi 2015: 4).

In an effort to empower and celebrate women's efforts, it is important to understand the role those cultural norms and beliefs play in women's lives. Cheldelin and Mutisi agree that culture and tradition play an important role in driving or destroying the empowerment agenda (Cheldelin and Mutisi 2016: 135-255, Yasmin 2016:128-150). Yamin (2016: 128) discusses the existence of patriarchal values in the Arab Spring and concluded that women's empowerment programmes must address social structures and practices that entrench

gender inequality and stereotypes. A step forward would be an acknowledgement by men that women's roles in society are socially and culturally assigned and therefore can be changed – this may foster a dialogue to unlock the hidden potential of women that has been overshadowed by a culture of oppression. To do this, one needs to engage the media as an actor in challenging the old narratives and giving space for debates that can change the narratives. This can be done through the training of journalists on conflict-sensitive reporting that focuses on empowering journalists to focus on writing stories based on the real context, use conflict-sensitive language, and avoid language usage that provokes emotions and portrays women as victims. Engaging the media will also help them to understand the cultural and structural limitations of women.

Having looked at women's roles in post-conflict situations, peace, conflict transformation, and the role of the media in profiling women in contemporary conflicts, one can consider women in traditional African societies, including indigenous women. There has been some literature attempting to understand the traditional roles of women from an insider's perspective (Berger 2016; Leatherman 2011; Sadiki 2010). The stories of African women have been criticised as being unauthentic because they have been written by non-African scholars. This chapter is an attempt to add to the body of knowledge and literature on exploring women's traditional roles in African society by an African scholar with the objective of giving an understanding of that which has changed in the lives of African women and, if possible, how those traditional roles and untapped skills can be used for contemporary conflicts.

1.16 3.6 Women in peacebuilding and the role of donors

In an attempt to understand the relationship between peacebuilding and donor funding and how this affects women participation, I examined literature that explores trends of donor funds. According to Duckworth (2016:6), there is evidence to show that most donors do not give priority to peacebuilding. The smallest priority category appears to be 'Track II' (civil society), where presumably most peacebuilding or conflict transformation programming would be located. The question that needs to be explored is whether these CSOs are women-led and if they have access to the funds required.

Veron and Sherriff (2020:11) examined data from different sources and different times to compare the trend of funding for peacebuilding and how the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the funding cut for peacebuilding. They found the following: between 2015- 2019, international transfers of major arms increased by 5.5% compared with 2010–2014, global

military expenditure was estimated to have been \$1,917 billion in 2019, the highest level since 1988. Total military spending in Europe in 2019 was \$356 billion, 8.8% higher than in 2010. Germany, whose peacebuilding policy has traditionally emphasized the primacy of civilian means over military responses, had the highest annual increase (10%) in military spending among the top 15 spenders in 2019. Germany's spending in 2019 was at the highest level since 1993 (Veron and Sherriff 2020, UNwomen, 2021:3) The report also indicated that in 2018, multilateral organisations were the main channel of funding delivery for peacebuilding and had increased from 22% in 2009 to 37%. By contrast, the share represented by the public sector decreased from 34% to 32% and the share channelled through NGOs and civil society had decreased from 25% to 19% in the same period.

Another report by global peace index (2020:2) showed a deterioration in global peacefulness with an average country score falling by 0.34 %, by contrast, the Militarisation domain recorded a 4.4% increase. This dynamic confirms the different priorities by big donors who for the most part is from Western countries. According to reports by Candid (Candid 2020:4), there are reasons for private foundations not wanting to fund peacebuilding. Private foundations consider peacebuilding too political, too short on hard evidence on successes and too difficult to measure. The same reported showed that some organisations see it as an area reserved to governments and other official donors and beyond the mandate and means of private foundations or civil society groups. In 2020, only 1% of philanthropic funding supported peace and security (Candid 2020:4). Looking at OECD, the share is even smaller, only 0.11% of total philanthropic funding was dedicated explicitly to conflict, peace and security in developing countries as opposed to violence that costs the world \$14.5 trillion in economic activity in 2019 (OECD 2021:1-2).

According to Mwambari (2017:76), in Rwanda, during the period of recovery from 1994 genocide, overreliance on external donors led to the collapse of many locally led women's organisations. This was because shortly after the genocide, many international organizations started shifting attention to the unfolding humanitarian crisis in the DRC since many of the refugees entered DRC. As Kanyako (2016:34) notes, in Sierra Leone, while the funding flow may have appeared to be overly generous, the reality was that aid declined sharply after the emergency peacebuilding phase was completed and funding was cut to nearly half between 2003-2007.

In Sierra Leone and Somalia, it is reported that donors overlooked important grassroots voices and prioritised tangible products such as training or Truth and Reconciliation Commissions at

the expense of 'people-centred' processes which are so vital to restoring the relationships at the heart of any conflict (Horst 2017:4-5 and Duckworth 2016:6). Several scholars have argued that the world is changing, and that creating a conducive environment for locally led peacebuilding in a changing world goes far beyond dedicating a certain proportion of funds to local actors (Breka 2021:2, Veron and Sherriff 2020:1). This implies a review of partnership modalities, donors adopting to the new changes, leadership, agency and knowledge of local actors needing to be strengthened at the same time and that partnerships based on trust, mutual respect and willingness to listen to and learn from each other become essential to making peacebuilding work in the long-term" (Breka 2021:2, Veron and Sherriff 2020:1, Sherriff at el 2018: V).

The Peace and Security Funding Group (PSFG n.d:1) confirms the above by stating that peacebuilding results are often the strongest when local peacebuilders define problems and solutions and determine outcomes, goals, and timelines for peacebuilding efforts to be sustained. In other words, the leadership for ending violence and building peace needs to be owned and led by those who live in the place impacted by conflict. Peace scholars have warned that if local understandings of the meanings of "gender equality" and "inclusion" differ from those of international actors introducing an empowerment agenda, and the WPS agenda risks being counter-productive to local negotiations on women's roles as political and civic leaders in places like Somalia and South Sudan etc will be left behind (Horst 2017: 5, *Breka* 2021:2).

Duckwork (2016) explained that sometimes donors misunderstand the context in which they are working and the manner in which their disbursement of aid prioritised and empowered certain local actors and reinforced the marginalization of others, thus risking a reproduction of the dynamics that drove the conflict (Ibid:7). If this trend continues, the power inequalities surrounding funding is likely to remain driving the source of conflict. Based on this, it is then logical to argue that addressing the power imbalances between often wealthy, Western donors, implementers from a variety of backgrounds and constituents and community members seeking resolution to the conflict, is essential for sustainable peace. In Sierra Leone (Kanyako 2016:27), asserted that donor funding led to the creation of a vibrant civil society sector that helped foster democracy and accountability including women groups. Kanyako noted that activities of these groups contributed to regional peace and development networks like the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding and that the funding opportunities following the end of the war created the avenue for the emergence of a proactive civil society sector (Ibid). However, there are concerns that funding for local organisations does not come at a free cost,

several local CSO/NGO leaders over time have expressed their concern about compromising their vision and mission because of being too dependent on donors.

Some scholars have noted that donors have unrealistic expectations and conditions that affects local organisations priorities because funding are tied to geographical location, thematic area, for example, Western donors emphasised democracy and good governance, the type of conflict, different reporting systems, project proposals are vetted by funders based upon their values, financial and organisational documents which main organisations do not have (Kanyako 2016:32, Neufeldt 2016:55, Braka 2021:2, Connolly and Mincieli2019:13, International Crisis Group 2020:6 Veron and Sherriff 2020:2). The authors warn that unless donor requirements shift to reflect the priority of process over product and prioritise information that is truly actionable, there is no way to have locally led sustainable peace. They also recommend that at a time when the world is extremely very unstable, it is vital that the international donors seize this critical moment for change and seek complementarities and alignment initiatives to collectively enhance the space for locally led peacebuilding Kanyako 2016:32, Neufeldt 2016:55, Braka 2021:2 Connolly and Mincieli2019:13-18, Benitez 2020:23-29).

Kanyako (2016) noted that smaller donors were more flexible than the traditional donors. I tend to agree with this finding because for the last three years since the initiation of CEPADWN, the organisation has attracted small and big donors. The due diligence from some of the big donors poses a challenge. CARE International is one example. The conditions of CARE are threes time more than what Stiftung would ask. This makes the life of the staff difficult as they spend a great deal of time on paperwork. An example is that of CARE's procurement and finance policy that requires three quotations for spending five thousand Ugandan shilling (\$1.5) while CEPADWN allows for spending up to five hundred thousand (\$150) with one quotation. Much as CEPADWN had the capacity to renegotiate terms of engagement with CARE, not all donors would want to accept renegotiation, let alone have the capacity of local organisations to renegotiate. They are fearful of losing the funding, hence making them vulnerable to unrealistic terms of engagement.

Donor funding sometimes make local NGOs do substandard work. For example, I have learnt and experienced some of these challenges when working with many donors and local organisations. Some donors have burdensome reporting systems, for example, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID and European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO are known for this along with the fact that the application

for funding has to be done online, this is confirmed by (Neufeldt 2016:56). This kind of practice eliminates many locally women-led and women founded organisations. Women in BidiBidi have no access to the internet to submit applications online. There are sometimes delays in giving funds on time but with an expectation that project activities must be carried out and concluded on time. In other words, there is no flexibility with timing and the required due diligence, it does not matter if the one-year project starts in May or June but by December, local NGOs are expected to submit final end of project report to donors.

The humanitarian women's network was founded in 2015 and one of their objectives was to build local-led women organisations to be able to push back against unrealistic expectations of donor requirements. In an interview with the team leader of the HWN (December 28, 2021), she noted that:

one of the biggest challenges faced by women led organisations is their access to big donors because they can't meet the requirement of the donors and so their good initiatives are underfunded and get no attention. Donors, she continued give money to international organisations like CARE, DRC, UNHCR etc. and these international organisations sub-grant small amount of money to the local organisations but still expect the same results". This kind practice between donors and INGOs causes frustration and weakness the capacity of local peace initiatives as they now begin to focus more on completing their tasks as opposed to the quality of work to create a longer-term impact.

The other issues include the funding period. Peacebuilding is a process that takes years. Peacebuilding is normative (Neufeldt, 2016:55), in other words, it has standards and principles that need to be followed, it is not a one-off activity, time is needed for recovery, reconciliation etc. Donor-driven projects do not give priority for capacity-building for sustainability, a challenge for local women-led organisations because from the research, low levels of education and access to income have been identified as a key factor constraining women from being active in peacebuilding. In other words, any donor wanting to support women needs a long-term plan to build them for sustainability otherwise after donor departure, there is nothing left to continue the good work started.

To conclude this discussion, literature shows that donor funding has implications to peacebuilding and women's exclusion. There needs to more work done to make donors take into consideration women's capacities and peacebuilding norms when developing their requirements. However, there is no indication of any deliberate effort by donors to exclude women, it looks to be rather general donor requirements and priorities are problematic regardless of who applies for the funds. This comes back to the UNSCR 1325 and the subsequent resolutions that call for more women involvement at all levels. I would think the

conversation should be about whether there needs to be funding set aside targeting women initiatives, including building capacities, spearheaded by governments and regional bodies like African Union and ECOWAS etc. There are many women's rights organisation already doing good work to support women, but a missing link is the access to grassroots women who may not have access to the internet, social media, cannot complete online applications, etc. Therefore, advocacies are needed through governments, private sector/business and civil society to build systems and infrastructures that are accessible to grassroots women. Once those systems and infrastructures are in place, donors can then direct funding deliberately targeting women. I do believe this is a collective responsibility that governments can spearhead to make sure no citizen is excluded and set the roles for the donors. While speaking to donors "you get what you negotiate for" is the rule of thumb, if donors are not told what is needed, they can easily assume that everyone is part of a common basket, or "one size fits all".

3.7 Traditional African Women in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation

This section briefly looks at the traditional African woman with a focus on the Great Lakes region. I decided to consider only the Great Lakes region to narrow the experience to suit the current study. I have discussed women in the Great Lakes region and by taking Burundi as a case study, I have carried out a comparison of the Great Lakes region and indigenous women, and women on their similarities and common challenges.

3.7.1 Introduction

Various literary and historical sources on women in peace and conflict transformation show the chronicle existence of the lack of women participation in public life in all sections of society since ancient times (UNwomen 2015; World Bank 2017; Anderlini 2007; Bell 2015; Bubenzer and Stern 2011; Cohn, Kinsella and Gibbings 2004). Women's suffering in conflict and yet exclusion in peace processes are not uncommon happenings, and this kind of systematic behaviour is not uncommon, as believed in oriental societies (Berger 2018).

In the Great Lakes region of Africa, consisting of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, some of the countries have kingdoms ruled by kings and queens, and women in royal families played an important role in the social lives of these communities. The writings on the role of African women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation originates in the seminal African literature of Nwapa (1995a, 1995b, 1992,

1984, and 1986). Her writings revolved around women's roles in traditional African settings and how they use their roles as mothers and wives to non-violently transform conflict. From her writing, one can see an inherent link between the historic and the contemporary role of women in African society.

3.7.2 African Women in Pre-Colonial Period: Great Lakes Region

According to Sadiki (2010: 17), the Great Lakes region is the most studied region in Africa because of its tragedies but the least studied in terms of an analysis of the concrete situation of women, specifically their involvement in peace and conflict management. Globally, women are referred to as 'victims'. There have been many publications on the victimisation of women, including in African regions, mostly by non-African scholars (Gizelis 2011; Ndey 2015). According to Mvingi (2016: 109), African patriarchy has existed but most of the accounts were from missionaries and European historians who conceived of African social and political organisations through a Eurocentric frame, in other words, viewing Africa from a European institutional point of view that, in the end, has several ramifications for the lives of women (ibid).

There are very few scholarly studies of African women by African scholars in the interlacustrine communities of the Great Lakes region in the 1970s; Ndaywel 1979 cited in Sadiki 2010: 21-22). Sadiki's (2010) volume gives a good background understanding on the role of women in traditional African society as peacebuilders. It looks at women in Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC. It is important to note that unlike the case of Liberian and Rwandan women recently, this study focused on royal women, and elite women, such as queens and princesses in the Great Lakes region. Therefore, it does not significantly give a representative overview of the ordinary African women, however, it gives a reasonable understanding of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in the region.

As mentioned previously, there is sparse literature authored by African scholars on this subject. Sadiki (2010: 20) asserts that African scholars absorb in mercantile logic on promising issues and themes that are, directly or indirectly, imposed by the vision, needs, and priorities not of their countries or people but by their sponsors, publishers, and benefactors, in most cases, from the West. Consequently, the literature studies that exist on African subjects are carried out by Western scholars which are often biased and uninformed.

A recent study conducted by Derlet and Foster (2013) examines this fact. In their volume *Invisible Women of Prehistory*, the authors acknowledged that there is an academic tension

between those who write from within their inherited tradition and those who come from outside as scientists, academics, or journalists to write on women's roles in traditional societies. Derlet and Foster argue that it is time to listen to the insiders because the writing of women's role in Africa by non-African scholars has contributed to the image of women as 'victim' rather than 'peacemaker' in Africa.

However, an empirical study that was conducted by the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on Women and Culture on Peace Programme in 2003 to trace the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in traditional African society seems to have changed the narrative of 'victimhood'. They examined the role of women in six African countries: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Namibia, Somalia, and Tanzania. The results proved an interesting collection of traditional conflict resolution and peacebuilding practices used by women in South Saharan Africa. The empirical study provided the foundation of how African women have traditionally contributed to peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Similarly, the present study also demonstrates that when women are given the platform to raise their voices, they can play a significant role in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

According to Bauer (2009 cited in Muvungi 2016: 107), African women wield considerable power before the colonial period that extends to cultural, economic, and political social spheres, and some held considerable influence on community decision-making. In Africa, the success and unity of the family, including sustainable marriages and the bearing of children, were greatly contingent on the African woman (Afisi 2010 cited in Shulika 2016: 5). These aspects of the woman's social status were fundamental to African existence and continuity. Likewise, educating and instilling in children the appropriate moral, ethical, cultural, and societal values constitute an essential dimension of the social obligations of African women as individuals and culturally informed social groups (Cheldelin and Mutisi 2016: 256).

Marriage has also played an important part in the African community and defined a woman's social and economic role in society. The social and economic foundations that have characterised women's roles have provided them with the platform to engage in political activities, especially through their social trading networks, hence establishing their political role (Shulika 2016: 7). In the traditional African context, women have played a crucial role in the social and economic lives of their families. In their traditional role, this unavoidable link between the social and the political role is contained in the socio-cultural importance of marriage, particularly where the union occurs in royal or influential families (Sadiki 2010: 46-

78). Such unions provide women with the platform to influence political decision-making, indirectly or directly, through their involvement in family meetings and traditional groups. This was common in the families and in the Great Lakes regions. The women in these marriages had excessive governance with their spouses and male members of their families (ibid).

Women in Africa did that which was necessary for their families with decorum, and they shouldered the responsibility of providing material resources for the upkeep of their families, which meant engaging in economic activities such as farming, manufacturing, trade, and craft-making outside of the normal household duties (Veldwijk 2011: 157; Berger 2018: 10; Mulamula 2017: 2). Today, intrinsically, the construction of women's social identities is greatly shaped by their involvement in community affairs through the development and fulfilment of new roles in the sphere of economic empowerment. Economically, women have transcended the market grids and systems that they have established and focus on the survival of their families (Berger 2018: 11).

Berger (2018) and Muvingi (2016) claim that the cohesion and strength of African women's role in society's pre-colonial atmosphere has changed with the advent of "colonialism" (Berger 2018: 49; Muvingi 2016: 107-116, Tripp et al 2008). Berger further proclaims that Western colonialism – accompanied by the introduction of Western educational systems which favoured boys over girls – legislations, Christianity, and the modern state system of voting and electing leaders have negatively changed the socio-economic and political standing of pre-colonial African women. To elaborate on this point, she quotes Nigerian novelist, Buchi Emecheta, in her novel entitled *The Joy of Motherhood*:

The rapid social changes brought by the Europeans not only disrupted individual lives, but threatened the health, well-being, and continued viability of African societies. By transforming relationships between spouses and between parents and children, colonialism endangered the very survival of African families (Berger 2016: 9).

The above statement is evidence of how colonial rule has affected women's lives until today despite the efforts at different levels to change this narrative because the colonial changes affected the deep social roots of the African way of life. There is an aspect regarding the structures that were established by the colonial administration that have not changed in many countries, and they exist as an integral part of governments including in legal documents such as constitutions. For example, Uganda uses the British common law, as Muvingi argues, which is also the case in South Africa, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, where the colonial past continues to be profoundly present in the region as is reflected in the economic disparities and the nature of inherited states (Muvingi 2016: 111, Chingono 2015:111-115). Notwithstanding

the colonial disruption, African history, as presented by Berger, is abundant with women who are queen mothers, wealthy merchants, spiritual leaders, participants in resistance and nationalist movements, revolutionaries, and modern professionals in business, law, health care, teaching, arts, literature, and peacebuilders (Berger 2018: 2), but most of these facts were eliminated from the historical accounts of Africa. For example, in Zimbabwe, the *Nehanda* (a woman spirit medium) used to perform traditional ceremonies that ensured good rains and harvests. Given the spiritual medium that was competing with the missionaries, it was not surprising that their role was silenced in missionary accounts, and the silencing of spirit mediums meant silencing the most powerful public roles of women (Muvingi 2016: 108). For further illustration, Burundi will be considered and how the presence of colonial rule there has metamorphosed women's position over time.

3.7.3 The Case of Burundi

Traditional Burundian society is patrilineal and patriarchal, with women being recognised as holding an important role as moral guides and peace makers (Inclusive peace and transition initiative 2018: 2). Historical accounts of Burundi's colonial period point to an increased reliance on masculine interpretations of rigid ethnic identities that were initially, prior to German and Belgium colonial encroachment, quite fluid. While there is contestation among scholars such as Newbury (1998) and Lemarchand (1970), about the origins of ethnicity in Burundi, that is, the 'Hutu'/'Tutsi' categories and the degree of social mobility and oppression between them, that which is clear is that the stereotype of male 'Tutsi' being a distinguishable group that are more skilled in matters of the state became more prevalent during the "colonial period" (Inclusive peace and transition initiative 2018: 2).

In his seminal writing, Linden contended that what had once been a fluid ethnic boundary between two socio-economic groups in Burundi hardened under Belgian rule into an unchangeable barrier between the categories of Hutu and Tutsi defining access to the political class (Linden et al 1977: 4). The public sphere of the colonial state was closed to all 'African' women regardless of ethnicity. In some countries, missionaries even trained wives of chiefs (chiefs selected by the colonial state) in housekeeping, child rearing, and sewing in an attempt to instil patriarchal European values of the importance of women's role in the 'private' sphere of a 'nuclear' family (Berger 2018: 2).

Rigid, ethicised femininities were also coined alongside this (Lind and Sturman 2002: 91). According to Daley (2007: 52), the Tutsi women were stated to be tall, slender, light-skinned, and the epitome of beauty. This stereotypical superiority of 'Tutsi' femininities based on

Western notions of beauty and sexual imagery was a “doubtless powerful motivation for certain atrocities experienced by women against each other” (ibid: 53). According to Berger, this colonial patriarchal ethnicised hierarchy, reinforced with the creation of new laws and educational systems on European languages, history, and culture that favoured men over women, led to further subordination of women and enabled men to further extend their authority over women across Africa (Berger 2018: 8).

In addition, Burundi has a history of queen-mothers, one of whom was known as Ririkumutima who governed the country for a long time during the pre-colonial period. Other matriarchs could have existed either in contestation with or alongside patriarchy (Sadkik 2010: 74). Colonialism subverted these spaces of power that women occupied and created a patriarchal alliance between colonial Belgium/German male officials and newly, socially constructed ‘Burundian’ male elite, and further entrenchment of ethnic elite masculinities occurred when Belgium and German colonial systems established centralised military forces that were considered as vital for the security of the colonial establishment (O’Daley 2007: 54). Similarly, Hubsbawm and Ranger (1983) theorised that the African tradition was reinvented to fit the construct of the society desired by dominant elites for their benefit (Hubsbawm and Ranger 1983 cited in Muvungi 2016: 110), but this type of narrative has been challenged by feminist scholars.

However, some scholars have argued that although there is a paucity of literature on the histories of femininities in Burundi, as in many African states before the colonial era, Burundian women did enjoy some authority in the form of control over cows, land, and other forms of wealth (Albert 1971: 179-216; Berger 2018: 2). “A woman they said was revered for using feminine guile to advance herself”. This enabled Burundi women to accrue wealth independent of their husbands (ibid). Furthermore, women in Burundi gained wealth, a position of honour upon which they received cows, clothing, jewellery, and serfs, all of which were considered her own, and not the property of her husband (Sadiki 2010: 74). Some scholars have also underscored the reaction of African women to the colonial rules. Mikell (1995 cited in Collier, Lawless and Ringera 2016: 401) notes that historically, “African women took strength from the fact that their participation was essential if their countries were to end the colonial experience and achieve independence” and that this ideology acted as a steppingstone to African feminism. Muvungi writes that the South African liberation struggle was mounted in the name of equality and democracy which has led to the reimagined state based on the equal participation of all South Africans (Muvungi 2016: 117). In other words, the struggle of women to be included was a recipe for the formation of African feminism which, in my opinion, is still

developing and will continue to give voices to African women who were generally generalised as victims and powerless by Western scholars.

The general understanding by feminist scholars is that colonialism radically masculinised and feminised the roles of men and women in African society. During the colonial period, women were assigned designated responsibilities, places, and duties, as were men. For example, in South Africa, families became separated, and men were taken to the mines while women were left to cater for their families (Muvungi 2016: 117). According to feminist scholars, this was the start of gender segregation in the continent. Despite the exclusionary colonial dynamics, authors such as Berger (2016), Theobald (2012), Bubenzer and Stern (2011), Anderlini (2007, 2010), Sadiki (2010), Angom (2018), and Muvungi (2016) have paid tribute to the works of some African women in the 21st century. They have looked at women in Uganda, Mozambique, Rwanda, Burundi, Angola, Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Eritrea who fought very hard to ensure that their voices were not silenced in the new political system, and who remained strategically active and able to establish and join resistance movements to fight for political independence. Through different community mobilisation schemes, some of the women have remained key political players in their countries today.

From the foregoing literature, it can be argued that pre-colonial African women were quite proactive in influencing community governance and decision-making, as well as conflict resolution and preserving communal peace. Apparently, the socio-economic and political agency of women in the historical sense were defined by their ability and determination to maintain family bonds, nurture households and livelihoods, maintain social harmony, and contribute to economic empowerment and development of society and hence, vastly contribute to peaceful communities in Africa. However, this changed with the advent of colonial powers.

The conclusion is that despite the fact that colonial rule favoured men over women's participation in political life, African women remained active players and worked underground to see their countries emerge as independent nations. Even today, many women in countries emerging from conflicts have fought for their place in public life and this is the case for Burundi (Falch 2010:9-19). If these facts are not taken lightly, one can realise that women have much to offer and that it is time to utilise the untapped resources that women have to offer. Over the years, women have moved from being passive victims to active actors for peace and peacebuilding.

The colonial period did not only affect the lives of African women but also the lives of indigenous women from the Americas, Australia, and South Africa, to mention a few. The next section considers some indigenous groups from three different countries: Brazil, Australia, and Kenya. The objective was to understand if there are differences and similarities in the lives of women and the common challenges that women encounter globally.

3.8 Indigenous People

Indigenous people are people who originally lived in a country having their own culture and social beliefs that guide their communities. Around the world, indigenous people live in fear of losing their land to the government and/or foreign investors who come to disrupt their traditional lifestyles. The disruption of indigenous lives started from the colonial period and still continues. Today, most governments, especially in Africa, continue to use systems that were established by colonial powers which abolished the traditional ways of life, as will be shown in the examples given in southern African countries.

It is important to note that across the globe, the participation of indigenous people in political life is seen mostly as a struggle for autonomy or independence as minority groups. This is something that most governments are not ready to allow in their states. Just as the rise of women “affirmative action, the quota systems” that aim at promoting women’s participation in public life and which were mostly viewed as feminist by men and the struggle for indigenous people to have their voices heard is viewed by most governments as an act of separatist/terrorist ideas. This has happened recently in the Amazon region of Brazil, Canada, Australia, South Africa, and even Kenya, etc. The problem with this is that when societal lives become disrupted for whichever reason, women are always the first to suffer because of their role as the keepers of families and societies (Muingi 2016: 109). For this reason, indigenous women have suffered discrimination around the world for being “a women and indigenous”, in other words, they suffer double stigmatisation.

There are, however, some developments in the international community that protects the rights of indigenous people. Whether these resolutions are implemented lies in the hands of states. The United Nations declarations of the rights of the indigenous people 61/296, adopted by the General Assembly in September 2007, states that “indigenous peoples are equal to all other peoples, and recognizes the right of all peoples to be different, to consider themselves different, and to be respected as such. It also affirms that all peoples contribute to the diversity

and richness of civilizations and cultures, which constitute the common heritage of humankind” (United Nations 2007: 2).

To protect and respond to the needs of the indigenous people, on 13 September 2007, the United Nations passed the resolution on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) that highlighted the importance of ensuring effective participation by indigenous peoples in decision-making at all levels. Notably, Article 5 of the UNDRIP differentiates between indigenous people’s “right to internal decision-making (developing and maintaining their own institutions of self-governance) and their right to external decision-making, participating fully in the political, economic, social and cultural life of their respective states”. The significance of indigenous people’s involvement in external decision-making is underscored by the 2014 Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Declaration of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, which affirms that meaningful participation of indigenous peoples at all levels of government and parliament is necessary in order to ensure public policies that are sensitive to their situation, needs, and aspirations, and that are accompanied by sufficient resources, and point 2 of the UNDRIP focuses specifically on states to “end discrimination and provide for meaningful participation of indigenous peoples, and in particular indigenous women, in decision making in parliament **and elsewhere** (IPU 2014: 1).

Two important points in the UN declaration of the indigenous people’s rights can be seen in, for example, Article 22, in relation to the rights and protection of women, youth, and children against violence, which states that:

1. particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities in the implementation of this declaration, and
2. states shall take measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination (UN 2007: 17).

3.8.1 Indigenous Women

Despite their vast assets and contribution to society, indigenous women continue to suffer from multiple discrimination, both as women and as indigenous individuals. They are subjected to extreme poverty, trafficking, illiteracy, a lack of access to ancestral lands, non-existent or poor health care, and exposure to violence in the private and public spheres (UNESCO 2013: 5). This violence is exacerbated when indigenous communities find themselves in the midst of conflict and women become the target of violence with political motives when going about their daily work, fetching wood or water for the family.

However, an important document to look at is the study of indigenous women's political participation at the international, national, and local levels published by the UN economic and social council, where paragraph 2, section 15 states that: "The right of indigenous women, as members of their peoples, to be consulted and involved in processes relating to free, prior and informed consent". The Declaration explicitly states, in Article 22, that in its implementation, States shall take measures, jointly with indigenous peoples, to ensure that "women enjoy full protection and guarantees against all forms of discrimination", and in Article 44, that "all of the rights recognized in the declaration are equally guaranteed to male and female indigenous individuals" (UN 2013: 4).

Despite the existence of such legal frameworks, indigenous women are still lacking in all aspects of political life. A survey published by IPU in 2014 on the participation of indigenous women in parliament in 41 countries around the world collected data for 923 member of parliaments (MPs) which was gender disaggregated. From the 923 MPs sampled, 742 (80%) were men and only 181 (20%) were women (IPU 2014: 7). The report revealed a disturbing trend that even where indigenous peoples are represented in parliament, they still remain significantly underrepresented in the parliament (ibid). The report highlighted the fact that indigenous women face a "triple challenge", because of being "women, poor and indigenous", and warns that achieving gender parity among indigenous parliamentarians will require a stronger set of political, social, and economic measures (ibid). In comparison to indigenous women, a study by IPU on the general participation of women in political life indicates that women hold only 21.9% of parliamentary seats worldwide (IPU 2019).

These data are consistent with the current global gender inequality not only in parliament but in many other sectors including the work market, education, and so forth. The question then is how can women take part in decision-making if they are not present at the decision-making tables and do not have access to the resources that men have? This thesis does not go into detail to find answers to this question but rather the thesis seeks to address how women and men can be empowered to work together by pinning the study on peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and social inclusion theory which complement each other for sustainable peace. Before looking at how these theories could be used to address better participation of women, one can consider some of the indigenous communities and their differences and commonalities.

3.8.2 The Indigenous Women of Australia

The indigenous Australians are people who are descended from groups who lived in Australia and the surrounding islands before British colonisation. They include the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia. As in most parts of the world, the indigenous women of Australia face challenges in participating in politics. A report on the indigenous governance fact sheet published by Women in governance Australia in 2015 indicates that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, before colonialism, had valued roles and responsibilities in the governance of their families, clans, communities, and nations. The reports continue to state that senior women were often the bedrock of community and family well-being and were active in many leadership and governance roles (Women in governance 2015: 1). Just as many African women, the lives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were profoundly changed by the arrival of British colonists in 1788. Many of them lost their lives and lands were taken as the colonisers attempted to impose new social, economic, and religious orders. The report highlights that today, the indigenous women of Australia face challenges of “structural racism experience as indigenous people, and gender inequality experience as a result of being women” (ibid). The report also highlights the gender inequality that has led to power, resources, and opportunities being unequally distributed between men and women in a way which tends to advantage men and disadvantage women (Women in governance 2015: 2).

This unequal distribution of resources between women and men and the changing of social structures can lead to changes in social values settings in terms of attitudes, norms, and practices that can affect women negatively (Muvingi 2016: 109). This research found out that women’s access to resources and education is a prerequisite for their participation in public life. With this in mind, I can then argue that this unfair distribution of resources among the indigenous people has affected the participation of women in political life just as it has for the women of Uganda and South Sudan and many others.

As with any other setting, the report also highlights that this unequal distribution of resources has led to GBV and a high level of trauma among women, specifically traumas of carrying more burdens of unpaid work. During a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in May 2019, the men confirmed that in most communities, women’s work is restricted to work such as domestic duties, caring for families and communities, and taking care of the sick.

The end result is limited opportunities and resources being afforded to women, who will then miss being exposed to outside opportunities including skills training and mentoring opportunities that currently exist in the settlements. Research has also shown that these unfair

treatments are as a result of culture and structures that surround women (Chang *et al.* 2015: 11). As with women around the world, the Australian indigenous women bear the burden of taking care of their families, yet they have less access to resources that could help them to grow and sustain themselves for a better future life.

3.8.3 The Indigenous Women of Brazil

There is less literature in English about Brazil. Some early writers indicate that Latin America is populated by some 40 million indigenous people from a total population of about 500 million (Picari 2002: 1). In Brazil alone, the indigenous population is estimated to be 310,000, and 280,000 of these individuals reside within areas specifically designated as preserves (Carneiro da Cunha 2000: 129). Brazil is known for its indigenous people until now and they play a pivotal role in the politics of the country. Historically, the Portuguese were the first European settlers to arrive in Brazil in the colonial period of the 1500s. There are 160 different individual societies within the borders of the Brazilian Amazon that speak 195 different languages (*ibid.*). Despite their traditional settlement in the rainforests within Brazil, their legal and constitutional rights only provide them with about 20% of the land within the Brazilian Amazon. This type of constitutional unfairness has led to immense challenges for the indigenous people and women in particular in Brazil.

A study conducted by the Latin America and the Caribbean Committee for the Defence of Women's Rights (CLADEM) indicates that the indigenous women of Latin America had a key role within their towns in relation to the intergenerational transmission of spiritual traditions, the history of their people, their philosophy, and the defence of the land, territory, and natural resources (CLADEM n.d.:1). Much of the cultural heritage of the indigenous communities of the region, including their knowledge of medicine, and the properties of plants, seeds and herbs; all that it provides with regards to animal life; oral traditions; and designs that are applied in the visual arts, ceramics, and textiles, including ancient symbols have been preserved by the efforts of women (*ibid.*: 2).

In Brazil, women are stated to have always played a key role in the transmission of the language of their people. Just as in other parts of the world, besides preserving the language of their peoples, women have been active in the defence of the cultural heritage role, resources, and territory. Another study conducted by the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFIS) showed that the collective struggle over territories, resources, autonomy, intercultural basic services, among others, has served as processes of

politicisation and the strengthening of ethnic and gender identities (Cunningham and Paradies 2013).

Another study by Calede on the political participation of indigenous women in legislature in six countries showed that indigenous people, in general, are a minority in Parliament, and within that minority, women are another minority (Calede 2013 cited in CLADEM n.d.: 5). These statistics on the indigenous women of Brazil give a clear picture of their place in Brazilian politics. These indigenous women, as with women in other countries, are marginalised socially, economically, and politically, leading to disparity.

3.8.4 The Indigenous Women of Kenya

In east Africa, Kenya is the only country that officially recognises indigenous people and has a constitutional provision for marginalised and indigenous people. The Constitution of Kenya defines 'minority groups' through the lens of marginalisation (Constitution of Kenya 2010: 46-48). Article 260 of the Constitution defines marginalised communities to include:

2. A community that, because of its relatively small population or for any other reason, has been unable to fully participate in the integrated social and economic life of Kenya as a whole;
3. a traditional community that, out of a need or desire to preserve its unique culture and identity from assimilation, has remained outside the integrated social and economic life of Kenya as a whole;
4. an indigenous community that has retained and maintained a traditional lifestyle and livelihood based on a hunter or gatherer economy; or
5. pastoral persons and communities, whether they are (a) nomadic; or (b) a settled community that, because of its relative geographic isolation, has experienced only marginal participation in the integrated social and economic life of Kenya as a whole (Constitution of Kenya 2010: 46-48).

The Constitution makes a distinction between marginalised *communities* and marginalised *groups*. Marginalised groups encompass women, children, the disabled, and the elderly, among others (Constitution of Kenya 2010: 260).

A study carried out to assess the challenges of gender and ethnic identity in Kenya's minority and indigenous women indicates that even though these groups are officially recognised by the Constitution, women face multiple forms of marginalisation. While many ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples are considered marginalised communities, women, as a whole, are considered a marginalised group under the Constitution. Therefore, this confirms the notion that minority and indigenous women confront multiple forms of discrimination; they are

discriminated against because of their gender and because of their identification with groups that have been marginalised over time, and because they are women and less privileged in these communities.

3.9 Summary

Part of the literature review looked at different literature on women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation, including women from the Great Lakes region and indigenous women in three different countries. It also looked at the role of donors, media colonial powers and how their systems of government have disrupted both the African and indigenous people's way of life, respectively. I have also included her own arguments to reflect her opinion regarding the existing literature and evidence. It is clear from the literature and empirical evidence that women have played significant roles in communities prior to the colonial period and continue to play a crucial role in the social and political life of their communities. It is also clear that the legacy of the colonial administration has continued in modern democracies. It is true from the above literature that the presence of colonial masters has played a key role in destabilising the social fabrics of traditional social norms among African and indigenous communities. This has mostly affected women as they were mostly attached to the traditional ways of life that were discouraged by colonial powers. The end result is that women were excluded from the colonial administrative systems. Unfortunately, most of the colonies, even after the departure of their colonial masters, have continued to use the same institutions that are unfriendly to women's leadership and today one sees less women in political life (Mutisi 2016: 49). Apart from colonial changes, there are other social and cultural factors that restrict women's access to public life. There is no clear evidence to suggest a deliberate move from donors to exclude women but considering the funding sources, I can argue that donor priorities contribute to women's exclusion as their policies do not favour women much of the time.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE PEACE TABLE

4 Introduction

The peace table in the 21st has been an issue of discussion especially in regard to the presence of women at the table. From Liberia to South Africa, to Northern Ireland to Rwanda, Syria etc, there has been debate about the absence of women at the peace table. This chapter looks at the different issues surrounding exclusion of women and the arguments and evidence of including women at the peace table and how it has contributed to sustainable peace.

4.1 Exclusion of Women at Formal Peace Table

It is not impossible to realize our goals while discriminating against half of the human race. As study after study has taught us, there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women (Kofi Anan, 2006: 2).

Kofi Anan made this statement six years after the UN passed the popular Resolution 1325 in 2000 on women, peace, and security. Could it be that the resolution was failing? This statement by a UNSG is an indication that despite the existence of Resolution 1325, there were still gaps in the implementation of the resolution at all levels.

Since the passing of Resolution 1325 in 2000 on women, peace, and security, the UN has worked together with governments and regional bodies to ensure that women are part of the peace processes. Strong statements, such as the one made by Kofi Anan (2006: 2), were advocacy tools to propel the need for women's inclusion in all decision-making processes. This statement was also a recognition that women were still being excluded at the peace table. Reflecting on such statements in the context of this study encourages the inquiry into which women are invited to the peace-making table.

The feminist scholar and advocate, Cynthia Enloe, radically asked, a year ago, "Where are the women?" She was referring to the invisibility of women as subjects of study in international relations (Enloe 1990; Sjoberg 2012: 23-31). Again, the same question was asked by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) when exploring the presence of women in decision-making positions in the countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) (UNDP 2015: 12). This question, which feminists continue to ask today, remains important. The consequences of not studying women's inclusion in peace studies and international relations include effects on security practices.

In the perspective of this study, the questions that need to be asked are: how can women be included? Which resources are needed and how can women access these resources? Who are the actors who need to be engaged to work with women? These questions are set with the objective of achieving an empowerment and advocacy plan that is based on identifying resources and actors for resources to address the third objective of the action research in this study.

Around the globe, women's presence at the peace table has not been ignored. For example, in 2004, Dr Anne Itto, a member of the negotiating team for the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), was frustrated by the consistent exclusion of women from the negotiation process during the development of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the SPLM/A and the Government of Sudan (GoS). Itto stated: "These negotiations resulted in a peace agreement that hardly acknowledges women's security concerns or priorities for peacebuilding, reinforcing women's invisibility as stakeholders in war and peace" (Walender 2016: 159 and Horne 2016:151-167, Wilson 2016:53, Kaufman and Williams 2016: 559-561). Unfortunately, Sudan is not a unique case, as women's exclusion from peace negotiations is widely seen around the globe and dates back to colonial times which has now been reinforced by cultures.

Common trends in seminal writings in international relations about women, peace, and war have generally neglected women, and when it has been considered, it has often been treated as a secondary phenomenon rather than as a central feature of any analysis. Political conflicts revolve around the exclusion of women from the arena of national and international politics, and they are not mentioned in the gendered effects of armed conflict (Harbom *et al.* 2006; Hartzell and Hoddie 2003; Walter 1997 ;). However, there has been a shift after UNSCR 1325 and a number of scholars such as Bell and O'Rourke (2010), Caprioli (2005), Gizelis (2011), Sjoberg (2014), Cheldelin and Mutisi (2016), Anderlini (2007, 2010), and Berger (2018) have taken exceptional steps to focus on women's peacebuilding efforts.

One explanation for the inadequate literature on women's peacebuilding efforts is evident in the prevalent view of women as victims of conflict which tends to overlook, explicitly or implicitly, women's power and agency, and yet women, including girls, are combatants in patriarchal military and rebel movements (Enloe 2000; Sjoberg 2012, 2013). It has also been reported that they constitute the majority of the victims of sexually motivated war crimes (Leatherman 2011: 9; D'Awol 2011: 53), the majority of displaced persons (Eliatamby 2016: 78), and the majority of landmine casualties are women, they include nurses, teachers,

mothers, wives, combatants, and members of political leadership groups, as seen in Nepal (Eliatamby 2016: 71; Yamin 2016: 130).

When discussing women's participation, it is important to understand the challenges women face during armed conflict. Women's bodies become objects of war which gets violated to show power over the enemy. Destroying women's body becomes a symbol of destroying societal norms and values. This causes not only physical pain but puts a heavy psychological burden on the women. The psychological magnitudes of these experiences have profound effects on both women and men. In other words, the conflict and the post-conflict gender relations are likely to be fractured and become fragile, particularly where strategies of destroying social norms and values succeed and social relations are damaged or disrupted.

The disruption of social norms and values may have another dynamic in where women stand during conflict and post-war reconstruction. The trauma of GBV in armed conflict and the damage to the social fabric that follows makes the path for women's empowerment more uncertain and challenging if women face specific gender-related consequences in war. This would mean that gender-specific provisions, resources, and practitioners in the peace processes need to be instituted for women especially during reconstruction.

The positive aspect is that there is a paradigm shift from the focus of the victimhood of women to activism through empowerment that may reveal information crucial to understanding women and their peacebuilding capacities. While women remain absent or marginalised from formal peace processes, they are conspicuously active in informal grassroots peacebuilding activities.

Over the years, the UN and other regional bodies have paid relentless attention to women's inclusion. The UN recognises that the exclusion of women in peace processes violates their basic human rights and underscores the structure of unequal relations, which is at the root of conflicts. If human rights are universal rights, then women's rights are human rights (Hunt 2015: 12). The Vienna World Conference of 25 June 1993 proclaimed that women's rights were human rights (UNHCR 1993: Para 12). Therefore, it is fair to argue that everyone has a responsibility to protect and respect women's rights regardless of the context, for the reasons that not doing so affects the basic existence of the community. In support of this argument, Kristof and WuDunn (2010: 234), in their ground-breaking documentation of the lives of women *Half the Sky* stated that the marginalisation of women should not be seen as women's issues, because it is a threat to global peace and security.

In retrospect, society has confronted many different controversial issues that need a joint effort in responding to them. For example, the 19th century slave trade crisis, the 20th century human trafficking, the 21st century exclusion of women, and more recently, the ‘Me Too’ campaign, have swept from Hollywood in the USA to Delhi, India, being referred to as the “rape capital” (India news July 15, 2017), and all have incited social outrage and proactive behaviour.

Kristof and WuDunn argue that “just as slavery was not seen as just a black issue” and the Holocaust was not seen as just a “Jewish issue” either, women’s issues are not for women alone (ibid). The authors’ idea is that there needs to be a comprehensive strategy to address women’s issues not in isolation but rather as a human rights issue. For example, numerous destructive aspects of African traditions, along with many other tenacious stereotypes, have led people to think that it will be women and women alone to address issues related to the rights and promotion of women and gender equality (Sadiki 2010: 14). This is also partly because in Africa, the concept of gender equality is considered a Western idea by many Africans and one that interferes with African norms. This is one reason that issues related to gender are seen as contradictory to the ‘normal’ traditional customs that exemplify patriarchy in Africa and therefore must be fought. In this sense, addressing women issues would mean addressing the cultural and structural issues affecting women as well.

For many women, the understanding and expectation that they have inherent human rights and cultural rights is alien. During the action research training, it was clear that women grappled with comprehending the concept of human rights, especially in accepting that ‘women and men have equal rights. Some women continually referred to that which is culturally acceptable and feared that they would lose their marriages if they decided to demand for their rights. Marriage and protection of motherhood and the aspect of being ‘the good wife’ seems to be more important to some women than human rights.

New Zealand’s prime minister, Jacinda Arden, in an exclusive interview with BBC’s Lucy Hockings held on 23 April 2018, elaborated on this topic on the good mother: “juggling being a mother with politics”, she expressed the conundrum of being pressured to have a child and being an advocate for all people. When asked how she is able to be a prime minister, an earth mother, a strong woman who is in charge, and a career woman, she responded:

[Every woman feels that expectation of] being the other thing and that is not new and if there is anything for me what is different is people know that I have to be the Prime Minister and they are less guilty in that because I have the existing responsibility (BBC world services interviews, 23 April 2018).

She continued to state that:

I am no super woman; no woman should be expected to be super woman. We achieve what we can with grit, determination and with help of others (BBC world services interviews, 23 April 2018).

She also added:

I hope that one day it won't be interesting any longer to be a mother and a Prime Minister. I think (women) can (accomplish many obligations) but they should not have to do that alone. This idea that women can have it all, but they have to be the sole charge for making all of it succeeds and they have to make it look easy, that I do not agree with (BBC world services interviews, 23 April 2018).

Her reflection of being a mother and politician oscillates with the realities of many women who want to be mothers, wives, and career women. This is an example of how women are viewed in their roles as women and also as public figures. The idea that women should take care of women's issues solely as mothers and wives, rather than as leaders in their own right, is socially unacceptable. It is a stereotype maintained in familial, social, religious, and cultural environments and this is something that needs to be addressed because it has political ramifications for women participation.

With this view in mind, it is paramount to understand peace as being linked to the wider issue of inequitable gender relationships in the political arena. A feminist scholar, Anderlini (2007: 228), claims that attention to women's voices, rights, and needs is culturally sensitive. Therefore, it is momentous to move beyond "gender-sensitive" approaches to consider alternatives in which the roles of women and men are transformed to become more equitable in their relationships. One must look at how women and men can complement each other, not only to help resolve conflict and establish sustainable relationships. Conflict, as stated by Cheldelin and Mutisi (2016: 108), alters pre-existing social contracts and actors strive to construct and reconstruct a new form of association and governance in its midst and aftermath. In other words, conflict offers opportunities for men and women to re-evaluate the negative gender dynamics that affect their relationships to avoid relapses into conflict and violence. This approach is at the core of the second objective of the study which involves the empowerment of women and men to work together through dialogue which opens space to share hidden voices.

In the earlier sections of this thesis, differing arguments pertaining to women and armed conflicts and their lack of participation has been presented. The next section focuses on the rationale for women inclusion, that which the literature states, and that which the reality is. The objective is to give the reader an overview of the importance of women in society and to connect it to the aims and objectives of the study.

4.2 Rationale for Women Inclusion in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation

According to Muvungi (2016: 116):

Freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression ... and Have been empowered to intervene in all aspects of life as equals with all other members of the society (President Nelson Mandela inauguration speech, 1994).

This statement is a confirmation of the agency for the inclusion of women in all aspects of social life including peacebuilding, reconstruction, and political leadership. Studies have confirmed that there is no development strategy more beneficial to society as a whole than one that involves women as key players (White 2003 cited in Madu 2016:102, Ramnarain 2015: 677-692, Porter 2010,2015). Many feminist and non-feminist theorists have assumed a connection between women and peace whether in terms of the greater interest in peace on the part of women or their supposed peaceful feminine nature (Jacob et al. 2000: 13; Enloe 1991, Rombo 2016:47-57,). Cultural feminist theorists have argued that feminine traits such as cooperation, caring, and nurturing have been devalued but are, in reality, superior to the masculine traits of individuality, violence, and dominance, and “thus we can bring about peace by re-evaluating these feminine traits” (Wiper 1986 cited in Angom 2018: 16 and Ramsey-Marshall 2008: 112-116).

Whether the arguments are true or not, the question ‘*why include women in peace processes?*’ is always present. This is particularly relevant to the women, peace and security, and international relations fields of study. Some answers can be found in the Security Council Resolution 1325 and other protocols supporting this argument. The overwhelming majority of literature, both academic and field reports, have tried to address this question to some extent. The literature advances a number of arguments for women’s inclusion, participation, and presentation. They can be characterised as arguments for equality and rights, and post-conflict conflict/social transformation. These arguments are not mutually exclusive. Among the different arguments, one finds the equality of men and women at the top of the agenda.

There is also literature in favour of women’s participation based on utility. At the same time, social transformation, including transforming gender relations, is frequently one of the end goals in writings focused on equality. However, the reality in the field is different considering equality and participation.

In a statement at the Joan B. Kroc Institute of Peace and Justice Women Peacemakers' conference, September 2002, Joyce Neu, the then leader of the UN standby team for mediation (2008-2009), described the characteristics of the peace process as follows:

There is a significant lack of women's participation in the peace process that I have worked on thus far during my time as team leader. If women do make it to the negotiating table, it is in very small numbers, and their ability to influence the process is not clear. Additionally, mediators often do not look beyond the official representatives, to include the input of civil society, women, or men, at the peace table. In both my previous positions, I have often found myself to be the only senior level woman present, even in large scale meetings with up to twenty-five government officials, foreign ambassadors and representatives of international organisations (Joan B. Kroc Institute of Peace and Justice, 23 September 2008).

The acknowledgement of the disparity of women's representation by key public figures in the peace process poignantly addresses the need for more proactive and equal representation of women at the peace table. It is important to recognise that women's exclusion from peace negotiations often results in their exclusion from post-conflict planning, reconstruction, and implementation. However, in war situations, women constitute the majority of a country's population as most of the men go to fight. The UNHCR (2017) projects the figure of South Sudanese women refugees in Uganda at 86% out of the total number South Sudanese refugees in Uganda. If women form the majority of the population, then marginalising their role at critical times of peace negotiations means underutilising and squandering critical human capital and ignoring the important resources that women have to offer, which intensifies the difficult task of ending conflict and building peace. At this point, the questions to ask are: who sets the agenda for peace negotiations, and how do the international community/mediators decide on whom to invite to the peace table and why?

Leymah Gbowee, the Liberian Peace Laureate of 2011, when addressing the 2014 Carol Hoffmann Collins Global Scholars in residence on the topic of *Women's Leadership Ending Wars and Building Peace*, lamented on the response to the letter that the women laureates had written in 2013 to the UN and those in charge of the Syrian peace negotiation at the time, expressing their concern regarding the exclusion of the Syrian women at the peace table. The laureates were critical of the fact that Syrian women had been denied an invitation to the peace table. The UN responded that "Syrian peace is too technical, and it will be too difficult for women to participate" (Gbowee 22 October 2014, Habets 2016).

In addition, Gbowee stated that this response was given one week after the UNSCR 2122 in 2013 on strengthening women's participation in the peace process was passed. On listening to her presentation, I asked my how the UN and the partners came to decide that Syrian peace

would be difficult for women. Could it be that the UN spoke to a select few Syrian women who declined to be at the peace table for technical reasons? It would be helpful to have more research carried out to explore answers to these questions. This makes me wonder how the internal community intended to achieve the UNSCR 1325 (2000) if the process of peace was too technical for women to be a part of.

Similarly, Theobald (2012:8) has also echoed a similar point regarding the experiences of Liberian women during the civil war when she lamented that external actors failed to promote stronger involvement of women in the formal peace process because the peace process was seen as a technical, not a social or political, project. Unfortunately, the international community did not seem to have a support structure for the women for most of the times and it appears that neither the UN nor the individual governments had the political will to involve women in the peace process. However, this did not end the Liberian peace process, instead, the act of patriarchy in the international community strengthened the Liberian women to mobilise and demand their rights. Ironically, prior to the Liberian peace process, UNSCR 2122 on women's participation was in effect – was this a symbolic resolution? If not, why did women's participation in the peace processes appear to have lacked both substance and girth? This is the ultimate empirical question that future research needs to address, to make Resolution 1222 a reality.

Researchers argue that during war, opportunities open up for new ways of relationships between women and men and governmental officials because conflict, as stated earlier, alters pre-existing social contracts and actors strive to construct and reconstruct new forms of association and governance in its midst and aftermath (Cheldelin and Mutisi 2016: 108). There is a general understanding that women gain during armed conflict because positions that were traditionally meant for men become available to women due to necessity (Anderlini 2010; Angom 2018; Berger 2018; Tawiah 2020). However, this seemingly posed occurrence is criticised by some theorists because “changes in gender relations are often ephemeral – short lived” (Jacob et al. 2000; Maina 2012 cited in Maina 2016: 192). The “end of armed conflict mostly means that women should abdicate any new rights or freedoms which they may have gained” to the men who are returning from war. For example, during World War II, on the economic front, returning men displaced many women from their wartime occupations, and many households that were headed by women due to the loss of male breadwinners faced new levels of hardship.

Women did not gain or retain access to all professions, and they did not come close to gaining equal pay for comparable work (Grayzel 2014: 7). Women, as affirmed by former UNSG Kofi Annan, are the main agricultural labour force in Africa, yet most of them are still denied the right to credit, land ownership, and inheritance (Madu 2016: 102). The same account is given of Egyptian women, that their participation in the agricultural sector has been underestimated in official statistics (Yamin 2016: 135). This means that women's contribution in the agricultural sector also contributes to peace in society because the community has access to food which is a basic human need.

Despite losing their positions after war, women do not give up on their search for peaceful communities. It is often assumed that the signing of peace agreements and the ending of conflict are, on the whole, positive for women, while war has implications for women, and the peace following the end of violent conflict also has repercussions for women (Maina 2016: 189). One of the most predominant single arguments by feminist theorists is that of a special connection between women and peace in that women hold more positive attitudes to peace than men (Conover and Sapiro 1993 cited in Brounéus 2014:127). This argument focuses on the "materialist" and "motherlist" position which holds that "war is antithetical to women's natural childbearing and childrearing roles and by extension, women should organize as mothers to oppose militarism and war" (ibid). Further perspectives on women and peace are embedded in cultural feminism.

The thread of cultural feminism discussions has been primarily, though not exclusively, dominated in the academic realm by Western feminists. It is important to note that African feminism is still a growing field, as seen in South Africa where women changed the narratives as written by missionaries to clearly articulate women's perspectives to establish their presence in public life (Muvungi 2016: 121-122). The seminal works of Chioma (2005) are a few of those representing African feminism, and the authors see it as epistemologically correct to empower many African women for them to understand their gendered status in the society of which they are a part.

According to Njoki (2011: 7), "African feminism is part and parcel of African women's lived experiences and African indigenous ways of knowing". If the argument by these authors is true about African feminism, then it is likely that the writing of Western feminist scholars cannot completely address the lived experience and gender roles of African women. However, ideas on women, the peacemaker or "maternalist", by feminism have been used in women's peace

groups and mothers' groups worldwide and mostly by the essentialist feminist scholars who believe that women across the globe are the same regardless of their experience and context.

Three main explanations underpin the assumed uniqueness of women's contributions (and none are mutually exclusive): women are more suited to collaboration, empathy, and conciliation, either inherently or because of their social upbringing (Galtung 1996: 40); women experience wartime differently and thus bring a needed perspective that ultimately strengthens peace (Oxfam 2020: 2); and women have stronger community ties and their involvement builds more trust and ownership of the process by the people (Chang, et al 2015: 23-24). However, focusing on these attributes, while they may be true in some cases, can slide into essentialism and reinforce gender stereotypes, especially when studies claim that women are better suited than men for the achievement and maintenance of peace due to biologically- and socially induced tendencies of being "naturally peaceful", "caring", and "motherly" (Baas 2015: 17).

Galtung (1996: 40) concurs with the essentialist feminist theory that women's overall peacebuilding ability emanates from their innate peace-loving nature. This view is corroborated by Potter (2004: 4) who posits that women have always been affiliated with reconciliation and peacebuilding. Hence, their inherent ability is to influence peace. Another explanation of the relationship between women and peace is that women are naturally more peaceful, and Galtung writes

Women have inborn qualities that makes them more peace loving. High in empathy, their characters are horizontal and centripetal, making them more prone to peaceful relationships, combined with the chemical programming of the cyclical and complex oestrogen and high levels of mono amino oxidase, the chemical responsible for controlling violence (Galtung 1996: 40-43).

In support of Galtung (1996), one of the scholars wrote that young girls tend to share and co-operate whereas young boys compete (Brock-Utne 1989: 99), and other scholars such as Alonso (1993: 11) and Brounéus (2014: 128) affirm this notion, insisting that:

[W]omen from the national to the international level tend to hold more peaceful or compromising approaches than men because they are more sensitive, more caring, more thoughtful, more committed to producing a more humanistic and compassionate world than men as a whole.

On the contrary, men are portrayed as makers of war and perpetrators of violence (Sjoberg 2014: 61-78; Angom 2018: 16). Galtung (1996) argues that the low empathy, vertical, "centrifugal", expansionist character of men demonstrates that 95% of direct violence is committed by men (Galtung 1996: 40-41). Anderlini (2007: 229) maintains that having women

in government offices can ensure longer-term transformation as women are seen to be more amenable to working cooperatively, bridging political and/or ideological divides (ibid). In addition, women, in many instances, are trusted more, viewed as less corrupt, and viewed as more dedicated to addressing people's needs (Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, BBC World news, October 2019). These traits are important aspects of transformation in the aftermath of war (Anderlini 2007: 229). Thus, the Ethiopian Prime Minister, Mr. Abiy Ahmed, told the BBC in a 2019 interview, that women were quality agents of transformation.

Feminist researchers assert that the advantage of having women as peacemakers is also because men and women perceive conflict and post-conflict situations differently due to issues of identity and power in their respective societies (Gardam and Jarvis 2001 cited in Kinyanjui 2016: 153). Seminal feminists' writings argue that national and gendered identities coupled with women's disadvantaged positions within global and local power structures combine to put women at risk, while at the same time providing little room for them to voice their security concerns (Anderlini 2010; Handrahan 2004: 429-445). Nonetheless, many conflict narratives shed some light on a common theme of women actively seeking to end wars and minimise the effects of violence through their divergent social roles (Anderlini 2007, 2010; Angom 2018; Graybill 2002; Turshen and Twagiramariya 1998; Sjoberg 2012, 2014). Thus, women are also fighters, warfare workers, community leaders, social organisers, farmers, and traders, amongst other roles (Turshen and Twagiramariya 1998; Sjoberg 2014: 21-30; Berger 2016). This exemplifies women's strong resilience in post-conflict situations, notwithstanding the difficulties that they encounter. This does not mean that everyone agrees that women are more peaceful and work harder for peace, as there are some criticisms by feminist scholars to this portrayal of women.

The feminist scholar, Weber (2006), contends that not all women possess that instinctive capacity to build peace, given that they also take up arms in wartime. Weber's arguments seem to suggest that the context in which a woman finds herself defines the side that she takes during armed conflict, as seen in Liberia, Northern Ireland, and South Sudan. The inherent aspect of the peaceful nature of women is also criticised by Confortini on theoretical grounds.

The author asserts that the conjecture is over-generalised and that mythologies and stereotypical perceptions of what is female and male lead to deception and misrepresent the understanding of armed violence and peace (Confortini 2012 cited in Brounéus 2014: 128). These views on women and men in armed conflict and peace times are profoundly debatable

and will require more research to be carried out and policies to be put in place. This is also partly because authors such as Ní Aoláin (2012: 619) caution that public policies alone will not lead to social transformation, and that a 'gender-central' approach that prioritises women's advancement and dismantles inequality is needed.

I tend to agree with the second argument of Confortini and Weber. Having experienced war and violence, I think that the difficult nexus that an individual is caught up in in life induces an action and reaction in the individual regardless of the gender. However, I do agree that the culture of patriarchy has allowed men to believe that they can act violently, but not all men are brought up in such cultures that celebrate patriarchy. I think that the problem lies in one's understanding of that which "gender roles" are that makes most people think that women are generally peaceful. This thesis however maintains that women, just like men, are gifted with inalienable human rights, hence the basis for their recognition, representation, and participation as equal partners in peace processes aims to influence their lives and society's development at all levels, and there is a need for them to be part of the peace negotiations. The role of refugee women needs to receive particular attention and a close examination needs to be made of their financial, social, cultural and literacy needs, as well as the knowledge that they possess and that can aid peacebuilding. During the data collection, valuable information was collected on the opportunities and gaps that have existed among the refugee and host communities in relation to their participation in peace. This was used to design an intervention and advocacy program for the women in Bidibidi refugee settlement.

Having detailed the factors regarding women, peace and conflict transformation, the next section presents empirical evidence that supports the literature and the theoretical frameworks on women's inclusion. The objective is to help the reader connect the lines between the theory, literature, and evidence for a better understanding of the research topic. I have presented some case studies in which women have made considerable strides through their participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation to elaborate on the topic.

4.3 Evidence Supporting Inclusion of Women

Twenty years have passed since the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) was unanimously adopted, and the absence of women from formal peace negotiations reveals an alarming and troublesome gap between the aspirations of countless global and regional commitments and the reality of peace processes. It has been 40 years since the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW 1979), 37 years since the UN General Assembly's Declaration on the Participation of Women

in Promoting International Peace (1983 and Cooperation, 24 years since the UN convened the Fourth World Conference on Women and participating governments issued the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), and 2020 will mark 20 years since Resolution 1325 (2000) called for women's participation in all aspects of peacekeeping, peace-making, and peacebuilding as part of the remit of the Security Council. This imperative has been reiterated in subsequent resolutions, including 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), and 1960 (2010), and in several reports of the Secretary-General on mediation, women, peace, and security. There has been some progress, and in the past 20 years from 2000, gender equality advocates, governments, and civil society actors have highlighted peace processes as a strategic entry point for the implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000), and scholars argue that conflict changes relationships and this must be used during peace negotiations for women to augment their positions gained during war.

In 2011, the Norwegian Nobel Committee decided to award the Peace Prize to Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee, and Tawakkul Karman for their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights to have full participation in peacebuilding processes, reaffirming the centrality of women's contribution to peace and the essential connection between democracy, justice, and gender equality. For the first time in its history, the Nobel Committee referred to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in its statement, reiterating the decisive importance of women's leadership in international peace and security. On 22 June 2011, the UN General Assembly also unanimously approved the first resolution (65/283) on *strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution* that has ever been adopted by the United Nations. This resolution encourages strengthening the position of women in conflict resolution efforts and underscores the need for further engagement with civil society to ensure its occurrence.

4.3.1 Empirical Evidence on Women Participation

Despite all these resolutions and almost 20 years later, women's participation in peace processes remains one of the most unfulfilled aspects of the women, peace, and security agenda. A research paper has been published by UNwomen presenting data on women's participation between 2010 and 2012 in 31 major peace processes since 1992. The results included a strikingly low number of women negotiators, and little appreciable increase since the passage of Resolution 1325 (2000). Women's participation in negotiating delegations averaged 9% in the 17 cases for which such information was available. Four percent (4%) of signatories in the peace processes included in this sample were women, and women were absent from chief mediating roles in UN-brokered talks (UNwomen 2012: 2). It is observed

that at the peace table, where crucial decisions about post-conflict recovery and governance are made, women are noticeably underrepresented (ibid). The paper however lists a number of success stories of women's participation in peace negotiations before the Security Council adopted this resolution on 31 October 2000.

Earlier, a study of the Republic of El Salvador in the 1990s showed that women were present at almost all the post-peace negotiating tables. One technical table called *The Reinsertion Commission* was formed by six women and one man. In the end, women comprised one-third of the beneficiaries of land redistribution and reintegration packages, which corresponded roughly with the percentage of female members of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), either as combatants or as collaborators (Ilja 2005). Another study by Whitman *et al.* (2009) on *Bringing Women into Peace Negotiations* in the Republic of South Africa in the mid-1990s, published by the Institute for Inclusive Security, Strategies for Policy Making, indicated that the Women's National Commission demanded that 50% of participants in the multi-party negotiating process be women and succeeded in establishing the condition that one out of every two representatives per party had to be a woman, or the seat would remain vacant. Approximately three million women from across the country participated in focus groups and discussions, and a 30% female quota was adopted for the upcoming elections (Whitman *et al.* 2009: 13-16).

In South Africa, women were fully engaged in the process of constitution-making. The women's coalition formulated the women's charter for effective equality outlining provisions for gender equality, and the resultant constitution articulates a firm commitment to gender equality through the bill of rights (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 cited in Muvungi 2016: 117). A study by United Nations Development Fund for Women -UNIFEM (2005) on 'securing for peace' that looked at cases in several countries including the DRC, showed that women successfully advocated for formal participation in the Congolese Dialogue, a national convention on political reform and reconciliation convened by all parties to the conflict that had initially excluded women at the peace table in October 2001.

The end result was the inclusion of gender issues and women's participation as substantive items on the official agenda, supported by a delegation of African women led by Ruth Sando Perry (former head of state of the Republic of Liberia) in a peace and solidarity mission in the DRC and supported by 60 women from across the country representing governments, rebels, political opposition, and civil society in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2002. This led to a national forum to

harmonise women's positions and to defend a common vision, which materialised in the Nairobi declaration and action plan (ibid 2005: 6).

In Northern Ireland, the same study found that women secured a seat at the peace table in 1997 by forming a women's cross-party political grouping and winning some seats in the election. The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition successfully built bridges between Catholics and Protestants and promoted the reconciliation and reintegration of political prisoners (UNwomen 2005: 7, Fearon1999:184 and Kilmurray and McWilliams 2011:12).

In Guatemala, the study found that women significantly influenced the talks that led to the 1996 peace accord, in spite of the fact that only two women were included in the negotiating teams of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit and the Government of Guatemala. Civil society participation, including women's groups, was strongly supported by the United Nations and the Group of Friends that sponsored the talks (UNwomen 2005). It is reported that Jean Arnault, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guatemala and mediator of the negotiations, at that time endorsed the formal tabling of women's concerns and recommendations for the parties' consideration.

Despite the underrepresentation of women at the peace table, the agreement contained a number of important provisions regarding gender equality (ibid: 8). This act by the mediator, in my opinion, made a difference to the inclusion of women and in Somalia, the study found that a Somali woman named Asha Haji Elmi had formed the women's sixth clan in the Somali Republic to lobby for women participation in peace talks in Arta, Djibouti, because the five main Somali clans had all been given a seat at the table but had excluded women (ibid: 8).

Meanwhile, in Burundi, and also in 2000 prior to the passage of Resolution 1325, while the 19 parties to the conflict were in the midst of another round of negotiations in Arusha Tanzania, UNIFEM, now part of UNwomen, convened the All-Party Women's Peace Conference, attended by two women representing each of the parties to the conflict and the seven women who had access to the plenary sessions of the peace talks as observers. The women presented their list of recommendations to the facilitator of the negotiations, Nelson Mandela, and more than half of these recommendations were incorporated into the peace agreement (UNwomen 2012: 3). Today, Burundi is one country that has the highest level of women representation at local government levels.

It is prudent to note that women's representation in local governments can make a difference in the quality of life of the population. For example, research by the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) on *panchayats* (local councils) in India discovered that the number of drinking water projects in areas with women-led councils was 62% higher than in those with men-led councils (*Yadav and Sahu 201a: 69*) and similarly, in Norway, "a direct causal relationship between the presence of women in Municipal Councils and childcare coverage was found" (*Ibid*).

Despite the efforts by the UN and regional bodies such as the AU and EU, a study conducted by UNIFEM in 2010 found that in a limited but reasonably representative sample of 24 major peace processes since 1992, only 2.5% of signatories, 3.2% of mediators, and 7.6% of negotiators were women. UNwomen (2018:3) states that:

Women's full and equal participation at all levels of society is a fundamental human right. During times of conflict, women's participation in resolving conflict and negotiating peace is especially important to ensure that women's rights are protected, experiences are recognised and that peace lasts (UNwomen 2018:4).

From the foregoing statistics, it is clear that since October 2000, only marginal progress has been made with regards to the number of women in formal peace processes or the design and conduct of peace talks in ways that would give a greater voice to women, particularly from civil society. Over the same period, a limited number of provisions addressing women's human rights have been incorporated into peace agreements. This is in spite of the growing participation of women in politics and the security sector, greater awareness about the differentiated impact of war on women and girls and the role that they can play in conflict resolution, and evidence that peace negotiations characterised by high civil society involvement are less likely to result in resumed warfare (*Wanis-S et al. 2008 cited in UNwomen 2012: 3*).

Strengthening women's cross-national peace coalitions, supporting the inclusion of women in peace talks, providing gender expertise to mediation processes, building women's voice at donor conferences and other forums for the implementation of peace agreements, and developing guidance on specific topics, such as the neglect of conflict-related sexual abuse, is still far behind.

4.3.2 Recent Developments: Women Leadership and Political Participation

4.2.1 Women in Parliaments

Evidence shows that only 24.3% of all national parliamentarians were women as of February 2019, a slow increase from 11.3% in 1995 (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019: 1). As of June 2019, 11 women are serving as Heads of State and 12 are serving as Heads of Government (UNwomen 2018: 1). Rwanda has the highest number of women parliamentarians worldwide, where women have won 61.3% of the seats in the lower house, as can be seen on the map of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU 2019: 1, Hamilton 2000, Issifu 2015). Globally, there are 27 states in which women account for less than 10% of parliamentarians in single or lower houses, as of February 2019, including three chambers with no women at all (ibid).

4.2.2 Regional Facts

There is a wide variation in the average percentages of women parliamentarians in each region. As of February 2019, after combining the single, lower, and upper houses together, the representation is: Nordic countries, 42.5%; Americas, 30.6%; Europe including Nordic countries, 28.6%; Europe excluding Nordic countries, 27.2%; sub-Saharan Africa, 23.9%; Asia, 19.8%; Arab States, 19%; and the Pacific, 16.3% (IPU 2019: 1).

4.2.3 Other Domains of Government

As of January 2019, only 20.7% of Government Ministers were women; the four most commonly held portfolios by women ministers included the Ministry of Social Affairs, which included family, children, youth, the elderly, and the disabled; the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources, Energy; Employment, Labour, Vocational Training; and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (IPU 2019). A report by the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2019 on 103 countries and areas indicates that women's representation in elected local deliberative bodies varied from less than 1% to close to parity, at 50%, with a median of 26% in 2019 (UNwomen 2018).

4.2.4 Women Representation in Major Peace Agreements between 1990 and 2018

According to UNwomen (2018), women remain underrepresented and unrecognised for their efforts and successes in peace and political processes at all levels by 2018. From 1990 to 2017, it was noted that from 664 peace agreements, only 17 (11%) included at least one reference to women. From the 504 agreements signed since the adoption of Resolution 1325 (2002), only 138 (27%) included references to women 2242 on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on Women and Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict

Situations. In 2015, seven out of ten peace agreements signed included gender-specific provisions (UNwomen 2018: 5). Since then, there have been only 2% women mediators, 5% women witnesses and signatories, and 8% women negotiators (UNwomen 2018). Between 1992 and 2011, 4% of the signatories to peace agreements and less than 10% of the negotiators at peace tables were women (UNwomen 2012: 6). Three out of 11 peace agreements signed contained gender-sensitive provisions in 2018 (UNwomen 2018: 3). Several reports have concluded that when women are included in peace processes, there is a 20% increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least two years, and a 35% increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 15 years (Oxfam 2020: 2). It is not surprising that in peace processes between 1992 and 2011, women comprised only 2% of chief mediators, 4% of witnesses and signatories, and 9% of negotiators (UNwomen 2019).

4.2.5 What is Meaningful Participation?

Women's meaningful participation in the peace process goes beyond representation and means that people take part to have a say in decisions that directly impact their lives (Expert group meeting 2018:6-7). Ensuring women's multiple interests are fully reflected guarantees that peace will last longer: "when women are included in peace processes, there is a 25% chance of peace lasting for at least 15 years" (Laurel and Stone 2015: 3; UNwomen 2017). Furthermore, recent studies have found the following startling statistics concerning women's leadership in conflict regions:

1. In conflict-affected countries, women's share of seats in parliament are 4% points below the global average of 22.7%, and women occupy only 14.8% of ministerial positions (IPU 2015: 2).
2. By 2016, in conflict and post-conflict countries with legislated electoral quotas, women made up 22% of parliamentarians. However, in conflict and post-conflict countries without legislated electoral quotas, women made up only 11.2% of parliamentarians (UNSC 2016: Para 52). The percentage of UN field missions headed by women has fluctuated between 15% and 25% since the 2011 report (UNSC 2015: 37-38).

4.2.6 Education and Leadership of Women

A report by International Labour Organisations (ILO) on five facts about the informal economy in June 2015 on Sub-Saharan Africa indicates that 74% of women, as compared to 61% of men, are likely to be employed in lower-paying, informal jobs (ILO 2015: 1). This leaves women vulnerable to exploitation, low job security, extreme poverty, and largely excludes them from policy support programmes. The study by CLADEM shows that the indigenous population has low levels of education and women have the lowest rate of schooling due to a lack of resources to cover school expenses (CLADEM n.d: 6). Pacari, a feminist scholar, in her study

of the political participation of Ecuadorian indigenous women, argues that “One possible explanation for lack of women’s participation is women’s lack of education and training”. She continues to explain that it is the conditions in which indigenous women become involved in politics, generally amid profound socio-political and economic difficulties and disadvantages, that have the effect of keeping women away from politics (Pacari 2002: 7). This means that there is a close relationship between education level, level of income, and the participation of women in public life including peacebuilding and conflict transformation. An empirical study that examined the relationship between education level and the political participation of women in Cameroon indicates that “the higher the level of women’s formal education, the more their tendency to participate in politics in areas of voting in elections and occupation of political posts either through elections or appointments at all levels of government” (Kumar *et al.* 2019: 1).

In a 20th century survey, Burns *et al.* (2001) considered factors that influence the political activity of 15,000 American adults, focussing on factors such as education level, childhood socialisation in politics, participation in high school clubs, employment in jobs that provide political connectedness and opportunities, participation in non-political organisations, participation in religious institutions, available time, family income, and own income etc. The authors found that women had a higher endowment than men in some factors related to participation in high school clubs and religious associations. The study also noted that these endowments are outstripped by men’s educational and employment advantages. The study showed that men’s advantage in political participation was linked to a much stronger endowment of two key factors: education and the types of jobs that provide the resources and contacts needed for politics (Burns *et al.* 2001: 258).

The findings relate women’s lack of participation to their lack of time for politics due to their domestic obligations, their lack of socialisation for politics, and their lower social capital and weaker asset base than men owing to discrimination in schools and in the market within a male-dominated society, and concluded that even though women are found to be participating more in religious life, this affiliation of women to religious life has some ambiguous implications for their subsequent recruitment into political activity, given that some religious institutions keep women out of leadership positions (Burns *et al.* 2001: 255). Dersnah (2013) rightly notes that in Israel, “while there are high numbers of female judges in the civil legal system, women are excluded from the Orthodox religious courts, which are exclusively male. Religious exclusion of women’s participation within religious courts is low, as often non-state or identity-

based legal orders can be discriminatory towards women as equal adjudicators” (Dersnah 2013: 48).

In their concluding remarks, Burns *et al.* (2001: 258) suggest that gender differences in participation are the result of disparities in the stockpiles of factors that facilitate participation, and not of gender differences in the way participation factors are converted into activity (ibid: 256). This reinforces that which the political philosopher, Anne Phillips, stated as:

[What] everyone knows to be the case: that the extent to which individuals become involved in politics and thereby gain access to decision-making conduit is directly correlated with the resources they have at their com database; that all else being equal, those who have everything else get political power as well (Phillips 1991: 79).

A study carried out in Uganda indicated that though women’s educational levels are lower than men’s in their lower tiers of government (villages, parishes, and sub-counties), women’s educational attainment is not significantly different to those of men at the district level (Ahikire 2007: 229). In Mukono District, the study revealed that at the Districts Council, for instance, there were more women (27.2%) than men (25%) who had completed secondary school, while not as many had been to university as men (4.5% as compared to 16.7%), and more of them (45.4% as compared to 41.7%) had acquired some other form of post-secondary training. A similar trend was seen in my study that found out that over 69% of women had a primary level of education or below, while all the men had a secondary level of education or above. This implies that women are the least educated among the respondents, as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Cross tabulation of sex of respondents * level of education of respondents.⁴

Sex	Level of Education of Respondents				Total
	None	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary institutions	
Male	0	0	11	3	14
Female	4	14	7	1	26

⁴ Findings from field research in Bidibidi refugee settlement from 7-9 May 2019.

Total	4	14	18	4	40
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The results in Table 4.1 indicate that there were more females (14) and no males at a primary level of education, while at the secondary level, the reverse is true, with more males (11) as compared to the females (7). In tertiary institutions, the number of females dropped further with the ratio of male to female being 3:1. The above statistics have implications for women participation in any public activities in the settlement. It is clear from these findings that the less women are educated, the lower the chances of their participation in political life; as commonly stated, 'knowledge is power', and depriving women of needed knowledge leads to their exclusion at all levels.

The study in Uganda also revealed that the major difference between women and men councillors was in the service for which this education was used. Despite the greater variety in their practical training, women councillors were employed in a much narrower range of occupations than men. These findings confirm the observation made by this study's research team during the FGD in May 2019 regarding how the low level of education has affected women's access to jobs that provide the income and social contacts useful for politics. The qualitative studies suggest that cultural variables are more significant than education in shaping the rate and nature of women's participation in politics. The different ways in which women and men are selected for, and treated within, political and social institutions are strongly influenced by culture.

4.2.7 Expanding Participation

Data shows that as of February 2019, only three countries have 50% or more women in parliament in single or lower houses: Rwanda with 61.3%, Cuba with 53.2%, and Bolivia with 53.1%; but a greater number of countries have reached 30% or more seats for women (IPU 2019). The international Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) reported that as of February 2019, 50 single or lower houses were composed of 30% or more women, including 22 countries in Europe, 12 in Sub-Saharan Africa, 12 in Latin America and the Caribbean, two in the Pacific, and one each in Asia and the Arab States, and that more than half of these countries have applied for some form of quotas – either legislative or candidate quotas – or reserved seats, opening space for women's political participation in national parliaments (IDEA 2019). Figures from a study of 34 countries with legislated candidate quotas showed that the Solomon Islands had the smallest number at 4%, Nicaragua was the highest

with 44% of women, and the total average of women stood at 23.1% below the average of at least 25% (ibid).

The problem with the quotas, as argued by Mutisi, is the element of 'gender tokenism' in gestures such as quotas because political elites often adopt quotas for strategic reasons (Mutisi 2016: 57). In South Sudan, quotas were deemed necessary and were stipulated in the CPA but there was no mechanism to ensure the equitable implementation of the quotas (ibid: 56). The quota is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they oblige men to think about including women in decision-making, since men must create space for women. On the other hand, since it is men who are opening up these spaces, they will seek out women whom they will be able to manage, women who will more easily accept the hegemony of men (Dahlerup 2002 cited in Mutisi 2016: 57). Mutisi's argument explains why many women who have the opportunity to enter politics and government end up being relegated to less important positions. This, she states, is an evidence of *de jure* female political participation and representation in politics, which is reflected by the type of positions that women hold in the government ministries that they lead (ibid).

Another interesting problem with quotas that is of great importance to this research is that the quota is based on the assumption that women in politics have universal needs and experiences, and women elected to power would make conscious efforts to represent their fellow women. However, women elected through quotas may not necessarily pursue women-friendly policy change (Krook 2008 cited in Mutisi 2016: 58).

This is because politics is competitive and biased, and candidates may be more united around political party ideology than gender issues. It has also been observed that once women attain political positions, they forget about their women's movements and about defending the needs of their colleagues; being a woman does not necessarily mean having a commitment to gender issues, and they adopt masculine features in order to survive politics (Krook 2008 cited in Mutisi 2016: 58; Theobald 2012: 57). During the research team's field research, refugee women complained about South Sudanese women politicians coming in 2018 to the settlement and asking them questions about their expectation of the peace negotiations that were in progress in Addis Ababa, but who left and since then there has been a follow-up and they wondered if the women understand their needs (Interview, 7 May 2019).

Gender balance in political participation and decision-making is the internationally agreed target set in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 2005. There is established and growing evidence that women's leadership in political decision-making processes improves

them, as can be seen from an online conversation of UNwomen (2015), and yet as one can see from the evidence above, globally, their participation is still below the global average set. To address some of these gaps, there needs to be a focus on the internal and external factors that affect women's participation.

4.2.8 The Building Blocks to Women's Participation in Peace Processes

According to Inclusive Peace (2018) and UNwomen (2018), the following are the building blocks to women's participation in peace processes and unless there are 'yes' answers to these questions, the inclusion of women will continue to remain a dream on paper:

1. Patriarchal perceptions that are hard to counteract, for example – are women involved at setting and designing the peace process?
2. The lack of identifying the patriarchal backlash as a reality – are women's perceptions heard and reflected while setting the agenda?
3. Invited versus claimed spaces separate women's spaces in peace negotiations – are women and girls present in the meetings where decisions and agreements are reached?
4. Overcoming conceptual confusion: what constitutes the meaningful participation of women in peace processes? Are women and women civil society organisations heard while negotiating for peace?
5. Women's inclusion or feminist inclusion? Does the agreement reflect women's rights, needs, expectations, and experiences?
6. Preventative reduction of women's demands – has the agreement reached and addressed the above-mentioned stages?
7. Changing the rules of the game, not just the players; excessive focus on formal peace negotiations that hardly work – are women involved in the implementation and monitoring of the peace agreement?

It is only by systematically observing the above questions and finding 'yes' answers that one can objectively speak about women's meaningful participation in peace.

4.3 Summary

Women are making progress albeit the endless structural challenges with which they are faced. In order to attain the expected results, the UNwomen report in 2018 stresses that

creating a space for women to enter, to remain, and to contribute effectively to peace processes requires an open environment that includes issues of equality in the law, inclusivity as a social and cultural norm, and security and protection from violence. This means that advocacy for women's participation must address social services, such as childcare, access to knowledge, financial support, as well as support for the women's movement.

This research has revealed that the low-level support for women, especially by implementing partners who focus on the already-existing structures that are mostly patriarchal, affects women's participation. One participant relayed to me that women are mostly found in religious institutions and women groups organised by church-based organisations. This confirms the finding of Burns *et al.* that even though women are found to be participating more in religious life, does not guarantee women a better position in religious institutions. Women's affiliation to religion still has unclear implications for their subsequent recruitment into political activity, given that some religious institutions keep women out of leadership positions (Burns *et al.* 2001: 5).

Despite existing resolutions calling for women inclusion in addition to the quotas, there is still a large amount of evidence that clearly shows that women continue to be left out of political life including in religious institutions. Recently, one has seen the public response to Pope Francis' argument for not including women to be ordained as priests. As much as his argument reflects that which they claim, "Is original church started by Christ himself", the fact is that these institutions are created by men who perpetuate and benefit from systematic inequalities. Therefore, having women in informal peace processes and creating women associations in churches, markets, and schools can contribute to peace, but their experience and voice in the big picture is still lacking.

This is also the reason why women peacebuilding efforts are not captured by the media. A lack of formal recognition, resources, education including training, space, and excessive domestic work are probably some of the issues with which women are confronted daily as they try to advocate for their work for peace. In times of war, a woman's burden only becomes heavier, and her vulnerability becomes more pronounced, but despite these grim realities, she brings vast energy, leadership, and resilience to protecting her family and rebuilding fractured communities (Shulika 2016: 4). Reflecting back on the theories grounding this study, the call for inclusiveness that has built relationships for sustainable peace needs to be emphasised to address systematic cultural and structural gaps if one wants to achieve the goal of meaningful participation for women. In the next chapter, I have considered some internationally

recognised efforts made by women over the years to bring peace and resolve conflicts in their countries; the objective is to inform the reader of some of the efforts of women and to add to the voice of celebrating women's efforts.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUCCESSFUL WOMEN PEACE EFFORTS: NORTHERN IRELAND, LIBERIA, AND NORTHERN UGANDA

5 Introduction

From the literature reviewed earlier, one can see that in conflict, women are not only passive participants but also active participants. They may become combatants or helpers, depending on how and where they find themselves. They may become sole providers for their families, more active in the informal or formal sectors of the economy, or more active in peace-making groups because of conflict. They also suffer disproportionately from sexual violence and displacement. Yet, in the aftermath of war, women are often excluded from activities aimed at resolving the violent conflict that so deeply affects them. Those conflicts cannot be brought to an everlasting end without making women's lives more secure because it is women who are best positioned to determine how that security is achieved (USIP 2011: 3)

In the 1990s, there were specific studies of women in the context of a conflict area, such as Northern Ireland, or profiles of individual women taken from a variety of contexts who have advocated for peace (Morgan 1995; Henderson 1994 and Elliott 2007). In the global context, examples such as the International Alert's programme of Gender and Peacebuilding, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and UNwomen all emphasise the important role of women in peacebuilding projects. Specifically, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000 was passed to increase the participation of women in all UN field operations and to ensure a gender element in all peacebuilding initiatives.

Over the years, women have contributed to stopping violence and alleviating its consequences in a range of ways: providing humanitarian relief, creating and facilitating the space for negotiations through advocacy, and exerting influence through cultural or social means. The following case studies show specific women's peacebuilding practices, the challenges faced, and opportunities and the lessons learnt from their experiences. The studies include women from Northern Ireland, Liberia, and Northern Uganda. I have also included the case of one single woman who negotiated peace in Yumbe District. These countries were chosen because of their women's efforts to end an armed conflict and their role in the reconstruction of their

communities. The cases describe the stages of women's advocacy, involvement in peace processes, and how conflict has an impact on their gender roles and relations.

5.1 The Role of Women in Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland

Anyone working to understand the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in the 21st century must start with the example of the women of Northern Ireland, which can be viewed as the pioneer example of women's peacebuilding efforts. The Northern Ireland conflict was a violent sectarian conflict lasting from about 1968 to 1998 between the overwhelmingly Protestant unionists (loyalists), who desired the province to remain part of the United Kingdom, and the overwhelmingly Roman Catholic nationalists (republicans), who wanted Northern Ireland to become part of the Republic of Ireland. The other major players in the conflict were the British army, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), and the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) – called the Royal Irish Regiment from 1992 – and their avowed purpose was to play a peacekeeping role, most prominently between the nationalist Irish Republican Army (IRA), which viewed the conflict as a guerrilla war for national independence, and the unionist paramilitary forces, which characterised the IRA's aggression as terrorism (Wallenfeldt 2019: 1). The conflict claimed the lives of 3,600 people and more than 30,000 were wounded before a peaceful solution, which involved the governments of both the United Kingdom and Ireland, and later a settlement was effectively reached in 1998, leading to a power-sharing arrangement in the Northern Ireland Assembly at Stormont (ibid).

In Northern Ireland, women were stated to have joined efforts across the "enemy" lines and organised themselves into campaign groups. Women were actively building bridges between Catholics and Protestants long before the official peace negotiations began. Instead of focusing on old injustices, they discussed solutions and strategies for healthcare and education, as well as other social resources (Power 2007: 192-204). Their key success relied on listening to the Protestant and the Catholic communities rather than imposing a top-down approach (ibid). Such acts of dialogue during periods of conflict open doors for each side to learn about the other (Weller 2013 cited in Dawa 2020: 55). Before the peace talks began in 1996, public elections were used to determine which political parties would be allotted seats at the negotiation table. The landmark Good Friday Agreement (Belfast Agreement) that ended 30 years of violence between British Protestant Unionists and the Irish Catholic Nationalists involved several key players. Many proclaimed the contributions of leaders such as the chief negotiator, former Sen. George Mitchell (D-Maine); however, a critical factor that helped secure and preserve the peace was the participation of women.

5.2 Women taking charge

Taking advantage of this un-proverbial design, Catholic and Protestant women's groups, led by Betty Williams, Máiread Maguire, and Ciaran McKeown, joined forces to establish the peace people (Maguire 2016: 1) and the Northern Ireland Women Coalition (NIWC) under the leadership of McWilliams and Pearl Sagar drawn from the Catholic and Protestant communities, respectively. They were elected under the campaign slogan "Wave goodbye to the dinosaurs". These women groups secured the representation of women in peace negotiations (O'Rourke 2016: 1). As advocates for peace and human rights, the NIWC was successful in engaging women in politics and campaigning against sectarian violence. The women had a simple message that states:

We have a simple message to the world from this movement for Peace. We want to live and love and build a just and peaceful society. We want for our children, as we want for ourselves, our lives at home, at work, and at play to be lives of joy and Peace. We recognise that to build such a society demands dedication, hard work, and courage. We recognise that there are many problems in our society which are a source of conflict and violence. We recognise that every bullet fired, and every exploding bomb make that work more difficult. We reject the use of the bomb and the bullet and all the techniques of violence. We dedicate ourselves to working with our neighbours, near and far, day in and day out, to build that peaceful society in which the tragedies we have known are a bad memory and a continuing warning (ibid: 2).

With this message, the NIWC won enough support in the election to gain access to the talks and were joined by one other woman representing the Sinn Féin party (Power 2007: 192-204). These women helped the Good Friday Agreement take shape and become established. The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition managed to fuse together issues of injustices of women's exclusion from political structures with a broader package of ideas about dialogue and reconciliation, justice, and equality (ibid). These ideas were inspired by the practices and principles forged by women over years of working with families and their communities in peace campaigns (Roulston 1997: 11). The adoption of the Sex Discrimination Act of 2002, with a sunset clause which expired in 2015, was evidence of women gaining ground in the country's politics. The 1997 General Elections saw the proportion of women Members of Parliament (MPs) rise from 9% to 18%. In the 2017 elections, The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the Women's Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, the Women's Policy Group, the Northern Ireland Women's Rights Movement, and the many more women's groups endorsed a joint manifesto listing gender equality priority (ibid).

5.3 Challenges

Although the final agreement included commitments to support women's full and equal participation in society, women remain underrepresented in politics and in the economy of Northern Ireland. Minogue (2015: 10-23) discusses that during the peace process itself, women were vastly underrepresented. Although women have been at the forefront of peacebuilding activities since the 1970s and the NIWC has earned a place at the discussion table, the NIWC only saw two members elected to the assembly in the first post-agreement election and has failed to return any candidates since (ibid). The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition was formally dissolved in 2006 and twenty years after the Good Friday Agreement, only one woman has been appointed to a monitoring body for the peace process. The decrease of women's contribution to the peacebuilding process has meant a loss of the plurality and creativity that was so beneficial to the original peace negotiations in Northern Ireland (ibid). Despite a lack of recognition of women in political activities, the Northern Ireland case has remained an example of how women have moved out of such upheavals to peace and continues to be a reference to those interested in women peace and security.

5.4 Role of Women in Peacebuilding in Liberia

The country of Liberia was founded in 1847 by former slaves from the United States of America as a result of the transatlantic slave trade and the efforts of the American Colonization Society (ACS) (Sirleaf 2009: 22). The ACS was the most actively involved organisation in bringing a halt to the slave trade. The country's civil war began in 1989, when Charles Taylor returned to Liberia from the neighbouring Ivory Coast. He brought with him a force of 100 rebels, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia – seeking to oust the repressive regime of the then president, Samuel Doe (Ndey 2015: 11-12). The ensuing bloody conflict left thousands dead and displaced women and children, who were most affected by the war.

Liberia is one unique and successful showcase for women's activism from the grassroots to the national level. The documentary film by Disney and Reticker (2008), *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, recounted the story of a group of visionary women who demanded peace for Liberia, a nation torn to shreds by decades of civil war. The women's historic yet unacknowledged achievements found voice in a narrative that interspersed contemporary interviews, archival images, and present-day scenes of Liberia. A small group of Liberian women came together in the midst of a bloody civil war with the violent warlords and corrupt Charles Taylor regime and won a long-awaited peace for their shattered country in 2003 (Theobald 2012: 1).

The women, who mobilised the Liberian Women's Initiative in protest of the civil war, originated with ordinary women in villages and eventually included elites in the cities. Their goal was to end Africa's bloodiest civil war which claimed thousands of lives and displaced millions across the regions (ibid). Dressed in white T-shirts with a peace sign as their weapon, they took to the streets of Monrovia to non-violently demonstrate to the warlords to end the violence and the conflict (Fuest 2009). The women were told to refused to have sex with their husbands as a strike demanding an end to the war (Kuwonu 2018: 2). To bring the opposing sides to the peace table, the women sat day after day and month after month in the hot sun in their white T-shirts by the side of the main road, Sinkor road, silently protesting.⁵ Gbowee (2011:102-5), who now heads the Women, Peace and Security Program at Columbia University in New York, recalls that "We felt like the men in our society were really not taking a stand". According to Kuwonu (2018: 2), "They were either fighters or they were very silent and accepting all of the violence that was being thrown at us as a nation ... So, we decided, 'We'll do this to propel the silent men into action'".

The Liberian women stated that their "goal was peace, what mattered was peace (Kuwonu 2018: 2),". When the peace negotiations started in Ghana, there was initially very little progress made. The women organised themselves and sent representatives to the negotiations. In an interview conducted in 2017 while working in Liberia, the women, on arrival, were not allowed inside, but they waited patiently outside. The Liberian women reached out to both Liberians and non-Liberians who were willing to support them (Interview, 15 June 2017). They utilised the media (mostly international media) to raise awareness of their exclusion and pressed for their voices to be heard (Ibid). The women demanded an end to the violence. The climax came when the women barricaded the site of the stalled peace talks in Accra and announced that they would not move until a deal was decided on. Faced with eviction, they invoked the most powerful weapon in their arsenal – threatening to remove their clothes and staying naked (ibid).

It is worth noting that in African culture, when a woman intentionally opts to strip herself naked out of anger, it is considered to be a curse and has significant consequences. Women are

⁵ While working in Liberia in 2017, I could still see the site where these women sat, and there were still posters. Prior to the 2018 elections, I saw the women dressed in those white T-shirts and sitting in the same location demanding for peaceful elections.

seen as givers of life and therefore traditionally their bodies are sacred and should be respected. This heroic act of Liberian women brought the stakeholders back to the peace negotiation table. The story of the Liberian women is living proof that moral courage and non-violent resistance can succeed, even where the best efforts of traditional diplomacy have failed (Theobald 2012: 55-56, Brunk 2016: 62-87).

The women secured the peace for Liberia and worked hard to have their first female president elected to office. When Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was elected president of Liberia, she gave credit to the women activists who secured her election and facilitated the pathway for peace to be possible. One of her first plans as the head of state was to develop a program on empowering Liberian women in all areas; strengthening laws and law enforcement to protect women against rape; supporting the education of children, most significantly (the) girl child; and improving programmes to enable women to play a key role in the economic revival of Liberia (Congressional research services 2005: 12 Yves–Renee 2016: 170-188).

President Sirleaf appointed women to head multiple key public offices and created a separate unit within ministries to address gender issues (Congressional research services 2005: 12). Today, Liberian women are more conscious of their rights to political, social, and economic inclusion and are aware of their significant contributions. It is in recognition of these rights that their issues are identified in order to correct the wrongs and rebuild Liberia for a sustainable and lasting peace.

However, having lived and worked in Liberia in 2017, I have observed that there are existing challenges in women's lives in relation to GBV. The women to whom I spoke mentioned that there were many issues that women faced that they think were never considered during the national peace talks. Women continue to feel marginalised, discriminated against, excluded, and have their human rights abused. One of the prevalent issues was that of GBV that was done with impunity. Many women still faced rape, domestic violence, sexual exploitation, and harmful cultural practices, particularly Female Genital mutilation (FGM), in rural areas. Women lacking access to income, having a lack of marketable vocational and technical skills, being faced with illiteracy, and lacking access to justice were some of the issues raised. More importantly, the lack of political will to implement laws to protect women/girls against domestic violence was a major contributing factor, and the cause of high rates of illiteracy, which subsequently has led to vulnerability in women's lives in Liberia.

These challenges show one that it is possible that despite the fact that many Liberian women campaigned for peace, it is very likely that women who were in IDP and refugee camps, and

even ordinary women in villages, were excluded and are now facing the challenges that they should have voiced if they were part of the process. Despite these challenges, the Liberian women are acclaimed by the international community for the struggle for peace as a reference point in the struggle and success for peace by the African women.

5.5 Role of Women in Peacebuilding in Northern Uganda

For nearly 20 years, the northern part of Uganda has suffered violence. These wars have left 1.4 million people as IDPs, 2,500 children were abducted by the LRA and forced to work as child soldiers, porters, and sex slaves including 2,500 children, and more than 1,000 children have been born in captivity (Natukunda – Togboa 2016: 43). The LRA traces its beginnings to anti-government movements in the mid-1980s after Yoweri Museveni overthrew the regime of Tito Okello, an ethnic Acholi from Northern Uganda. The LRA was stated to be the evolution of 'the Holy Spirit Movement', a rebellion against President Yoweri's oppression of the North of Uganda, led by Alice Lakwena. When Alice Lakwena was exiled, Joseph Kony took over, changing the name of the group to the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The Lord's Resistance Army is responsible for Africa's longest running conflict, and at its peak, the rebels' brutal insurgency displaced nearly two million people in large areas of Northern Uganda. Rather than focusing on military targets, the LRA targeted the very citizens for whom it claimed to be fighting, raiding villages for supplies and forcing children to carry the goods into the bush (BBC, 27 July 2018). In 1991, President Yoweri Museveni's government launched a large military campaign, known as Operation North, to destroy the LRA. The assault failed, and with the support of the Sudanese government, in Khartoum, the rebels were able to establish safe bases across the border in southern Sudan.

Venturing with ease into Northern Uganda, the LRA became increasingly brutal. Civilians suspected of supporting the government or forming self-defense forces had their ears, lips, and noses hacked off. During attacks on villages, rebels carried out mass abductions of children who in turn were forced to carry out future attacks, making them both victims of the conflict and perpetrators (Invisible Children 2016). In government attacks, abducted children would be killed, angering the local population. In August 2006, a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was signed by the LRA and the Government of Uganda. The talks took place over the course of two years. Joseph Kony sent a delegation to negotiate on his behalf, but when the final Peace Agreement was ready to be signed, the International Criminal Court's indictment of the LRA leader caused the talks to collapse (Natukunda-Togboa 2016: 43)

5.6 Women's Action for Peace

The women started the activism by advocating as individuals and initiating local community-based organisations to influence the 2006 peace talks in Juba and this started with the formation of the Uganda Women's Coalition for Peace (UWCP). The following section is a discussion on the women at the peace table in a Juba interview with Lina Zedriga Waru Abuku, director of the Women, Peace, and Security at the Regional Associates for Community Initiatives (RACI) (17 August 2018).

Lina was one of those women who took an active part in mobilising women's participation, and she reflected on the process during an interview when I asked her what women did during the Juba peace talks, what they achieved, and what challenges they faced.

Lina Zedriga Waru Abuku started "first and foremost, I believe the involvement of women in peacebuilding is vital to both securing a women-sensitive agenda in peace negotiations, and in securing peace as a whole". Women, she stated, think "with their hearts and not with their stomachs".

Lina Zedriga Waru Abuku stated that:

During the Juba peace talks, there was no woman on the government delegation. So, we tried to meet with the stakeholders such as the members of the Uganda peace team, but we were told that '*the issue of women will wait!* They do not have to be at the table'. But we knew as women that we needed to be at the table, we needed our issues to be enshrined in the agreements. So, we decided to mobilise outside of Northern Uganda.

We mobilized ourselves ... You know the rest of the story...! (She pauses) ... It was so powerful that when we reached Gulu, the President himself, who had refused to see us, decided to fly to Gulu to meet us. We were very strategic as we sent for him women he did not know and were not the leaders. The fact that we came from beyond, women demanding that this war must end and demanding that peace must be given a chance, was very powerful. And then the district leaders all came to support us. We were singing war songs and we went to radio. Kony himself called and said, '*How many women are ready?* I can have all of them on my team'. On radio! That was very powerful.

We delivered the Peace Torch in Juba with the Women's Protocol for Peace which made demands about how we wanted the peace agreement. When we look at the agreement, Juba Agenda Item No. 3, Clause 10 and 11 specifically has a provision for inclusion of women's issues and children, but specifically for UN Security Council Resolution 1325. They just got it! The other outcome was that we got a slot for a woman, Santa Okot, formerly MP for Pader. We also got a request from Riek Machar, who was then the mediator, to have women as technical advisors to identify critical issues and engender the process.

What we lost was the proposal that there should be a truth and reconciliation commission set up. One of the things we did, and we did it right, was the fact that we did country-wide consultations. We documented what people were saying at the

regional level, national level, IDP camp level. So, we had evidence and our movement was driven by the grassroots.

Reaffirming the findings on women who believe that working together with men is better, Lina Zedriga Waru Abuku continued to state:

I have learned from women's movements that if you do not involve men, there will be no success. The men will only involve women with suspicion and sabotage it. They will say, 'You leave your UN Security Council Resolution at the gate'. So, we started the '*men engage program*'. We had to really engage them as the change makers and as the advocates. They are not the problem – it is the society, the system. We have to work together to deconstruct as a team.

With regards to women as peacebuilders, Lina Zedriga Waru Abuku stated:

Women take decisions with the heart, not with the stomach. We are socialised to use 'needle logic' in conflict resolution. When there is a tear in a cloth and you use the needle it mends, but if you use the knife like some of these justice mechanisms, you are wrong.

In her opinion, "if you use the knife, you will still go on hurting and we will not be coming together to constructively engage. You continue to want to tear yourselves apart. You will plan revenge wherever you are. We need to employ that needle logic and women are so good in doing it".

With regards to women exclusion, Lina Zedriga Waru Abuku stated:

If women are excluded from discussions that would involve them, or that people are not willing to listen to them, what strategies should they employ at their own level to achieve their objective? *We have been culturally socialised to believe we are less human.* We must have women personally master that their decision is right and that it is good. They need to feel confident, assertive, and personally important. The perception that women are sexual objects and are workers should be demystified. It is being demystified, because we are not raising our children with discrimination. We also need to document the lives of women who are successful. We also need to make sure we encourage and set up support mechanisms to encourage them and not divide their families.

In Northern Uganda, the women, through their actions and advocacy work, informed the UN Security Council, the president of Sudan, the president of Uganda, and the Vatican, as well as other authorities around the world to be witnesses to the magnitude of the atrocities that the LRA was committing against its own people. Women were instrumental in bringing awareness after the abduction of the 152 girls of St. Mary's Abuke secondary school. A Comboni sister, Rachele Fassera, who was working in the school, followed the rebels on foot and demanded for them to release the girls (Angom 2018: 157).

Angom (2018: 145-165) studied the peace process in Northern Uganda. Her study summary revealed that even though women carried the burden of the war, their efforts in peace

negotiation were never taken seriously, and moreover, were sabotaged by the government's actions. The field researcher concluded that the lack of success in the Juba peace talks in 2006 was due to the lack of inclusion of women in the peace process (Angom 2018: 142).

The peace talks did not lead to the transformation of the relationship between the Ugandan government and the LRA, and this is why the rebels are still at large in the Central African Republic. A key woman, Betty Bigombe, the then minister of state for Northern Uganda, was very instrumental in the beginning of the negotiation in the early 1990s when she opened her personal line to communicate with Joseph Konyi, the leader of the LRA (Tunbridge 2010 cited in Natukunda-Togboa 2016: 44). During her five years as minister, she encouraged those rebels come back home, and she encouraged the community to tell their sons to come out of the bush. The Acholi Religious Leaders Initiative, the Greater North Women's Voice for Peace Network, and the UWCP participated in lobbying and advocating for access to the public discourse and ensuring that women's needs, and concerns were reflected in the agreement (Natukunda-Togboa 2016: 45).

Who is Betty Bigombe? She was a grassroots mobiliser, and she used her role as a woman by visiting the people who were affected by the war – she ate with them, attended village funerals of the victims, visited families who had lost their members to war, and she cried with the people (Angom 2018: 152-153). This is an example of how women can contribute at the individual and grassroots levels to peace processes. As Bigombe was busy mobilising the community and holding peace talks with the rebels, on 6 February 1994, the Ugandan president issued a seven-day ultimatum to the rebels to “surrender or risk death”. This is an example of how political decisions can make negative peace.

Bigombe's effect as a key actor was not recognised by the president, her voice was excluded from the peace process, unrealistic political expectations were set for the rebels, and the military offensive was set to end the war quickly. Bigombe's approach that was starting to build a relationship among the rebels, army, and community inclusion was ignored and crushed (Angom 2018: 156). It is important to note that the Ugandan Government did not have any systemic approach that could lead to relationship building at this point; their process was more top-down as opposed to bottom-up which is the approach recommended by peacebuilding and conflict transformation, and as a result, the first efforts for peace talks collapsed.

Despite the mixed success of the talks, Juba was noted for its lack of involvement of women at the discussion peace table. Statistics by UNwomen on Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations show that only a fraction of the negotiation delegates included women as a factor

whom it notes may have influenced the agenda for discussion (UNwomen 2015: 2). This is not unique to Uganda and reflects much of the growing concern surrounding the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 of 2000.

A study by Desmidt and Davis (2019: 2) concluded that the gender equality and WPS/1325 policies in Africa are insufficiently linked up with efforts to create an AU policy for gender and women's empowerment and to promote women, peace, and security taking place in parallel. The AU has no clear strategy on how to implement and promote the WPS agenda in Africa more systematically. Most of its efforts, albeit laudable, are limited to a small office (ibid).

The three case studies present the common challenges and successes of women in their struggle for peace. The women of Uganda, just as in other parts of the world, continue to be affected by gender discrimination even though the Government of Uganda (GoU) has acknowledged its commitment to gender equality and NAP as a matter of principle and policy. It is very surprising that although women and women's groups and organisations have worked at the community level to build peace in Northern Uganda from the very beginning of the armed conflict, when it came to the formal peace process, women were left out. The women in Liberia, led by Leymah Gbowee, secured the peace agreement in Ghana but today, many of them feel that they were not considered and GBV continues to threaten the safety and security of women. In addition, Irish women broke the long conflict between the Catholics and the Protestants and secured the Good Friday Agreement but today, they are not equally represented in government. This is the fact of women from the global South to North.

As suggested by theories that underpin this study, sustainable peace can only be achieved through the inclusion of all stakeholders leading to the transformation of relations and conflicts which are a key characteristic expected of any peace effort. However, the reality is far from the truth today. To complement the above story, I would like to write a first account of the work of one woman with whom she worked from 2006-2008 whose efforts towards peace and conflict transformation she has witnessed. I went back to her during my field research to interview her on how she managed to secure the 2002 peace agreement between the GoU and UNRFII rebels in Yumbe District. The objective of this is to allow the reader to understand some of the untold stories of the successful efforts by women at the grassroots.

5.7 A Woman's Peacebuilding Story in Yumbe District, Uganda

5.7.1 Introduction

Globally, it has been acknowledged that even as ordinary citizens, women and their organisations have played pivotal roles in peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and security. Women are the custodians of knowledge in their communities and as members of the community, they receive and reintegrate former fighters. Women have extraordinary knowledge and skills that are very important for DDR (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002: 64). Women's groups, associations, and other civic bodies frequently do the work of providing alternatives to former fighters and are often the catalyst for new and more peaceful codes of conduct in society (ibid). Women engage in many activities during conflict, and these may include counselling to respond to trauma and psychosocial support, healthcare, education, and skills training (Angom 2018; Sjoberg 2014). Empirical studies show that women are mostly involved at grassroots peacebuilding activities before official negotiations start (Anderlini 2010; Bubenzer and Stern 2011; Sjoberg 2014). This is the story of one woman from Uganda that yielded the result of the peace agreement in 2002 in Yumbe District, in the West Nile Region of Uganda.

During the ten years of armed struggle between the Government of Uganda and the Uganda National Rescue Front II, the military and rebels were terrorising the lives of ordinary people in the region and especially those in the Yumbe District. One woman, Ayikoru Joyce, is the founder of the Participatory Action for Development (PRAFORD), a local NGO that had access to all levels of society. As head of the organisation, she used her position as a member of the community, and as a mother and a wife. She organised training and sensitisation workshops for women, elders, religious leaders, youth, and farmer groups. She started the process of breaking the cycle of violence from the grassroots level.⁶

5.7.2 Joyce's Peace Process

Joyce started by talking to her husband about her need to talk directly to the rebel leader, the late General Alii Bamuze. Ayikoru shared the same Aringa background with the rebel leader.

⁶ Personal interview with Ms. Joyce Ayikoru on 5 June 2018.

Ayikoru's husband was a member of the UNRF1 and later formed the UNRFII. He supported Ayikoru's idea and took her to speak to Bamuze in Morobo.⁷ However, because Ayikoru's husband had abandoned the fight for freedom, Bamuze did not trust him or her, thus the meeting failed. This setback was temporary; Ayikoru did not give up her dream for peace. She had an alternative plan and that was to move from home to home to talk to the women and find out whose husband was in the bush. Once she had this data, she called the women for a meeting, and during the meeting, she asked the women open-ended questions, focusing on their feelings, needs, interests, and the struggles they had because of the absence of their husbands. One point that was clear was that the women had common needs: they all wanted their children to go to school and have access to health care and food. This was a clear entry point for Ayikoru to start. In conflict transformation, it is important to have a communal entry/connecting point, as this makes success more attainable.

The women reported that their husbands came home at night and left at dawn. The women felt that their only value was to be sexual partners and have children, and the women wanted their men back home. Ayikoru gave them a brilliant idea; she told them:

When the man comes home next time, be nice to him, give him all he asks for but at dawn when he wants to leave, wake up the children and tell him you want to go with him because you're fed up of staying alone and that if he doesn't cooperate, you will go wake up his parents.

This was the last matter that the men wanted to hear. They did not want anyone to know, including their own parents that they came home, and this threat of the women scared them and they preferred to stay, hoping that this was a temporary demand and that the women would give up the next day. The women continued insisting every day that their men stay home, and eventually the men gave up the idea of going back to the bush. One by one, women performed this act, and those who succeeded shared their secrets and these methodologies spread like wildfire in Yumbe. Before Bamuze knew, most of his men had gone home and would not come back.

⁷ Morobo is a village located between Uganda and South Sudan, and it was the hiding place for the UNRFII rebels.

On the one hand, Bamuze did not attribute this strategy to the work of Ayikoru. On the other hand, Ayikoru was worried about the impact that it would have on her in the long run if he became aware of the truth. Nevertheless, she took advantage of the outcome and visited Bamuze alone. Bamuze, desperate to negotiate peace, decided to give in and accepted the offer to negotiate peace. Ayikoru then informed the then gender minister, Zoe Bakoko-Bakoru, who was a high government officer and who had direct access to the president, to assist in the process (Mischnick and Bauer 2009: 53). Bakoko started the top-down communication process and by May 2002, the final peace agreement was signed between the Government of Uganda (GoU) and UNRFII. After the peace agreement, the GoU and United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) entrusted PRAFORD with the reintegration project called Skill for Peace and Income (SKIPI), a five-year project funded by the government of Japan. This aimed at providing life skills and income-generating activities such as carpentry, joinery, tailoring, mechanics, welding, brick laying, concrete practice and entrepreneurship development to the ex-combatants and the communities to support the transition of combatants into civilian life. At the end of the project, each beneficiary was given a start-up kit to start their own business and this led to proper reintegration into the communities. It also marked the end of the armed struggle in the Yumbe District and today the Yumbe District has one of the world's largest refugee settlements, Bidibidi – 20 years ago, no one would have imagined a settlement in Yumbe.

The above example shows that individual women and women's groups and organisations have taken leadership in addressing the issue of mobilising for peace. In Northern Uganda, the Rachele Rehabilitation centre is an example of an initiative started by a woman to rehabilitate the military and rebel returnees. The women participate in training and research to understand how trauma can sustain social conflicts (Schirch and Sewak 2005: 13). Active involvement and capacity building of women does not only improve self-esteem, but it is also directly related to the living conditions that support mental health. Women play central roles in ensuring that mental health and other issues affecting people's wellbeing are taken into account and that all programmes are part of the broader procedure of social and political transformation, but they need more resources including policies that address their issues. The next section discusses the regional and international legal documents that have been put in place by the UN and AU to reinforce women's participation in all activities of post-conflict situations including their goals. The objective is for the reader to understand the efforts that have thus far been made and the challenges facing the implementation of these frameworks.

5.8 An Overview of International and Regional Frameworks on Women's Participation

5.8.1 Introduction

During the late twentieth century, the issue of gender equality became a major issue on the global agenda. Seminal writing on the UN Decade for Women, which ended in 1985, argued that this was the beginning of the integration of women into development, triggering the formation of thousands of women's organisations and networking them across the world (Meyer and Prugl 1999). The pattern hastened during the following decade. In 1993, the Vienna World Conference proclaimed that women's rights were human rights, and in 1994, the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development placed women's empowerment and health at the centre of sustainable development programs. Two years later, the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women adopted a platform seeking to promote and protect the full entitlement of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women, and in 2000, the UNSCR 1325 was put in place. Lastly, Resolution 2122 (2013), aiming to strengthen women's role in all stages of conflict prevention, was adopted. Between 2000 and 2018, there have been resolutions passed to support the successful implementation of UNSCR 1325.

In an occasion to mark the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the US Mission to the UN had profiled 20 women political prisoners and other prisoners of concern from around the world in September 2015. During the occasion, the first lady, Hillary Clinton, stated to the world that "Human rights are women's rights, and women's rights are human rights, once and for all" (Hunt 2015: 1).

Clinton's catalytic speech ignited the women's peace movement, resulting in the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The Resolution made it clear that a greater role for women in peace negotiations is essential to global stability. The resolution is also a landmark decision for protecting and supporting women in decision-making and conflict resolution. The resolution specifically mandated that all actors, states, and governments adopt measures that supported local women's peace initiatives and the involvement of women in all implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements.

Since the adoption of the resolution, awareness of the importance of including women in peacebuilding and reconstruction processes has grown tremendously. Specifically, the United Nation Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and UNwomen have played a leading role in promoting its support by advocating on women's behalf at international and regional forums. The UN bodies

have facilitated and supported women's efforts to break through peace processes across the world with specific cases such as in Burundi, Afghanistan, Sudan, Somalia, and Northern Uganda. The UN entity for gender equality and empowerment of women (UN-OSAGI, DPA) and other civil society organisations working on women, peace, and security issues have also been instrumental in advancing the mandate of the resolution. It is notable, however, that the implementation of Resolution 1325 has remained sporadic, unsystematic, and ad hoc. Although there has been substantial progress towards gender equality in much of the world, great disparities persist, and this has led to the passing of several other resolutions to support the implementation of Resolution 1325. The following are documents passed by the United Nations and African Union since recognising the indiscriminate violence against women during war and the key role that women can play as actors rather than victims in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding. Table 5.1 presents the framework of the UN Security Council Resolutions and their strategic objectives.

Table 5.1: Framework of UN Security Council Resolutions and their strategic objectives.

FRAMEWORK AND THEIR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
<u>UNSCR 1325, 31 October 2000</u> : This was the first resolution that recognised the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls, acknowledging the contributions that women and girls make to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding, and highlighting the importance of their equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security.
<u>UNSCR 1889, 5 October 2009</u> : Addresses obstacles to women's participation in peace processes.
<u>UNSCR 1960, 16 December 2010</u> : Recognises that few perpetrators of sexual violence have been brought to justice and reiterates the need to implement effective measures to end sexual violence in armed conflict.
<u>UNSCR 2106, 24 June 2013</u> : This is an additional resolution by the UNSC that commits to the Women, Peace, and Security agenda and recognises the need to strengthen implementation by all parties with the adoption of two additional resolutions: it reiterates sexual violence in conflict as a war crime.

UNSCR 2122, 18 October 2013: This puts in place stronger measures to enable women to participate in conflict resolution and recovery, stressing the role of the UN Security Council, the UN, regional organisations, and member states in removing obstacles to women's participation.

UNSCR 2242, 13 October 2015: Reaffirms the obligations of States Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto and *urging* States that have not yet done so to consider ratifying or acceding to it, *further noting* General Recommendation 30 of the Committee for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on Women and Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Situations.

UNSCR 2493, 29 October 2019: Reaffirms the importance in achieving sustainable peace and security by dialogue, mediation, consultations, and political negotiations to bridge differences and to end conflicts. Recognising the progress made as well as the opportunity needed for far greater implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda.

UNSCR 2467, 23 April 2019: Focuses on recognising the persistent barriers to the implementation of the above resolution adding that this can only be dismantled through dedicated commitment to women's participation and protection and the promotion of human rights, and consistent support to building women's engagement at all levels of decision-making.

In looking at legal frameworks supporting women's participation in public life apart from these UNSCRs, there are other international laws and African Union declarations that must be considered for further understanding. A list of the documents that can be researched include:

- The United Nations Charter of 24 October 1945
- International Bill of Rights of 1948
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948
- International humanitarian law of 1949
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 10 December 1984
- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948

- Convention Related to the Status of Refugees of 1952 and its 1967 Protocol protecting such individuals
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 16 December 1966
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 16 December 1966
- The Geneva Conventions of 18 December 1979
- Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women of 20 December 1993
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 17 July 1998
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 15 September 1995
- Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol) of 15 November 2000
- Millennium Development Goals, September 2000
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 21 February 2012
- Sustainable development goals of 2015

African Union legal documents include:

- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of 1990
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol) of 21 July 2003
- The Great Lakes Pact, December 2006
- Goma Declaration on Eradicating Sexual Violence and Ending Impunity in the Great Lakes Region of 17 July 2008
- Declaration of Heads of State and Government of Member States of the international conference on Greatlakes region (ICGLR) on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence of 4 December 2016
- Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa of 10 May 2016
- International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) of 19 October 2017

5.8.2 Reflection on the Legal Frameworks

These legal documents are a reflection of the commitment of international, regional, and national governments to women's role in peace and conflict prevention. However, there is an overlap in the objectives in some of these resolutions and protocols. UNSCR 1325 and its follow-up resolutions, together with the Beijing Platform for Action, the Windhoek Declaration, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), constitute the global Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. Scholars such as Hendricks

(2017: 2) and Pratt and Richter-Devroe (2011: 490) have noted that UNSCR 1325 deserves to be lauded as a historical moment for women's peace activism and the expansion of a global agenda on women, peace, and security. Desmidt and Davis (2019: 6) disagree with the above-mentioned scholars stating that the resolution is largely minimalist and has a state-centric agenda, divorced from the feminist debates that originally gave rise to it.

I tend to agree with Desmidt and Davis because of that which they find to be missing in the framework. I find no proper means for checks and balances for the existing resolutions; they are political documents the success of which depends on the political will of each nation which, according to the UN charter, is a sovereign state (UN Article 2(1) (1945). Just as the quotas were adopted by political elites for strategic reasons (Mutisi 2016: 57), so are these resolutions. The failure of these resolutions can be seen in humanitarian crises. During a crisis, the competition and dynamics among implementing partners during humanitarian emergencies cause more challenges.

There are often many partners at the scene at the same time with much money and who are ready to act. Moreover, there is always a lack of coordination and accountability because everyone who comes with a mandate from donors and 'Sovereign state' is a key. They are all individually busy doing something and, in the end, no one does anything that reflects accountability to the target group. That which I mean is that these resolutions are numerous, and ideally, UNSCR 1325, UNSCR 1820, the Geneva Conventions, and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women are a few documents that, if properly coordinated and monitored with political will, should set the stage for success for women. There is a saying that 'too many cooks spoil the soup' – I agree with this saying and contends that the more resolutions and protocols there are, the more unsuccessful their implementation will be. In addition, there is very limited knowledge about these documents at the grassroots level and my understanding is that these resolutions are passed to protect those women at the grassroots. During this research, very few respondents had knowledge about the UN and AU as institutions.

All the women to whom I spoke in the refugee settlements and the host communities had no idea about the legal documents that promote them. This tells one how badly one is engaging with the 'real victims' of war who need to be part of the implementation and focusing too much on technocrats whose skills and knowledge do not necessarily address the issue on the ground because they do not have the same experience. Hudson (2017: 23) asserts that the majority of the plans acknowledge feminist interpretations of human security (mostly implicitly)

and the multidimensional nature of women's insecurity (explicitly), only to privilege women's participation in the security sector over genuine local ownership, and the same story is true for peace and conflict prevention.

Therefore, one ought to be careful in choosing the methodology of implementing these resolutions and having educated women at the peace table does not necessarily guarantee that the need of all women is taken care of. Indeed, the inclusion of men in the implementation of this resolution is paramount if one does not want to knock a cultural snag. This research indicates that men sometimes feel threatened when women are taken care of without involving them – this causes men to feel insecure and can lead to domestic violence. Hence, there is a need to shift one's attention onto monitoring, coordination, and accountability at all levels and to be 'all-inclusive', which is the theory for transforming relations and sustainable peace if one wants to achieve the much-needed results regarding women, peace, and conflict prevention.

5.10 Summary

This chapter looked at women's potential for peacebuilding and conflict transformation; women's experience in post-conflict situations; women, conflict, donors and the media; women in traditional African society including indigenous women; and women exclusion and the rationale for their inclusion at the peace table, discussing some empirical evidence from the field and not forgetting case studies from the peace processes in Liberia, Northern Uganda, Northern Ireland, and Yumbe. The chapter concludes by looking at the UN and AU resolutions supporting women's participation in peace and conflict prevention. From the feminist scholars to empirical evidence, there is clear evidence that women's contribution to peace and conflict prevention is vital to sustainable peace.

There are a few studies that have captured women's achievement in peace efforts, and much of the literature and empirical evidence reveal women's absence at the peace table and show their status as 'victims of war'. I have also not encountered any literature that reveals how men have supported or how they could support women's participation. I suggest that focusing excessively on masculinity and how it manifests into patriarchy is not helpful at this point but rather an understanding of culture and structures and how they affect women participation is better to develop. Bartlett (1990 cited in Ní Aoláin 2012 15) asserts that "understanding structural exclusions in the context of humanitarian emergencies requires not only asking the 'woman' question but also mandates asking the 'man' question". A few examples from Liberia, Northern Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda point out the inclusion of women from all walks of life

during their search for peace. However, as one follows the story, in the end it is the elite women who become recognised. There is a lack of evidence on the relationship between elite women and grassroots women and how the two cohorts could reinforce each other. This is an area that calls for further research.

The women refugees relayed to me during her field research that a group of educated women and men from South Sudan came to ask them questions before they went to Addis Ababa in 2015 for the peace negotiations but since then, there has been no feedback, and they have no idea of that which was discussed and agreed upon. They merely hear from people, especially men who have access to radio and social media regarding that which is occurring. This was clearly a frustrating development for the refugees. In my view, it would have made a difference if some of these refugee women were taken along to Addis Ababa, and even if language were to be a problem, they could be asked by the negotiators – with the help of translators – what their needs and interests were. The refugee women and those women in power do not have the same needs and yet they are all women, wives, and mothers.

The literature and empirical evidence show that gender equality and women participation in political life is affected by the interconnectedness of the issues from social, political, economic, and other factors as described by the former prime minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland, who stated: “Everything is interconnected” (Dersnah 5). Elements such as social policy, labour market policy, gender equality policy, family policy, and economic policy are all elements related to and dependent on each other (ibid).

To address these issues using the theories for this study, one needs to promote meaningful participation that requires the entitlement of individuals to participate in the decisions that directly affect their lives including being involved closely in economic, social, cultural, and political processes. This can be done by removing attitudinal environments and institutional barriers. When there is inclusivity in society, there is a positive change in relationships in the community, and when positive relationships exist, the end result is a peaceful society and one achieves the goal of sustainable peace which is the key theory of this study: inclusivity, transforming relationships, and sustainable peace. This therefore could mean that the more women there are in political offices, the more the cultural resistance to the notion of female leadership will relax.

5.11 Summary of Literature review (Chapters 3-5)

From chapters 3 - 5 I have reviewed the literature related to the study. I have explained my belief that if women are included in peacebuilding process, then we could have more sustainable peace. My belief and argument is backed and framed around the theoretical framework of conflict transformation, peacebuilding and social inclusion (Lederach 2003:6, Galtung and Fisher 2013: 596 and Gidley 2009 cited in Gidley *et al.* 2010: 8). These theories assert that transformation has multiple forms and stages and has to start at the grassroots and if we want sustainable peace, we must be all-inclusive in one's approach to peacebuilding. Both the theories and literature point to the fact that in order to better understand the participation of women, one must consider the historical, social, cultural, political, and economic contexts within which women find themselves, as these aspects influence women's level of participation.

The literature also looked at women's exclusion from both formal and informal peace processes. There is clear evidence to suggest that women are a very important asset in sustainable peace, conflict prevention, justice, and freedom from violence (Chang et al. 2015: 11; Anderlini 2010, 2011; Angom 2018; Gbowee 2009; UNwomen 2017: 2). In other words, women are not merely passive victims; they are important agents and actors in peacebuilding processes.

Much as there is evidence of African women leadership pre-colonial times, the literature points out to the historical exclusion of women by colonial errors and how this has persisted into the fabrics of our societies until today. Both the literature and theory point out to the fact that inclusion is a way of achieving sustainable peace that must be practiced both vertically and horizontally to be conflict sensitive at all stages of the process. Inclusion starts within the family which is the basic unit of a society, and it is at this level that issues of culture and structures should be handled because when they arrive at the top, they will be normalised. The peacebuilding theory explains peacebuilding as an inclusive process working towards a better communities and better relationships. Once people are included, relationships are transformed and one starts launching community-based peacebuilding activities at all levels, where everyone will be participating and sharing ideas on how to reconstruct a broken society. Figure 2.8, in which I explain how we can arrive at sustainable peace by including women at all levels, illustrates this.

In terms of where women's efforts are mostly seen, the literature shows that women play significant roles in peacebuilding and conflict transformation as mothers, educators,

mediators, peace activists, and community leaders (Track 4, 6 and 7). The literature points out to women's extraordinary skills in peacebuilding and conflict transformation by citing example from Liberia, Rwanda, Northern Uganda, Northern Ireland. That women bring very different perspectives to peace negotiations because they tend to articulate peace in terms of meeting human needs and other humanitarian aspects of conflict resolution, they also demonstrate maximum resilience, cooperation, tolerance, and maintained harmony in the society (Speake 2013:7, Kumalo and Roddy-Mullineaux 2019:2-4, Buchanan 2020:23, Rahmaty and Jaghab 2020:2-5., Westendorf 2018:433, and Ndey 2015: 21).

While the literature suggests that while this evidence is true, there is a missing link between women's participation at all levels of peace process and the skills required to do so especially as it relates to women at grassroots and the complexity of conflict and its management techniques/ terminologies in the twenty-first century. The evidence from the field work points to the lack of skills as a factor of exclusion. From the literature, most of the women who participate in peacebuilding process in different settings are those who had some level of education: a low level of education is another factor of exclusion of women in the context of the research. These challenges therefore indicate that there needs to be a deliberate effort to enhance women's skills and level of education to reflect the current conflict context.

To see a change in women's lives, I believe that there should be global action to build women's capacities and facilitate a change in attitudes and behaviour in all sectors, and individuals need to recognise that women are effective and capable leaders and should be incorporated fully and equally into participation at every level of decision-making in positions that relate to peace and security issues. There has to be a significant intellectual transformation to change the societal structures that uphold and reinforce a patriarchal ideology of gender discrimination. What is missing from the literature is the relationship between funding and the exclusion of women. What is clear, however, is the evidence that shows that most donors do not give priority to peacebuilding. Much as there is funding, the smallest priority category appears to be 'Track II' (Duckworth 2016:6) and the drastic reduction in peacebuilding funding and increase in military funding between 2015-2019 (Veron and Sherriff 2020:4-10, UNwomen, 2021) and yet this research shows that women are mostly found in track 6,7 and a few in 4. I did not delve deeply in understanding if there is a hidden agenda from donors to exclude women; this is an area that would need further research since there is also limited scholarly writing on this topic.

Therefore, if women receive the needed knowledge and skills, they can be better actors for peace. With this research, I hope to enhance the role of refugee and host communities' women in the Bidibidi settlement by providing distinct knowledge and skills on how to establish sustainable peace and prevent future conflicts.

The previous chapters have reviewed the literature on women's role in peacebuilding and conflict transformation and the potential that they have to change, but the realisation of this potential and the use of this potential will largely depend on the dynamics of the local context women found themselves in. in the next chapter I looked at the methodology used for the study.

CHAPTER SIX: RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGY, AND FIELD EXPERIENCE

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research methodology. It begins with reviewing the literature on methodology, research design, data collection tools and data analysis methods. The study adopted a mixed methodology approach to collect data from a variety of sources. I conducted one hundred and twenty (120) qualitative interviews with women and men including key informant interviews (KII), experts working in the humanitarian intervention in the refugee arena. An exploratory and constructivism worldview philosophical orientation was employed to facilitate participation and understanding of the meanings narrated by participants in consideration of their different views. Data pertaining to the study were collected from respondents comprising refugee and host community women and men through observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions, semi-structured questionnaires, key informant interviews, document analyses and action research that was implemented at the end to achieve the research objective. The data collected was used to identify common teams for action research. A team of five researchers and the principal investigator went to the field for three days in Bidibidi settlement. A total of 166 individuals were reached, this included 18 individuals as KIIs, 42 individuals in FGDs (4 FGDs were conducted), 94 survey questions were administered and 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted. The next chapter proceeds to explain the research methodology that provided the procedure for data collection and analysis of the data that informed the research findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The purpose of research is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific procedures (Davies and Hughes 2014: 9; Kumar 2014: 7). This chapter describes the design and methodology that were used for the study to achieve its purpose. Different methods and tools have been used including action research and data collection tools such as surveys, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. The sampling population and size are also discussed in this chapter. The chapter is concluded with a map that shows the location of the study. For the study to achieve its objectives, mixed methodology was used, that is, qualitative and quantitative methodology. Qualitative research mostly focuses on understanding, exploring, discovering, and clarifying situations, and the feelings, perspectives, attitudes, values, and experiences of a group under study. The study designs are therefore based on deductive rather than inductive logic, and are more fixable and

unstructured, as recommended by Kumar (2014: 133), Davies and Hughes (2014: 9), and Creswell (2014: 4).

The aims of the study were to understand the existing opportunities and limitations to women's participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding and build their capacity to transform socio-economic, cultural, and political conflicts in the settlements. To achieve this aim, the study had the following objectives, as stated earlier in Section 1.15 in Chapter 1:

1. To examine the roles and capacity of women in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Uganda
2. To identify reasons for the limited participation of women and to establish approaches for engaging women and men to work together in peacebuilding and conflict transformation and address women's lack of participation/exclusion
3. To implement peacebuilding and conflict transformation interventions (AR) to build the capacity of 20 women and men in responding to conflicts in the settlement.

6.2 Research Design

A research design is a conceptual structure within which the research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data (Mohajan 2017: 7; Kumar 2014: 122). It is a road map that a researcher follows during the research journey to find answers to the research questions. In other words, a research design details the plan of how the researcher intends to undertake the study. It explains the operational strategy at every stage of the research. It is a master plan for the determined methods, structure, and strategy of a research study to discover alternative tools to solve the problems and to minimise the variances (Kothari 2004 cited in Mohajan 2017: 7). It involves conceptualising and operationalising research from the start to the end (ibid). O'Leary (2017: 89) further asserts this notion when he states that:

Your methodological design is basically your study's blueprint and as such will comprise elements that are as broad as questions related to paradigm, and as specific as questions dealing with the nuts and bolts of who, where, when, how, and what.

Therefore, my conceptualisation of methodology covers the philosophical framework to include ontological and epistemological assumptions; this study's research design, that is, the AR design; the population and sample population; the data collection instruments; as well as the presentation, analysis, and ethical considerations. The sections that follow expand on the components. This chapter endeavours to explain the broad design, including the philosophical sketch map of the assumptions underlying the study. The AR design, as well as its

philosophical underpinnings, will be explained. For this particular study, I adopted a philosophical worldview combining the transformative and constructivism worldviews to guide the study. According to a range of authors (Slife and Williams 1995; Neuman 2009 cited in Creswell 2014: 5-9, neuman2012), constructivist views focus mostly on qualitative research to understand the individuals' worldview regarding the phenomena under investigation. The transformative worldview focuses on the participatory action research. In other words, from the constructivism views, I was able to design an action for transformative change. Two reasons guided the choice of the worldviews for this study:

1. This study was the first of its kind to be conducted in the Bidibidi Settlement focusing on women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation, bringing together refugees and host communities to discuss the topic. During the training, there were many unknown aspects and meanings that needed to be understood and discussed.
2. my aim was to adopt a bottom-up approach that places emphasis on the affected people to develop solutions through participation in the study process to graft the change needed. This also means that much attention has to be paid to understanding and observing the participants and analysing the observations to derive meaning from the participants' contributions.

6.3 Research Methodology

A mixed methodology approach was used for this research. This is because, according to Creswell (2014: 4), a mixed methodology incorporates qualitative and quantitative data collection tools integrated with very specific designs. The use of the qualitative and quantitative approaches gives a more thorough understanding of the research problem under investigation. In other words, it provides space for data triangulation from different sources which can contribute to validity and reliability.

Wellington, Bathmaker, Hunt, McCulloch and Sikes (2005: 97) define methodology as:

The theory of acquiring knowledge and the activity of considering, reflecting upon and justifying the best methods. Methods are the specific techniques for obtaining the data that will provide the evidence base for the construction of that knowledge.

Quantitative research is an approach that focuses on examining relationships among variables. It follows a rigid, structured, and predetermined set of procedures that explore and aim at quantifying the extent of variation in a phenomenon (Creswell 2014: 4; Kumar 2014: 14). Mixed methods research is an approach involving the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve

philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks (ibid). The rationale for the choice of mixed methods is that it provides a complete understanding of the research problem by using a variety of data collection tools that can be triangulated to enhance the accuracy of the findings to draw conclusions.

In an effort to shed light on the exclusion of women in peace and conflict transformation, the qualitative and quantitative data were collected concurrently through the use of interviews and surveys. In this design, the investigator collects both forms of data roughly at the same time which helps to neutralise the weakness of each form of data and then integrates the information for interpretation of the overall results (Creswell 2014: 15). Data from multiple surveys are used to identify the factors most strongly associated with women exclusion and insights gained from a small subsample of the refugees, host communities, government officials, and humanitarian agencies who were interviewed. In the study, the quantitative instruments measured the relationship between the inclusion/participation of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation (independent variable) and sustainable peace (dependent variable). At the same time, the methodology helped in understanding the central phenomenon explored using the exclusion/lack of participation of women (qualitative interviews or observations) with women participants at Bidibidi refugee settlement.

To achieve the above, I employed participatory and explanatory designs; this was not done to test or confirm any aspect but to produce many possible explanations for women's exclusion in peacebuilding. The explanatory design was used because the cultural meanings of women exclusion could be understood differently in South Sudan and Uganda. I used this before and after the study design (pre-test/post-test) to measure the change in the situation, phenomenon, issues and problems, or attitudes. According to Kumar (2014: 136), this is the most appropriate design for measuring the impact or effectiveness of the program. The changes are measured by comparing the differences in the phenomenon variable(s) before and after the intervention (ibid). I used a reflective journal log to help her record every detail of her thoughts, that which she observed, and that which she had heard the participant's state. This also helped to clarify themes that emerged from the data.

Finally, the participatory design was adopted throughout the study, from the start to the end of data collection. The participatory design gave a chance for the participants to own the process of finding and creating grafting an action for transformation. This involved engaging the study participants in various exercises such as field transect walks, methodological workshops, and

a validation workshop at the end of the study. These suggested actions from the evaluation workshop have been integrated into Chapter Nine.

6.3.1 The Study as grounded in Mixed Research

Kumar (2014: 14) notes that mixed research methodology incorporates more than methodology and is better described as a philosophy as it uses the qualitative approach that seeks to understand phenomena in specific context settings, where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest, and the quantitative approach that seeks to understand relationships between variables. A survey is normally used to establish the prevalence, perceptions, and frequency of certain variables of the core mixed approach; it enhances accuracy and meaningfulness in the conclusions to have a complete picture (ibid); and it helped me to effectively unpack the dynamics that influence human behaviour and perceptions in their social settings and understand their relations. It is important to note that peace studies are more interested in understanding the causes, nature, and dynamics of conflict, with the intention of providing remedial solutions to the communities that are in conflict. Therefore, it was logical to approach research in peace studies from a largely mixed methodology as it gives the opportunity to arrive at a conclusion that can easily be relied upon to create an intervention. However, this does not imply that peace studies should only use the mixed approach – it depends on the choice of the research and the objective of the study.

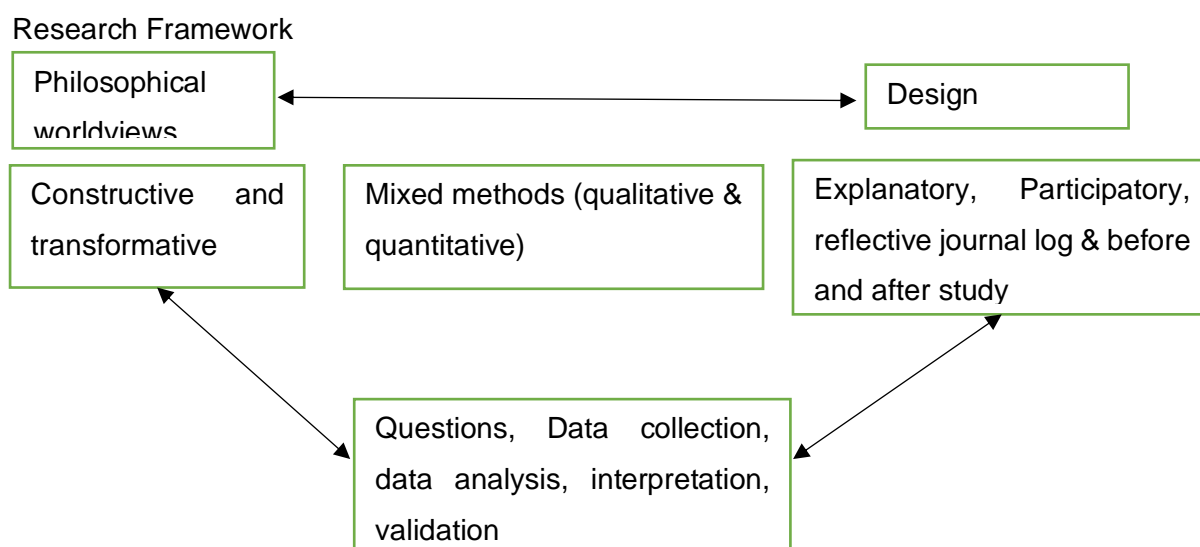
Mixed methods are summarised by Creswell and Clark (2012: 2) as an approach rather than a philosophy to social enquiry that uses two or more methods, processes, and in certain situations, philosophies in undertaking a study. It is based on the belief that different paradigms and methods have different strengths, and, for certain situations, their combined strength would result in improving the depth and accuracy of the findings. It aims at achieving the best objectives by combining the strengths of different methods and paradigms (Kumar 2014: 20).

Authors such as (Alexandra 2008 cited in Kumar 2014: 20-21, Alexander et al 2008:125-144) argue that for a study to be qualified as mixed, it must use two or more methods of data collection (questionnaires, interviews, and FGDs) with the same group of participants. They believe that that which makes a study mixed are the different methods used but not whether the methods are from the same paradigm.

Creswell (2014: 14) and Kumar (2014: 19) both argue that mixed methodology is relatively new with major works developing and stemmed from the 1980s, but it originated in 1959 when

Campbell and Fisk used multiple methods to study psychological traits (Campbell and Fisk 1959: 82-85). The rationale that underpins the mixed approach is its ability to provide accurate answers to all research questions in all situations and secondly, the idea that it provides a complete picture of a phenomenon in situations where a single method would not be able to provide.

I would like to contend here that, as a mixed methods researcher, this is not an easy way of obtaining all the answers to her research questions as all of them require proper planning, logistical arrangements, and the implementation of the plan as well. However, objectivity can sometimes be a challenge in AR because the researcher is actively involved in the intervention. These challenges are addressed later in Section 6.10 in this chapter. The principles of mixed methods resonate well with attempts to understand complex and multiple research questions. In the case of this study, studying refugees will mean understanding the refugees from the point of view of the culture from which they come and placing them in the new culture, and also understanding the people around them (the humanitarian workers and host communities). I believe that mixed methods were the best way for her to accurately obtain answers to the questions. Figure 6.1 depicts a framework for research, showing philosophical worldviews.



Research methods

Figure 6.1: A framework for research, showing philosophical worldviews (Source: Slife and Williams 1995 cited in Creswell 2014: 5).

Figure 6.1 shows the interconnection of worldviews, designs, and research methods used for studying women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Bidibidi refugee settlement in the Yumbe District of Uganda. In the framework, I viewed the world from the philosophical orientation of constructivism (qualitative) and positivism (quantitative) from which the mixed study approach was conceived to develop the appropriate research methodology, design, and tools to study women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Bidibidi refugee settlement in the Yumbe District of Uganda.

6.3.2 Action Research (AR)

Action Research (AR) is grounded in education and the pioneering work is attributable to Kurt Lewin (Burnes and Cooke 2012). In the 20th century, other notable works include that of Paulo Freire whose emphasis was on democratic education and consciousness-raising (Chevalier and Buckles 2013). In other words, it was used to empower the masses through education such that education could be used as a means to free rather than oppress people. Most of the systematic AR studies are widely documented in the context of Europe, Australia, and America.

In the 1970s, AR was used to allow the poor and the marginalised people examine their own environment and develop the best options on how to respond to the situation that they faced. Action research is a collaborative way of conducting social research that simultaneously satisfies rigorous scientific requirements and promotes democratic social change. Recently, there has been a growing interest in developing literature in the context of peace studies as evidenced, for example, in the works of Maphosa, Deluca and Keasley 2014 cited in Harris and Kaye (2016: 5). The overarching goal in AR is for organisations and communities to address critical social and organisational concerns in a manner that is both practical and scientific. There are various definitions of the concept of action research. Bradbury (2008 cited in Kagan *et al.* 2017: 2) offers a working definition of AR as:

AR is a participatory process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worth-while human purposes. It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory, and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities.

Further relevant definitions are referred to in the discussion that follows.

Menteron (2000 cited in Kagan 2017: 5) defines AR as “a methodological process and strategy actively incorporating those people and groups affected by a problem, in such a way that they become co-researchers through their action in the different phases and moments of the research carried out to solve their problems”.

[Their participation] places the focus of power and of control within their groups, mobilizes their resources, and leads them to acquire new resources in order to transform their living conditions, transform their immediate environment, and transform the power relations established with other groups or institutions in their society (Ibid).

Consistent with critical theoretical underpinnings, “AR addresses contextual forces that create situations of injustices for specific individuals and collectives, rather than seeking to ‘fix’ individual deficiencies” (Thomas *et al.* 2018: 2).

AR, as a form of enquiry, enables practitioners in every job and walk of life to investigate and evaluate their work (McNiff and Whitehead 2011 cited in Harris and Kaye 2016: 5). Action researchers are insider researchers who see themselves as part of the context that they are investigating (ibid). It can also be defined as “systematic and orientated around analysis of data whose answers require the gathering and analysis of data and the generation of

interpretations directly tested in the field of action” (Greenwood and Levin 1998 cited in MacDonald 2012: 3).

It is an emergent inquiry process that integrates theory and action to couple scientific knowledge with existing organisational knowledge and to address real organisational problems together with the people of the system under inquiry (Coghlan 2011; Shani Lewin 1947 cited in Maestrini et al 2016: 290). AR is about change (Coghlan 2011; Dickens and Watkins 1999 cited in Maestrini 2016: 291), and AR can also be defined as a means of action either to improve one’s practice or to take action to deal with a problem or an issue (Kumar 2014: 159). AR brings together action and reflection, and theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally, for the flourishing of individual persons and their communities (Bradbury 2008 cited in Harris and Kaye 2016: 5).

Titchen (2015 cited in Kaye and Harris 2017: 7) observed an important characteristic of AR in that “it has elements that consider the context of an action because they are change oriented, these elements can be used for developing transformative actions”. The key elements of AR identified are that it is collaborative, systematic, rigorous, future-oriented, reflective/reflexivity, evaluative, participative, and situational (ibid). It is an approach to research that is based on collaborative problem-solving relationships between researcher(s) and practitioners, which aims at both managing change and creating new knowledge (Coghlan and Davis 2006 cited in Khan and Tzortzopoulos 2016: 114).

In other words, AR is the study of social situations with a view to improving the quality of action within it. It aims at feeding a practical judgement in concrete situations, and the validity of the ‘theories or hypotheses it generates depends not so much on ‘scientific’ tests of truth as on their usefulness in helping people to act more intelligently and skilfully. In action research, ‘theories’ are not validated independently and then applied to practice. They are validated through practice.

The combination of the above definitions indicates that AR is primarily about a practical and yet scientific approach to doing research. It emphasises the importance of collaboration between the researcher and the participants during research. These key aspects of AR were the key to this study. Peacebuilding can be viewed in some sense as an applied science. Thus, the use of AR becomes even more appropriate in this context. I was sceptical at the beginning to use AR in a refugee setting considering their mobility especially in Uganda where the Bidibidi settlement is located at the Uganda-South Sudan border, and it is difficult to have

the same participants for the period needed. Nevertheless, I took the challenge, after being inspired by several researchers who have researched in refugee settings, as a trial exercise.

During the research, I was able to see the differences between AR and other research studies that she had previously conducted in the same setting. AR gives a sense of ownership of the process to the participants, and they seemed to have known their problems and what could be done to help but the means to arrive at the solution was unforeseeable because of the gaps in their knowledge and skills. The prospect of practical and hands-on initiatives and feedback in a proper research setting was thus appealing. AR addresses the ongoing doubts in the minds of research participants who feel used by researchers since they never get to see the results of that which they state. There are some key characteristics that are absolutely necessary in action research. As it will be seen later in the field report, the selected participants for training came from the same team that was used for collecting the data.

This study was based in Bidibidi refugee settlement with South Sudanese refugees and host communities in Uganda. The two groups live side by side every day and are engulfed by different types of conflicts as already described in the problem statement. Carrying out peacebuilding activities in refugee settlements can be a large challenge. These are people from different countries, cultures, and political beliefs, and the environment in which they live is highly politicised by both governments and humanitarian agents who also have their own agendas. I had to use democratic partnership guiding philosophy.

The next sections outline my opinions and approaches to addressing the research objectives. The objectives, the relevant research question(s), and data sources and data collection methods are highlighted. Two forms of designs were jointly used to address all the objectives (participatory and explanatory) with details as indicated below:

Keeping a sequence of events and having an approach to problem-solving provided me with direction on the steps to take during the course of the study. It gave me guidance on being sequential. However, being chronological during the study was not an easy task as issues were continually changing along the way, especially at the stage of the AR, such as postponing already-planned meetings because someone (a participant) had an emergency; hence the study plan was not cast in stone because of the many unforeseen developments that were encountered along the way. The details of the fieldwork are presented in the next chapter.

6.3.3 Foundations of Action Research

Action research has a long history. However, as noted above, the pioneering work is attributed to Kurt Lewin. The details of the history and evolution of AR will not be presented here, but rather the key concepts of AR by Lewin, as summarised by Argyis *et al.* (1985 cited in Coghlan and Brannick 2014: 46), are given as follows:

1. It involves change experiments on real problems in social systems. It focuses on a particular problem and seeks to aid the client system.
2. It, as with social management in general, involves iterative cycles of identifying a problem, planning, acting, and evaluating.
3. The intended change in an AR project typically involves re-education, a term that refers to changing the patterns of thinking and action that are currently well-established in individuals and groups. A change intended by change agents is typically at the level of norms and values expressed in action. Effective re-education depends on the participation by clients in diagnosis, fact-finding, and free choice to engage in new types of action.
4. It challenges the status quo from a participatory perspective, which is congruent with the requirements of effective re-education.
5. It is intended to contribute simultaneously to basic knowledge in social science and to social action in everyday life. High standards for developing theory and empirically testing propositions organised by theory are not to be sacrificed, nor should the relation to practice be lost.

These key concepts of AR are that which make the approach unique in studying a social phenomenon. When carrying out action research, it starts with identifying the problem (mostly by me). Subsequently, all other interested participant(s) start a process of trying to understand the causes and effects of the problem in a contextual setting, reflecting on current practices, and eventually designing and implementing corrective intervention measures together. The process is cyclic and requires constant evaluation which is perhaps the most useful part since the main goal of AR is to initiate the process of re-education. To this part, I added monitoring after the training to follow the action and initiatives of participants after the training, I was able to note some challenges and advise them along the way. This is an important process because at the end of the process, the participants should be able to have knowledge of new ways of doing something on their own to make their lives better.

Action research is the opposite of traditional, passive ‘academic research’ where the researcher comes into a setting and leads all the way and publishes that which he or she deems empirical with a list of recommendations. AR ‘challenges the status quo’. Its goal is to “solve a problem and to contribute to science” (Coghlan and Brannick 2014: 48). This

interlocks with the overall objective of this study I engaged two different communities (refugees and host communities) in developing new knowledge for women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The focus of the study was to develop with the communities a set of skills in responding to socio-economic and political conflicts in the settlements. This was a very unstable context because of the mobility of the refugees. The plan continually changed during the process, but it suited the original construction of the study. It needs much patience, creativity, and flexibility to adapt to the quick changes. However, I kept in mind not to lose track on the way. I did all that I was able to do in adhering to the original plans of the study, with the exception of two FGDs, where the dates and times had to be adjusted due to logistical reasons – however, this was done at the set period. As a result, there was no change in the research design and the sequence of activities, including the time set to complete the process. I also planned her data collection in a way such that for each activity, I gave one additional day to cater for unforeseen challenges. In order to achieve the objective, the AR had followed certain philosophical assumptions in order to meet the expectations of both the practitioners and the academics. The next section presents the ontological and epistemological assumptions. The methodology in AR can be chaotic, as mentioned above.

6.3.4 Philosophical Assumptions of the Study

From the start, I kept in mind that AR, as with any other type of research, has to be grounded in a certain type of philosophical orientation from an ontological and epistemological perspective. Philosophy is the use of abstract ideas and beliefs that inform one's research. There are many philosophical viewpoints through which studies can be carried out. For this particular study, I adopted a philosophical worldview combining the social transformative and social constructivism worldviews to guide the study. According to a range of authors (Slife and Williams 1995; Lincoln *et al.* 2011; Mertens 2010; Neuman 2009 cited in Creswell 2014: 5-9), constructivist views focus mostly on qualitative research to understand the individuals' worldviews regarding the phenomena under investigation. The transformative worldview focuses on participatory action research.

6.3.5 Social Constructivism

Social constructivism is also described as interpretivism by scholars such as Denzin and Lincoln (2011) and Mertens (2010). In social constructivism, as described by seminal writings, "individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. They develop subjective meanings of their experience's meanings directed toward certain objects or things"

(Lincoln and Mertens 2011; 2010; Crotty 1998 cited in Creswell 2014: 8). These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing down the meanings into a few categories or ideas.

The goal of the researcher, then, is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation. Often, these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically. In other words, they are not simply imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others, hence social construction, and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives (Creswell 2014: 8). From the perspectives of refugees and host communities, these views were also influenced by the environment and their daily life experiences, and it was interesting to ask the same question but hear different answers from people living in the same location but from different countries – this, therefore, means that experience plays a large role in social construction.

When it comes to the practices, in social construction, the questions become broad and general such that the participants can construct the meaning of a situation, a meaning typically forged in discussions or interactions with other persons. This calls for asking more open-ended questions as a better option, as the researcher listens carefully to that which people state or do in their life setting. Thus, constructivist researchers often address the 'processes' of interaction among individuals.

The process also focuses on the specific contexts in which people live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants. In the case of this study, it was the setting of a refugee settlement and the host communities. This meant that I first had to recognise her own background profile, listen to their interpretation, and position herself in the research to acknowledge how her interpretation flows from her own personal, cultural, and historical experiences to avoid mixing her own interpretation with that of the participants. Thus, I had to make an interpretation of that which she observed through the lens of the participants. Having worked in Yumbe with the Aringa people, in South Sudan with the South Sudanese, and with South Sudanese refugees in Uganda prior to the study, my interpretation was shaped by experiences and background. This helped me to make sense of the meanings of the participants' world. In other words, if I interpreted something differently, it was essentially due to the added advantage of knowledge acquired externally through study and exposure, but otherwise, my work and childhood experiences are very similar to those of the rest of the participants.

6.3.6 Social Transformation

Dating back to the 1970s, social transformation has been popular in the works of authors such as Neuman (2009), Fay (1987), Heron and Reason (1997), and Kemmis and McTaggart (2000 cited in Creswell 2014: 8). It is grounded on the assumption that “knowledge is not neutral, and it reflects the power and social relationships within society, and thus the purpose of knowledge construction is to transform a society and aid people to improve society” (Mertens 2010 cited in Creswell 2014: 9). The transformative paradigm is a framework of belief systems that directly engage members of culturally diverse groups with a focus on increased social justice (Mertens 2009; Harris and Holmes 2009 cited in Mertens 2010).

These individuals include marginalised groups such as women, youth, transgender persons, sexual and gender minorities, and societies that need a more hopeful, positive psychology and resilience (Mertens 2009: 3). The transformative paradigm is motivated by a strong social justice and human rights agenda that is specifically targeted to marginalised communities, such as women, racial or ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, the poor, and other people from that which are considered nondominant cultural groups (Mertens 2010: 266). As Mertens explains, “the transformative paradigm emerged in response to individuals who have been pushed to the societal margins throughout history and who are finding a means to bring their voices into the world of research” (ibid). The issues facing women are of paramount importance to peace studies, issues such as oppression, domination, suppression, alienation, and exclusion which are experienced by women around the world. As these issues are studied and exposed, a researcher provides a voice for these participants, raising their consciousness and improving their lives by giving them knowledge and skills, thus making them advocates for change.

From the above-mentioned philosophical viewpoints, two aspects can be considered: firstly, the community’s understanding of their social environment and making meaning of it – this meaning might be based on their experience of the environment and hence subjective; and secondly, the communities can be engaged in a process of social transformation where they can make new meaning of their environment and experience and seek to make objective transformation through action research.

6.3.7 Action Research Cycle

Johnson (2008 cited in Kaye and Harris 2017: 6) describes the process of AR as being recursive and non-linear with the answer unknown. In other words, it is an effort to understand an unknown answer to a problem that is what fosters the method of recurring learning through

different stages leading to generation of new knowledge and practice in the field. There are various models and stages that can be followed when carrying out action research. A closer look at the various cycles that have been developed will show that the differences are almost inconsequential. They retain the key features of the cycle. I used the AR cycle that has been developed by Susman and Evered (1978), as depicted in Figure 6.2.

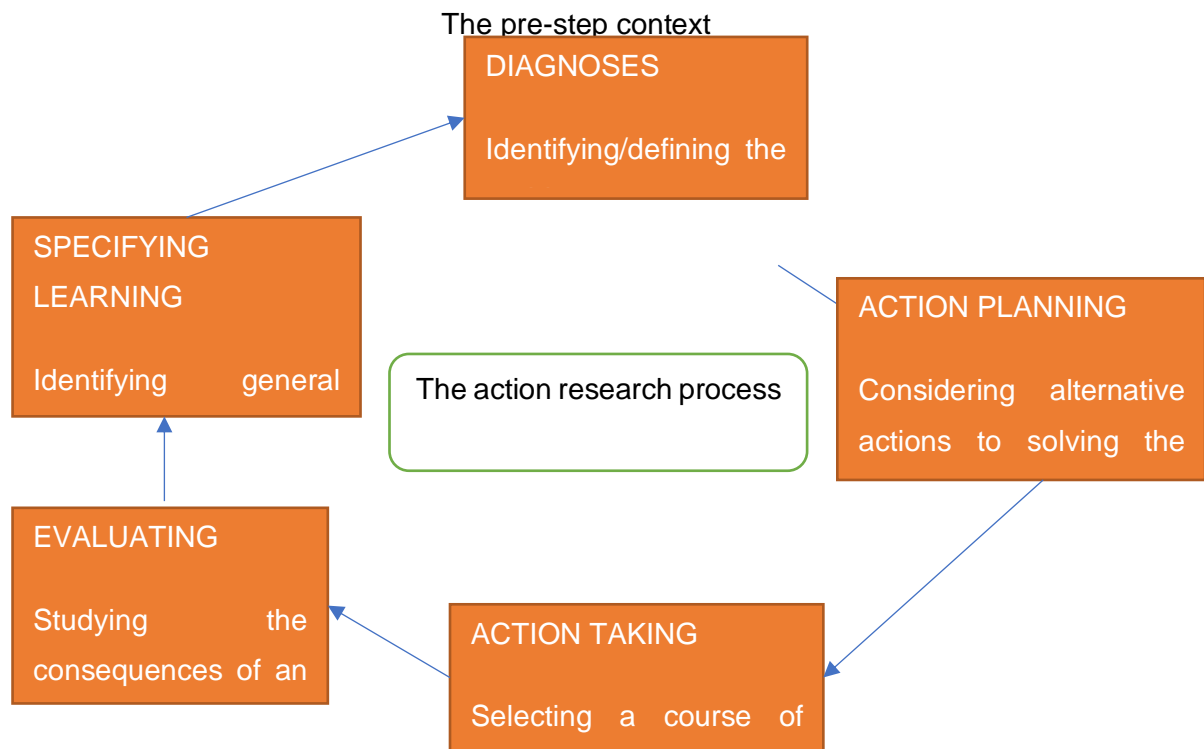


Figure 6.2: The AR Cycle (Source: Susman and Evered 1978).

According to Coghlan and Brannick (2014: 10), it is important to understand the general context within which an AR takes place and to ask questions such as: “Why is this project necessary or required? What are the political, economic, and social forces driving change?”

With these questions in mind, I had to study the broad socio-political and economic environment in both Uganda and South Sudan so as to understand the nature of the challenges with which women are faced in their participation regarding peacebuilding. I also had to profile a few peacebuilding initiatives currently in the settlement, their models, and identify gaps. In June 2018, I carried out a baseline survey in the same settlement where I had profiled the conflict dynamics and actors in the communities in order to tap into their knowledge as well (Dawa 2019). This helped me to understand conflict issues and their actors. Since

peacebuilding is not mainstreamed by an agency in the settlement, it was hard to obtain official information related to conflict and their management strategies.

In April 2019, I carried out a pilot study with ten participants in Bidibidi, essentially to check on the validity and reliability of the tools that I had developed. This helped me to readjust the tools with the research team. At this point, I had already discovered that in the settlement, peacebuilding is understood as 'protection' and 'livelihood activities', and the participants would give examples of women self-help groups who are either saving money or doing some type of activities to support each other's livelihoods. They gave names of organisations that focus on protection and livelihood as peacebuilding partners. However, a few NGOs to which I had access reported having documented conflict trends. A case in point is Caritas Arua and a local NGO named CTEN.

Essentially, issues related to women participation were not tackled in any of these primary data, and if they were, they were mostly focused on SGBV. It transpired that conflict was not a concept for the refugees in the settlement, and they related the word 'conflict' to war and armed conflict and only saw that in South Sudan. Some organisations declined to give access to their materials for ethical reasons. Primary methods used to obtain this information included interviews with women and men from the two communities, selected humanitarian organisations, the Yumbe District Local Government, and one focus group discussion with women.

a. *Diagnosing: Identifying or Defining the Problem*

For one to consider carrying out research, there must be a question that one thinks is unanswered, hence one's ability to identify a clear research problem determines the success of the study. Kumar (2014: 64) maintains that if one wants to solve a problem, one must generally know what the problem is. In other words, a research study can only be deemed successful when it has the potential to clearly identify and address the real problem.

Coghlan and Brannick (2014: 10) note that the first step in AR is dialogue where the stakeholders of the project engage in the construction of the issues and processes informing the action research. During this research study, I worked with Community Initiative for Rural Empowerment (RICE) West Nile and Community Empowerment for Peace and Development (CEPAD) West Nile. I had indicated to the organisations the profile of the research assistance that she would need. Because of the sensitivity of refugee settlements, I needed people who were familiar with research work in such settings. This turned out to be a good strategy for me

as these two organisations already had an ongoing peacebuilding activity, though in a different settlement (Rhino Camp settlement), and they both agreed that they could continue to carry out the implementation of the activities in the communities in Bidibidi after my departure.

b. Action Planning: Considering Alternative Courses of Action for Solving a Problem

After establishing the context as well as identifying the challenges and gaps that existed through analysing the data that was collected through qualitative and quantitative methods, I then worked collaboratively with the stakeholders to design the course of action to respond to the gaps and challenges identified. At this stage, I identified a team with whom I developed and implemented an intervention strategy.

One of the key recommendations that emerged was that 75% of the participants believed that it was better for women and men to work together if they wanted to build sustainable peace. Since the AR was essentially about developing peacebuilding and conflict transformation skills among women in Bidibidi settlement, I shared the key findings of the research with the OPM, Office Yumbe District Local Government, CEPAD, and RICE.

The four institutions then met to define the participants of the training. As mentioned previously, it was agreed that even though this research focused on women, it was important to empower men as well in the context of refugees since gender roles change during conflict. I then worked with the OPM and RWCs of the two zones, Zones 1 and 2, to identify the participants. Thereafter, the research team selected a total of eight men and 12 women, including both hosts and refugees, who were proactively taking on leadership roles in the communities, whether in churches, schools, village saving groups, or child protection committees. These participants were the Dinkas, Nuers, and Equatorians of South Sudan, and the Aringas of Uganda who came together for the three days of training and developed an action plan to be implemented in the communities.

c. Action Taking: Selecting a Course of Action

This is the training (intervention) stage of this study's AR cycle. I started by reorganising different manuals and designing one that would specifically fit the context. I worked with another peacebuilding scholar and long-term friend and colleague with whom I had worked in South Sudan. He is currently pursuing a PhD from the Eastern Mennonite University's Centre for Justice and Peacebuilding where he has also obtained his master's degree. The training

manual had three broad sections and ran for three days. The content was not entirely new as it focused on three areas, namely:

1. Analysis: this included understanding conflict, peace, violence, and a situation analysis of the conflict dynamics in the settlements.
2. Responses: these focused on different responses to conflict and violence including mediation and negotiation, and the key concepts of peacebuilding and conflict transformation.
3. Planning and delivering this included the role of gender in peacebuilding with a specific focus on women, the change of gender roles in conflict and how this affects gender dynamics, actor mapping in conflict, designing and implementing peace initiatives (advocacy) and reconciliation – details of this are presented in objective discussions.

d. *Evaluating: Studying the Consequences of an Action*

The term *evaluation* is concerned with unbundling that which has been learnt from the intervention process and to determine the extent to which the intervention has influenced change (Townsend 2013: 111). Coghlan and Brannick (2014: 11) discuss the outcomes of action research, both intended and unintended, and argue that these are examined with a view to find out if the “original construction fitted; if the actions taken matched the construction, if the action was taken in an appropriate manner and what feeds into the next cycle of constructing planning and action”.

During the training, I had to carry out an evaluation of each day taking into consideration the participants’ expectations and amending the programming to respond to the challenges of each day, if there were any. At the end of day three, a general evaluation of the training was also carried out to give an impression of that which the participants had learnt and if their expectations in relation to knowledge and skills were met. This was carried out through a simple questionnaire.⁸

The questionnaire had six parts; the first part evaluated the trainers and their knowledge on the subject matter, including their ability to transfer knowledge to others; the second part focused on the participants’ learning process, that which they learned and how they would apply it; and the third part focused on recommendations for improving future training. This

⁸ See questionnaire in Appendix VI of this document.

process was done because of the acknowledgement that each intervention had intended and unintended outcomes, and AR evaluation must reflect on the process with a view to identify the success stories as well as the challenges faced along the way. These evaluation processes could also set the stage for another phase of action research. Coghlan and Brannick (2014: 13) maintain that AR evaluation must be premised on content, process, and premise and this was achieved through the above-mentioned process carried out over the three days.

During the entire study, the evaluation was carried out in three stages: daily evaluation of the workshop, evaluation on the last day of training, and a 'short-term impact evaluation' of the training after six months. Specifically, the training was done in mid-August and the evaluation was done in mid-January. The short-term impact evaluation was carried out to see if there had been an impact in the community as a result of the activities designed by the participants after the training to assess the successes and gaps that still existed.

e. *Specifying Learning: Identifying General Findings*

The aim of any research is to address the identified gaps in literature and add to the existing knowledge and theory (Kumar 2014: 67). In order to add to the body of knowledge and theory, it is important to ensure that the outcomes of the AR process were well documented and shared with policy makers and academics for future actions. At the end of the data analysis, I shared the findings with the participants and key stakeholders (OPM, UNHCR, Danish Refugee Council, CARITAS, Rural initiative for community empowerment (RICE), Community empowerment for peace and development (CEPAD), International rescue committee (IRC), Community Technology Empowerment Network (CTEN), Participatory rural action for community development (PRAFORD) and the Yumbe District Local Government (YDLG). At the end of the study, I will analyse the process outcomes with the aim of publishing an article from the thesis.

6.4 Study Site and Population

Dyson and Genishi (2005: 4) posit that researchers make decisions about how to angle their vision on research sites depending on the interplay between their own interests and the grounded particularities. Dyson and Genishi assert that any educational setting, whether that setting is a class, a school, a family, or a community program, is always flowing with rich human experiences and with human stories.

Population in this context refers to the category of people (or object) about whom one wants to write one's report and from which one plans to draw one's sample (Davies and Hughes 2014: 57). The study took place in Yumbe District in the West Nile Region of Uganda. The people of Yumbe District are predominantly the Lugbara of the Aringa-speaking people. However, this study's population was determined by the communities currently living in and around Bidibidi settlement's Zones 1 and 2 in Yumbe District. Bidibidi settlement has a population of 226,891, with 226,877 being refugees, and 43,477 households. Eighty-seven percent of the total population are women and children (Dawa 2019: 48; UNHCR 1 June 2019). Zone 1 has 7,523 households and 43,602 individuals, and Zone 2 has 8,430 households with a total population of 48,953. From these populations, only 27.6% have an occupation (ibid). A total of 124 people were reached during the data collection from the two zones including humanitarian agencies and government officials at the Yumbe District Local Government. Tables 6.1 and 6.2 present summaries of the sample space and sampling criteria for data collection in the field, respectively.

Table 6.1: Summary of the sample space for data collection in the field total is 124

S/N	Tool	Number	Category	Number of Respondents		
				7 May 2019	8 May 2019	9 May 2019
1	General survey F=37, M=18	55	Refugee and host community women and men	18	20	17
2	Semi-structured interviews	10	Refugee and host community women	3	4	3
3	Key informant interviews (KIs)	12	Individuals and organisations (OPM, UNHCR, YDLG, ARC, IRC, Danish Refugee Council, RICE, RWC3,	4	4	4

			LC3/SAS, CTEN, UNWOMEN, PRAFORD)			
4	FGDs	4	Refugee women, men refugees and hosts, women refugees and hosts, leader refugees and hosts	2 FGDs Zone 1 2 FGDs Zone 2		Total FGD 47

Table 6.2: Summary of the sampling criteria for data collection in the field.

Research Assistants	(General survey) Female	Male	Semi-structured interview	Key informant interview	Total
IRENE	6	3	2	2	13
ALBINE	6	3	2	2	13
PETER LEE	6	3	2	2	13
TOPISTA	6	3	2	2	13
DOREEN	6	3	2	2	13
BONIFACE	7	3	0	2	12
Total	37	18	10	12	77
Overall Total	37 + 18 = 55				

The AR targeted a total of 20 participants (12 refugees and eight host communities).⁹ The groups worked as one entity, not as refugees and host communities. On average, the group consisted of 12 women and eight men; there were women group members, refugee welfare committee representatives, local council representatives, and community leaders. Because of the nature of the intervention that needed sustainability, I also decided to include two participants from the OPM and Yumbe District Local Government to be part of the population to be considered for the training, increasing the total to 22 participants. I also included participants from CEPAD and RICE who essentially acted as training assistance for the three days and, as such, were not included in the participants list.

6.5 Site and Sample Selection

According to Stake (1995: 4), one's first obligation while selecting a site should be to understand the particular case and to maximise that which one can learn from that case within the available time frame. Stake further explains that "our time and access for fieldwork is almost always limited" and if we can "we need to pick cases which are easy to get to and hospitable to our inquiry, perhaps for which a prospective informant can be identified and actors willing" to participate (ibid). As highlighted the selection criteria for participants took different methods for different data tools, this is because the research participants were expected to provide rich information about the phenomenon under investigation.

6.6 Sampling for Action Research

Sampling is the process of selecting a few (a sample) from a bigger group (the sample population) as the basis for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unknown piece of information, situation, or outcome regarding a bigger group (Kumar 2014: 229-30). There was a total of one hundred and twenty-four (124) participants for the study. For the survey, I used random or probability, expert, snowball, and quota sampling. Random sampling is done with the idea that each element in the study population has an equal and independent chance of selection in the sample and every possible combination of individuals from within the

⁹ Note that in all interventions taking place in the refugee settlements, there is a 30%:70% ratio meaning that 30% of the beneficiaries have to be host community members, but for the purposes of the AR, my percentage exceeded 30% to give room for equal gender representation of the host communities in the two zones.

population is equally likely, and this also helps to increase the chances of the credibility of the results (Kumar 2014: 234-235; Davies and Hughes 2014: 58), in other words, the probability of the selection of each element in the population is the same and is not influenced by personal preference. This was mostly used to select the villages and homes for the survey. To do this, the research team obtained the total number of villages, wrote the number on a piece of paper (there were eight villages in Zone 1), and each team member randomly picked a piece of paper, and this is where the survey was carried out. In the villages, one went to a home and found someone who was willingly to talk, and the person was simply spoken to. For the FGDs, purposive and quota sampling were used. While purposive sampling gave me the chance to identify participants who were typical of the study population (refugees and host communities in Bidibidi settlement), the quota sampling helped her to identify factors such as gender, age, and ethnicity for a balanced team in the FGDs.

Since I wanted a specific number of men and women, and a certain percentage of age groups in the FGDs, and since some FGDs were only for women while others were mixed, I had to be strict with the number of women that needed to be in the mixed group for the conversation to take place. This was also to ensure that the research team involved participants from different ethnic groups, genders, and ages from Uganda and South Sudan. In other words, the research team looked at gender, ethnicity, and age, as recommended by Davies and Hughes (2014: 62) and Kumar (2014: 243).

This process of gender balance and FGDs were carried out to obtain balanced information and the different perspectives of the participants and, as Stewart and Shamdasani (2015: 104) have asserted, this allowed the participants to feel that their opinions were not only valued but also important for the research. For the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) of the NGOs and local government, I used expert sampling. The expert sampling was used to reach well-known respondents who were considered to be 'experts' in the field such as the humanitarian workers, the OPM, UNHRC, and individuals who were known to be experts in the study subject (Kumar 2014: 244). This was used to establish the criteria for who were included in the sample, starting with those who met the purposive sampling criteria. In contrast, for the KIIs that targeted women leaders, snowball and stratified sampling were used.

Snowball sampling is a process of selecting a sample by networks, and the objective was to identify cases of interest from sampling people who know people who generally have similar characteristics who, in turn, also know people with similar characteristics. For example, in this case, I needed women leaders, and she had to use either men leaders or other women leaders

who then referred her to other women leaders whom they knew (Kumar 2014: 240-244; Davies and Hughes 2014: 63). The different sampling methods that were used helped me to make judgements about people, places, and aspects on the basis of fragmentary evidence and also helped in the triangulation of information. This was in line with Davies and Hughes (2014: 55) who state that sampling is closely linked to external validity or the generalisability of the findings of the inquiry because it is truly representative of the population under study. I realised that due to the complexity of the study population, she had to use a different sample technique to obtain the result that she wanted out of the fieldwork in order to answer her objectives.

There are many refugee settlements in Uganda, and they have similar challenges with which women are faced. I chose Bidibidi settlement firstly because she was interested in undertaking a research study in a settlement with a population that is predominantly South Sudanese; secondly, Bidibidi is the largest refugee settlement in Uganda; and thirdly, Yumbe District is one of the less developed districts in the West Nile, a district that has a long history of conflicts including rebel activities, and it happens to be the district that hosted the arrivals in what was called in 2017 “the world’s largest refugee settlement” (Hodgson 2018 cited in Dawa 2019: 7).

It is important to note that the prejudices among other tribes in the West Nile makes them think that the Aringa people are the most hostile community in the West Nile because of their history of guerrilla war that ended in 2000, and during the time of Uganda’s independence, most of the soldiers came from the Northern Region with Aringas being dominant in the West Nile Region.

I was also interested in working in a settlement where peacebuilding activities are few or non-existent. In a reply to the email to the OPM and Yumbe District Local Government in which I shared the preliminary finding that indicated the lack of peacebuilding initiatives in the settlement, the RDO stated:

The main partner in charge of peacebuilding, peaceful co-existence in the settlement is OPM, however, lack of resources limits what OPM can do, in essences, and OPM is expected to do coordination and monitoring while partners do the real implementation of activities that build peace. Funding is extremely limited because peacebuilding activities are not considered as lifesaving activities by donors (Refugee Desk Officer Arua, 15 July 2019).

Therefore, the factors above offered an appropriate and convenient entry point for the choice of a location for the research and sampling. The participants identified for the general data collection were involved in different activities at different levels in the community. Twenty of them who were identified later formed the AR Team (ART). This group was part of the training

(intervention) programme. Apart from the AR team, I conducted separate interviews with the team leaders of different humanitarian agencies including the OPM, UNHRC, PRAFORD, the Danish Refugee Council, CARITAS, and YDLG.

Since Bidibidi has five different zones, I chose two zones that had the most diverse population in terms of ethnic groups. This was also with the recommendation from the OPM and UNHCR who are in charge of settlements and know which groups were based in which zones. Therefore, the research team was given Zones 1 and 2 for the data collection. The FGDs comprised ten to twelve members. I also tapped into the insights from the district offices. As a result, I interviewed two officials from the Yumbe District Local Government.

The reason that I was interested in their perspective was to understand the nature and magnitude of the challenges that the district faced as a result of the presence of refugees and how they had been addressing some of the conflicts between refugees and host communities. Since cultural beliefs and norms play a central role in an existing community, I needed to have a space for the Aringa elders to obtain their perspectives. These traditional leaders/elders played a pivotal role in conflict resolution at the grassroots level among the Aringa people. Because of this, I identified four traditional leaders from four different villages for this study. I also had a chief (Kari Man) of the Aringa as the fifth participant under the traditional leaders. There was a total of one hundred and twenty-four participants, and from this total, twenty formed the ART. Some key issues that were kept in mind while sampling the participants included the gender, age, ethnic identity, and social class of the participants. Table 6.3 shows the summary of the participants.

Table 6.3: Sampling Frame.

Category	Sampling Technique	Sample	Data Collection Instruments used
Humanitarian agencies/local NGOs and local government	Expert Sampling	12	KII
Refugees and host community	Purposive and quota	47	FGD
Refugees and host community	Simple random	55	General survey

Women leaders	Snowball and stratified	12	Semi-structured interview
Host community/refugee leaders (LCs/RWCs)	Simple random sampling	6	KII
Total number of participants		132	

6.7 Interviews

Interviews are a commonly used method of collecting information from people in social science research (Kumar 2014: 176). It is a person-to-person interaction, either face-to-face or otherwise, between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind. Interviews can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. They involve an interviewer reading questions to respondents and recording their answers (Monette *et al.* 1986 cited in Kumar 2014: 176-177).

Davies and Hughes (2014: 101) assert that the aim of a research interview is to create a climate in which the respondents can talk freely and be able to offer the full range of responses that apply. In other words, an interview gives space for the respondent to feel part of the study. According to Burns (1997 cited in Kumar 2014: 177), an interview is a verbal interchange, often face-to-face, though telephones may be used, in which an interviewer tries to elicit information, beliefs, or opinions from person to person. It aims at the careful extraction of ideas, experiences, feelings, and beliefs from the maelstrom that makes up people's normal existence (ibid: 103).

Interviews were used at different levels of the data collection phase. The first stage occurred when I was attending to the first two objectives of the study. This was a preliminary assessment to examine the roles of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation and appreciate the challenges that they faced in participating; in the second objective, I identified different approaches for engaging the participants. Semi-structured interviews were used to solicit responses from women leaders in different offices, including those in humanitarian agencies, local government officials, and refugee women leaders in the settlement.

A semi-structured interview is a qualitative method of research combining a pre-determined set of open questions with the opportunity for the interviewer to explore more particular themes or new responses (Bailly and Nys 2018: 6). I used unstructured interviews because they fall between the two extremes of fully structured interviews (with a pre-determined set of questions

asked and responses recorded on a standardised schedule) and unstructured interviews (completely informal interviews, where the interviewer has a general area of interest and concern, and that are flexible in structure) (Kumar 2014: 192).

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 women leaders and covered the important themes, as guided by the study's first objective in identifying the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Adams (2015: 494) contends that in mixed methods research, semi-structured interviews can be useful as an adjunct to supplement and add depth to other approaches. Interviews demand a large amount of time to collect and analyse the responses due to their diversity. It should be noted that the flexibility offered by semi-structured interviews is key in probing seemingly unclear issues.

The data collected from the two objectives and in collaboration with the team of five other research associates helped me develop the training needs as well as the nature of the content to be included in the training module that essentially answered Objective 3 of the study. The development and training of the participants followed the key questions and themes, as highlighted in the interview and focus group schedules in Appendices III to V.

6.8 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Another data collection tool that was used were the focus group discussions. A focus group is a well-planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, convenient, and accessible environment to all participants (Stewart and Shamdasani 2015: 57-63). It is a social phenomenon to understanding the complex and dynamic social context in which group interviews take place (Hollander and Tubbs 2011 cited in Stewart and Shamdasani 2015: 15). Kumar (2014: 193) maintains that the purpose of FGDs is to explore the perceptions, understanding, experiences, and opinions of those who have collectively experienced an event or situation. In an FGD, a group of people are brought together to have a free flowing but focused discussion on a particular topic. Kumar further notes that participants are selected on the basis that they have a common experience and would be able to contribute to the discussions owing to their general understanding of the topic (ibid: 193).

I purposefully selected those participants who had experiences of the issues being studied to achieve Objective 3, which is to implement peacebuilding and conflict transformation interventions (AR) to build the capacity of 20 women and men in responding to conflicts in the settlement. I needed to form the appropriate group using this tool.

For example, I chose community leaders including women leaders from both refugee and host communities; I considered gender and ethnicity with regards to selecting the refugee participants. There were four FGDs (refugee women, refugee and host community women, refugee and host community male leaders, and refugee and host community males and females). This helped to look at the issues from the different points of view of women and men, leaders, the Sudanese, the Ugandans, and the ordinary community members. Probing is a very important technique for follow-up questions to identify the specific meaning of the group participants' responses (Stewart and Shamdasani 2015: 105). The authors maintain that:

The first response offered by participants is mostly incomplete, for example, participants in FGDs do not always say everything they wish, nor do they necessarily readily articulate what they think. Sometimes nonverbal cues are used as stopping midsentence or continuing to look at the moderator and can indicate that there is more to what they are saying and in that case probing or follow up questions are an important part of extracting full information from participants (Stewart and Shamdasani 2015: 105).

Scholars have argued that ideally, the groups should have a maximum of eight people, enough to give everyone the opportunity to express an opinion but large enough to provide a diversity of opinions (Stewart and Shamdasani 2015: 64). Prior to the FGDs, I needed to decide on the themes and topics to be discussed, having developed protocols for the collection of information at all stages of the discussion. Before the start of each and every focus group discussion, I had to supply background information to her research participants on how the information given during the discussion would be used and the extent to which their confidentiality and anonymity would be preserved. The letter of information and consent form for the participants are included in Appendices I and II, respectively.

I presided over all the four FGD sessions. The initial plan was to have groups with a maximum of eight participants each. The research team had planned for four FGDs, with ten participants per group (40 individuals). However, considering the setting in the refugee settlement, this changed, and the team ended up having 11 participants in three groups and nine in the fourth group. On average, each FGD lasted for approximately one hour and thirty minutes in the FGDs with refugees and host community leaders; the discussions were interesting to the extent that they proceeded for two and a half hours on the request of the members.

The initial time limit was one and a half hours, but I had to allow for a slight extension as a few more new and interesting ideas were still emerging and the time extension was requested by the participants rather than being imposed by the research team. I decided to have different

FGDs for men and women to avoid gender power dynamics that sometimes lead to women being overshadowed by men. This helped in creating a relaxed atmosphere and participants were free to express themselves in the different groups. In the last mixed group of women leaders, I managed the discussion in a way such that everyone had a chance to either give a view or respond to a view given by another person. In general, the research team was trained to use much probing and paid attention to body language that communicated hidden messages from the participants. Each FGD consisted of two research team members, a facilitator and a note taker.

6.9 Key Informant Interviews (KIs)

KIs are an important area of research as well. They facilitate the participation of stakeholders within the data collection process and can provide an external perspective on interventions. For this tool, I targeted local government and humanitarian actors – I used a one-page interview protocol to hold twelve key informant interviews with senior persons holding important positions in the government and humanitarian agencies to obtain their perspectives on the role of women in conflict transformation and peacebuilding. These individuals, who were selected by expert sampling by virtue of their knowledge and the privileged positions that they hold in their respective local government and humanitarian offices, included: the RDO in the OPM, the head of office of UNHCR, the YDLG, the head of programs in the ARC, the project officers in the IRC and WVI, the head of office of the Danish Refugee Council, the executive directors of RICE and RACI, RWC3, LC3/SAS, CTEN, the representative of UNWOMEN, and the former executive director of PRAFORD. The focus of this group was to achieve Objective 2 of the study by understanding the views of these experts on that which they thought were some of the reasons for the limited participation of women and to establish approaches for engaging women and men to work together in peacebuilding and conflict transformation and address women's lack of participation/exclusion.

There were a range of reasons for the variation in the time that the interviews lasted. For example, while my interview with the OPM was planned to last for 30 minutes, the interview only lasted approximately ten minutes because the RDO had an emergency in one of the settlements that needed his attention. On the other hand, whereas my interview with the settlement commandant was scheduled to last for only 30 minutes, the interview lasted approximately one hour, because the discussions became very interesting for the commandant, the commandant and I spoke about of peacebuilding, which is part of the thesis.

6.7.1 Formation of Research Team and Research Participants

The research team had six members including the me (Irene Dawa). My role as the chief investigator was largely to facilitate the process. I had to draw out many of the experiences of the two groups (their culture and daily experiences). The mere fact of accessing the refugees included a complex bureaucratic process. It was interesting to observe that the experience of women from two different cultural groups was very similar, however it was not clear if this was because of the environment in which they lived or their gender. For example, their understandings of their role and participation in public life as 'women' were very similar.

During the study, the participants took part in various exercises such as FGDs defining the key themes for the workshop, the methodology of the workshop, the monitoring of the group and individual activities for six months, and the evaluation and validation of the workshop at the end of the study. The validation workshop was notably very insightful as participants suggested solutions to the underlying challenges to women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in the settlement. The suggested solutions have been integrated into Chapter IX.

A key factor in choosing the participants was to address women issues and to involve men as part of the solution. With this in mind, the entire study process involved both genders although the women more than the men – this gender mix also helped to stimulate the debate and the participants were able to see issues with the lens of the other; I call this 'a transformative process'.

6.7.2 Development of a Training Manual

Prior to my study, I had developed various manuals for nonviolent conflict transformation, gender, peacebuilding, GBV, and Human Rights. Some of the content of these training materials included topics that specifically suited the themes upon which the research team had agreed. In consultation with the participants, my research support team, co-trainer, and gatekeepers, a module was developed including three broad sections, as explained in Section 6.10.3.

6.7.3 Impact Evaluation of Action Research

Impact evaluation is an important aspect of action research. Continuous evaluation is at the core of AR. The goal is to continually refine the implementation of an initiative at every stage and reduce variability and increase reliability (Khan and Tzortzopoulos 2016: 119). For AR to achieve its goal, it is necessary to provide well-established evaluation criteria in order to

establish impact. Because peacebuilding and conflict transformation are long-term group efforts, it will be unrealistic to carry out an impact evaluation. For this reason, I decided to carry out that which she terms a ‘short-term impact’ evaluation after nine months from the time of the action research.

The reason to evaluate the process was to reflect on the training process itself as well as to assess the outcome impact. The workshop evaluation was carried out immediately after the workshop on the last day of the workshop, while the outcome impact evaluation was carried out after nine months. The details of the intervention programme are discussed and presented in detail in the next section. Key points in the data collection and AR procedures are highlighted in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4: Fieldwork and data collection procedures.

Date	Actions taken	Data collection tool(s)	Purpose
June 2018	Baseline survey	Interviews and focus group discussions	To explore the conflicts, peacebuilding environment, and dynamics in Bidibidi refugee settlement. The intention was to establish the nature of the conflicts in the settlement and host communities, how these conflicts were managed, and the extent to which women participated in resolving conflicts, the challenges they faced, and gaps in knowledge. The research team focused on two zones in the camp, and senior government officials from Yumbe District and staff from humanitarian organisations were also interviewed. See publication on <i>Accord on Conflict dynamics in the Bidibidi refugee settlement in Uganda</i> (Dawa 2019)
April 2019	Pilot study	Semi-structured interviews and surveys	This was done to test the tools to be used for the entire data collection; it was after this exercise

		with ten participants	and its results that the research team sat down to adjust the tools.
May 2019	Baseline survey/data collection	KIIs, FGDs, and Surveys	Different data collection tools were used to interview, in detail, very specific participants from the settlement to obtain data on the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The participants included were senior local government officials, RWCs, women group leaders, UNHCR, OPM, community leaders, and other agencies working in the settlement as ordinary community members. The tools used were KIIs, FGDs, and surveys.
Early July 2019	Identification of AR team	Collaborative sessions	After analysing the data from the survey, I moved on to identify 20 participants for the action research. This was a collaborative effort of the research team, CEPAD, RACI, RICE, OPM, YDLG, and key community members. The aim was to work with them and share the findings such that they could identify the specific intervention needed. This was the point where the stakeholders agreed that because of the complexity of the conflicts and relationships between refugees, host communities, and cultural expectations, it was important to include men as part of the solution to the identified issues by including them as participants in the training.
End of July 2019	Mapping the different capacity needs	Collaborative session and workshop	In August, I engaged fully with selected participants to discuss and reflect on all the issues coming up from the survey on women participation and the existing gaps that needed to be addressed. The purpose was to prioritise and narrow down the areas that were of more importance to the women. Two workshop

			meetings were held to arrive at the final action to be undertaken.
1-5 August 2019	Panel beating and tailoring the training manual	I used the capacities gaps that were identified to develop an intervention tool to suit the specific needs of the participants	After analysing and understanding the environment (social, cultural, economic, and political), I could clearly see how the gaps had an impact on women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Together with a colleague who is a peacebuilding expert and aided me and my colleague having previously developed several training manuals for organisations working in the same field in Uganda and South Sudan, my colleague and I focused on tailoring the manuals to suit the specific themes informed by the survey. Together with the participants, my colleague and I identified the following major themes: capacity building in understanding peacebuilding and conflict, conflict management – a response to violence, designing peacebuilding and funding, and gender and peacebuilding.
11-14 August 2019	Intervention	Training workshop	The training was facilitated by Mr. Lam Cosmas, a senior peace scholar. Myself. During the training, Mr. Cosmas and I focused on the gaps that were identified in the mapping for the intervention. Mr. Cosmas and I are certified trainers of nonviolent conflict transformation of the Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation (SweFOR) and Do No Harm, conflict-sensitive programming with Collaborative Development Action (CDA) and a trained trainer of peace and reconciliation at the Duke University, and a trainer of Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). Mr. Cosmas and I had the advantage of having all the tools at their disposal to facilitate the workshop.

			<p>The decision to have a co-trainer who was an experienced peacebuilding trainer was excellent. Both Mr. Cosmas I had worked in South Sudan and with the refugees in Uganda. In addition, Mr. Cosmas spoke fluent Juba Arabic, a language spoken by most participants. This made my work very easy.</p>
14 August 2019	First workshop evaluation	Process evaluation	<p>The workshop evaluation was carried out to see whether the training had met its objectives of the intervention. All participants attested to having learnt a lot, as this was the first kind of training giving them specific skills of peacebuilding and conflict management. The participants however requested to continue receiving support, especially in the field of funding raising, as the partners do not effectively see it as an important component of an intervention. The group divided itself into two groups of Zones 1 and 2 and developed an action point to be undertaken in the zones, and women were encouraged to take leadership in which they had significantly lagged behind. It was then agreed that I continue visiting and monitoring their progress from September 2019 to January 2020 before the next evaluation could be carried out.</p>
July 2020	Final evaluation	Short-term/outcome impact evaluation	<p>After eleven months of the action research, in July 2020, I carried out the Short-Term Impact (STI) evaluation. Because of the restriction imposed by Covid-19 I had to seek permission from OPM. I was given permission with strict measures that included social distancing among the participants, and the provision of a handwashing facility, hand sanitisers, and facemasks. The workshop was organised for one day to reflect on the impact of</p>

			<p>the intervention on individuals and as groups who had designed interventions in the two zones. Three interesting themes emerged: lobbying and advocacy skills for resources mobilisation for women, leadership skills, and conflict management skills, which were rated to be the most useful. The women stated that conflict transformation and advocacy were more important while the men focused mostly on leadership and conflict transformation. The women indicated that they had started responding to daily conflict arising at water points and in their families, and they also formed a peace club and met every week to discuss potential conflicts arising for early warning and responding to them before they escalated. They stressed the increasing prevalence of GBV in the settlement and among host communities. The two groups from the two zones communicated with each other to support interventions in their communities. They used the Yumbe District Local Government Office of the Prime Minister, who had sent representatives to the training, to present their challenges related to resources for peace.</p>
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6.7 Data Analysis Process (Qualitative and Quantitative Data)

Data analysis is an important aspect of research. Data is used to describe elements by assigning a value to them. The values are then organised, processed, and presented within a given context such that they become useful. Data can be in different forms: qualitative and quantitative. This is the stage during which I reflect on the information collected in order to extract meaning from it. Irrespective of the method used in data collection, the first step is to clean the data (Kumar 2014: 296). In mixed methods, the methods used in data collection

determine the way in which researchers communicate the findings. The purpose of analysing data is to obtain usable and useful information (Kumar 2014: 327-329, Siu et al 2010: 238-249). To take advantage of the knowledge gained during the fieldwork through observation and other means, I decided to bring the research team for half a day of debriefing where each one shared their experiences and observations. This was also another form of data that added to the entire study before the analysis started. The analysis, irrespective of whether the data is qualitative or quantitative, may:

- describe and summarise the data,
- identify relationships between variables,
- compare variables,
- identify the differences between variables, and
- forecast outcomes.

Since the study took a mixed methodology approach, it was necessary to maintain consistency in the process of data analysis. The data was managed and organized using statistical package for social science (SPSS) analysis software. I chose the interpretive analysis approach as it relates well with the ontological and epistemological assumptions of her AR design. Interview transcripts were thematically coded via an inductive process, that involved regular discussions between the me (researcher) and the data collection team. Themes and sub-themes were established based on patterns, consistencies, discrepancies, and areas of interest in the data set. Broader discussions with the team to discuss common themes and incongruences between the two data sets (qualitative quantitative). The data analysis was a cyclical process through which data collection and analysis was interrelated, in order to prevent predetermined assumptions from restricting or distorting the findings.

I started by analysing the qualitative data. This was a process that helped to reduce and make sense of vast amounts of information from different sources, such that impressions that shed light on a research question could emerge. It is a process where descriptive information is taken, and an explanation or interpretation is offered. Quantitative data, on the other hand, is numerical and can be used to complete and verify the descriptive information obtained from qualitative data. This process helped me to establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data and to ensure that these links were both transparent (able to be demonstrated to others) and defensible (justifiable given the objectives of the research), as well as to develop a model or theory regarding the underlying structure of the experiences or processes that was evident in the text data.

The data analysis process aimed to present data in an intelligible and interpretable form in order to identify trends and relations in accordance with the research aims. Key themes emerged from both qualitative and quantitative data that helped to draw conclusions and recommendations for action research, for example, the theme of women having less access to resources including education, income, and skills for conflict transformation and peacebuilding. The research results were firstly presented as an analysis of the qualitative data obtained from the individual semi-structured interviews. The analysis of the qualitative data was followed by an analysis of the quantitative data that was recorded by the survey questionnaire, which mostly focused on understanding the relationship between women's participation, their status in the community, and their educational and income levels.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the data from the qualitative and quantitative sections were connected. At the stage of the pilot study, the results of the qualitative data contributed to the development of the quantitative questionnaire for the study. The study took the theoretical framework of key scholars such as Lederach (1995, 2003), Galtung (1996) and Schirch (2013) who underlined the importance of inclusion in one's communities if one wants to achieve sustainable peace. The use of interpretive as well as statistical data analysis helped me to make sense of the data and understand the key factors in the exclusion of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in the context of the study.

6.8 Trustworthiness of the Study

According to Pilot and Beck (2014 cited in Connelly 2016: 1), the trustworthiness or rigour of a study refers to the degree of confidence in the data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study. Regardless of their theoretical orientation, several scholars recognise trustworthiness as an important consideration in social science research (Duff 2008; Stake 1995; Yin 2003). Chilisa and Preece (2005: 166) view trustworthiness as the confidence that researchers and the consumers of research place in the procedures used in gathering data, the collected data, its analysis and interpretation, and its findings and conclusions. In this study, several strategies were used to address the question of the credibility and trustworthiness of the study. The first strategy was prolonged time in the field and engagement with participants which, according to Chilisa and Preece (2005: 166), is "important in enhancing the credibility of a study". I spent a total of 12 months in the field, working collaboratively with the research participants. This gave me ample time to build rapport with the participants, build trust with them, observe salient issues, and notice trends and patterns

being repeated. Creswell (2009) recommends spending prolonged time in the field as a means of increasing the credibility of research findings. He stresses that:

The researcher develops an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and can convey details about the site and people that lends credibility to the narrative accounts. The more experience that a researcher has with participants in their actual setting the more accurate or valid will be the findings (Creswell 2009: 192).

The second strategy that I employed to increase the credibility and trustworthiness of the present research study was the use of triangulation. According to Chilisa and Preece (2005: 167), “triangulation is another strategy for enhancing the credibility of a study based on the assumption that the use of multiple methods, data sources can eliminate biases in the study”. Creswell (2009: 191) takes a similar stand regarding the importance of triangulation for enhancing the trustworthiness of a study and argues that “If themes are established based on converging several sources of data or perspectives from participants, then this process can be claimed as adding to the validity of the study”. As described in Section 6.7, I used multiple methods to collect multiple types of data from multiple sources, which made it possible for me to evaluate her evidence and corroborate the information from different sources before drawing conclusions.

I also used member checks (Creswell 2009; Chilisa and Preece 2005) to enhance the trustworthiness of the present study. This involved verifying with the research participants the themes and patterns that were developing as the data was being collected and analysed. For example, during the interviews, I would summarise that which had been stated and would ask the interviewee to confirm if her summary accurately reflected that which the person had stated. I held a stakeholders’ workshop in Yumbe to present the preliminary findings of the study and to seek the participants’ comments and further input to my understanding of the issues emerging from the study in order to develop the plans for action.

6.9 Validity and Reliability

The credibility of any research undertaking is hinged on the validity and reliability measures that the researcher takes. Validity criteria to which researchers might hold themselves accountable are dependent upon two attributes of their research, namely, the particular methodological design and the paradigmatic assumptions invoked by the researcher (Creswell and Miller 2000 cited in Denzin and Lincoln 2013: 6, Noble and Smith 2015:34-35). It is also the degree to which the researcher has measured what has been set out to measure (Smith 1999 cited in Kumar 2014: 213). Reliability is the relation of the research instruments being

consistent and stable, and hence predictable and accurate (ibid: 215). In other words, a test is stated to be reliable if a repeat measurement made by it under the same condition will produce the same results (Moser and Kalton 1985 cited in Kumar 2014: 15).

Reliability helps with the consistency of the analytical procedures, including accounting for personal and research method biases that may have influenced the findings (Nobel and Smith 2015: 3). In its everyday sense, reliability is the 'consistency' or 'repeatability' of measures. To ascertain the reliability of this research, I relied on my supervisor and the support team who helped me with insightful comments and suggestions on the content, structure, and methodological aspects of her study. I also received considerable peer review from a team of research assistants who gave me feedback every day during debriefing after coming from the field. This helped to fine tune my data collection instruments.

A pilot study plays a large role in revealing deficiencies in the design of a proposed study or procedure, and this was used to address issues – especially adjusting the tools – before the main study, and the resources were expended on large-scale data collection. The pilot study informed and gave feedback to the larger and final data collection, and based on this feedback, I and the research team made adjustments to and refined the research tools before attempting the final data collection, as recommended by Nashwa et al (2018: 2). I ensured that all the important variables (dependent and independent) were covered in the research instruments. The interview instrument was pre-tested with a section of the population of the study.

Newton and Burgess (2008: 25) recognised that many of the frameworks for establishing validity for action are incomplete. They proposed that validity is contingent upon the modes of action research, that is, the mode of action research determines the configuration of validities to assess the knowledge claims of the action research project. The validities identified by Anderson and Herr (1999: 16) were particularly appealing for this purpose. The authors suggested that action research adhere to outcome, process, democratic, catalytic, and dialogic validities. Outcome validity refers to the extent to which the outcomes of the research match the intended purposes of the research (Newton and Burgess 2008: 26). I used the checklist provided by Herr and Anderson (2005) that provides a practical checklist for ensuring research validity in action research. Table 6.5 presents Herr and Anderson's goals for action research and validity criteria.

Table 6.5: Herr and Anderson's goals for Action Research and validity criteria, adapted from Herr and Anderson (2005: 55).

S/N	Goals of Action Research	Quality/Validity Criteria
1	Generation of new knowledge	Dialogic process validity – Form of peer review, this means that the practitioner researchers participate in critical and reflective dialogue with other practitioner researchers
2	The achievement of action-oriented outcomes	Outcome validity – Extent to which the outcomes of the research match the intended purposes of the research
3	The education of both researcher and participant	Catalytic validity orientating and deepening the understanding of the social reality under study and the participants should be moved to some action to change it.
4	Results that are relevant to the local setting	Democratic validity – Refers to the extent to which the research is done in collaboration with all parties who have a stake in the problem under investigation
5	A sound and appropriate methodology	Process validity – Refers to the extent to which problems are framed and solved in a manner that permits ongoing learning of the individual or system. It must also deal with the much-debated problem of what counts as evidence to sustain assertions, as well as the quality of the relationships that are developed by the participants. Process affects outcome.

The authors suggest that “all of these ‘validity’ criteria for practitioner research are tentative and in flux” (Herr and Anderson 2005: 16). In other words, they are only partial. This is because action research is context-specific and focuses on finding a collaborative solution in the context under study. The process of ensuring the validity of the study was, to a large extent, influenced by the insights from Table 6.5. Many social science researchers are accustomed to setting the research agenda as well as determining the route to take when doing research. This is not the case when carrying out action research. From the start, the participants, including the community’s humanitarian agencies, were involved and were given a chance to map the problems that they were facing and how best to develop an action for change. This collaborative approach becomes an important part of the study as there was a back-and-forth feedback and information flow between participants and me.

Triangulation was also carried out at two conceptual levels. Triangulation in research is the use of more than one approach to researching a question. The objective is to increase

confidence in the findings through the confirmation of a proposition using two or more independent measures (Heale Forbes 2013: 98). Triangulation was done in two phases; the first was the data collection phase, and the second was during the data analysis stage. I used a combination of interviews, focus group discussions, and observations during the data collection phase.

There was also a deliberate inclusion of various stakeholders as participants in the study. This also helped in bringing interesting insights into the themes that were being discussed. I felt that the inclusion of men in particular in addressing issues of women was an important part of the study and contributed to the validation exercise. The inclusion of local government officials, traditional chiefs, as well as humanitarian agencies was also an effective way of triangulating the data from the rest of the community members.

6.10 Ethical Considerations

In line with standard practice, the research participants were all informed of the purpose of the study, the study procedures, the duration of the study, and their rights and responsibilities from the beginning of the study. They were informed of their right to refuse to participate and to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. They were told that if they had any questions or concerns about the study, I would be available to listen to them and attend to their concerns. They were also provided with the contact details of my supervisors in case they had questions or concerns regarding the study that I could not address herself. Further, they were informed that if they had any concerns regarding their treatment or rights as research subjects, they could contact the research department of the Durban University of Technology for further clarifications. I asked them to freely decide whether the I should use pseudonyms or their actual names to refer to their comments. They all signed for me to attribute their comments to their real names.

Ethical codes or principles are an expression of how people should behave as individuals and as a society. They are moral judgements that can be applied to particular situations to help in making decisions and guiding behaviour. Inevitably, they are linked to cultural values at a particular time in people's history and are subject to change as attitudes and values evolve. Ethics are rooted in the ancient Greek philosophical inquiry of moral life. They refer to a system of principles which can critically change previous considerations about choices and actions (Fouka and Mantzourou 2011: 4).

As a way of ensuring the credibility of the study, I needed to consider important ethical issues. This involved three aspects: negotiating and securing access and protecting participants. I secured a letter of access from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and Yumbe District Local Government (YDLG) to undertake the study in Bidibidi. I secured letters of consent from all gatekeeper organisations that were involved at every stage of the study see appendix I. An important consideration is to maintain respect within and among the AR team.

Gray (2009: 323) emphasises that given the facilitation role of action research, the relationships and working processes between the researcher and participants are of central importance. This involves ensuring that people are not harmed by the researcher's actions. I was guided by Gray's observations when conducting and leading an AR group, as presented in Table 6.6.

A potential challenge that I had to deal with was the possibility of her entire research assistant team having no prior background in peace and conflict research, which could have potentially affected the research outcome. It was fortunate that among the six assistants, five of them were postgraduate students and one had completed her graduate studies and was experienced in conducting research. I needed to invest in training them on terminology related to the research and how to administer the research tools. They all understood my code of conduct and professional ethics which emphasise the importance of ethical behaviour in research that requires that the researcher (I) to adhere to and promote the principles of integrity, accountability, independence/impartiality, respect for persons and communities, and professionalism in his/her research engagements (WHO 2017: 10). They also understood the human ethics application process and the need to uphold ethical standards. The administration of the consent forms, questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions were all held at the research site in Zones 1 and 2. Strict confidentiality was exercised in the collection, storage, and use of the data accruing from the research. Personal information was further protected through the use of pseudonyms to safeguard the identity of the subjects. At home, the data was kept locked in a room I set aside for the research work. Further, to limit unauthorised access to the data files my laptop, I kept all the computer files with information on the study under password protection. Table 6.6 presents ethical considerations in action research.

Table 6.6: Ethical considerations in Action Research, adopted from Gray (2009: 323).

Working principle	Principles as implemented in Action Research

Relationships	Promote feeling of equality for all involved, maintain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmony • Resolve conflicts openly • Encourage cooperative relationships
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen attentively to people • Be truthful and sincere • Act in socially and culturally appropriate ways • Regularly advise others as to what is happening
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable significant levels of involvement • Enable people to perform significant tasks • Provide support to people as they learn to act for themselves • Deal personally with people rather than representatives or agents
Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise the involvement of all relevant individuals • Ensure cooperation of other groups, agencies, and organisations • Ensure that all relevant groups benefit from activities

I had to ensure that all members of the AR team were treated equally. An important consideration was to lay ground rules for the group. The members agreed and committed themselves to respecting each other's opinion as well as respecting diversity. The members also agreed to ensure political neutrality as well as religious diversity. The team agreed that activities would be gender-, religion-, and culturally sensitive in order to not harm any of the participants.

One common challenge when dealing with groups is that some members end up dominating proceedings. As a precaution, the team agreed that all members would be given an equal opportunity to participate. The team agreed that for every round of the discussions, a group member was not to make more than one presentation before everyone else had made his or her own contribution. However, an exception was made when members were not forthcoming on the particular theme being discussed, in which case other willing members could then contribute more than once.

I also ensured that there was an equal distribution of tasks especially during the intervention phase. All members carried out one or more tasks for each session. This was done to ensure inclusivity as well as ownership of the process.

6.11 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is an important issue in social science research. Gibson and Brown (2009: 9) define reflexivity as “the process of reflecting on the role of the researcher in the construction of meaning, and, critically of data”. Chilisa and Preece (2005: 168) maintain that reflexivity is a strategy to help ensure that the over-involvement of the researcher is not a threat to the credibility of the study – according to the authors’ perspective, reflexivity refers to “the assessment of the influence of the researcher’s background ways of perceiving reality, perceptions, experiences, ideological biases and interests during research”. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) hold a similar view and add that the orientation of researchers will always be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer upon them. Therefore, it is important for one to always be transparent about the positions that one takes during the research process and how these positions impact one’s analysis and interpretation of the data that one collects and the conclusions that one draws.

In this regard, the approach that I took in this study was that of being a participant observer. Yin (2014: 20-40) describes participant observation as “a mode of data collection whereby a researcher becomes involved in the activities of the subject being studied”. Being a participant observer enabled me to work collaboratively with the research participants during the data collection and action research preparations and presentations. I trained the enumerators and gave them tools for data collection I also gave them feedback every day and together, they reflected on daily issues that were raised regarding the adjustment of the tools. I supported the facilitator through the development of the training content and manual and the three days of training, and sometimes helped to supervise the groups during group work, taking notes and clarifying research-specific questions.

I subscribe to the view that social research is not a neutral activity that can be carried out in some autonomous realm that is insulated from the wider society and from the biography of the researcher in such a way that its findings can entirely be unaffected by social processes and personal characteristics (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). Social research, as Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), Neuman (2012) have noted, involves participating in the social world no

matter in which role and reflecting on the product of that participation. It means that there can be no way in which one can escape the social world in order to study it.

The important point to note is that when people entrust their views to a researcher, part of one's moral obligation as a social scientist is to ensure that they are treated with the respect and fairness that they deserve. In this regard, I made every effort in the course of carrying out this study to rely on evidence drawn not from observations alone but from multiple sources as a basis of her analyses and conclusions.

6.12 Limitation of the Study

A major limitation of this study that suggests directions for future studies is the participants' understanding of women's role in relation to socially ascribed roles as being mothers and therefore being required to do domestic work despite the context. This was mainly based on my personal observation of the observable features during the action research and the information obtained from the research participants through questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions.

I did not get a chance to speak to cultural leaders from South Sudan, since they could not be found in the settlements in Uganda, to obtain their perspectives to enrich my understanding of how they viewed women and what they thought of their role in peacebuilding and conflict transformation, particularly those aspects that might not be easily observable from the South Sudanese cultural perspective but that could be explained from the knowledge of cultural leaders and elders. Similarly, my understanding of women's role in public life was mainly based on my own observations and information that she had obtained in reading about the subject and from the colleagues with whom she had worked for the past ten years in this field. I did not focus on obtaining the thoughts of the cultural leaders from South Sudan on the role of women. This was because I wanted to keep the focus on the sampled population within the settlement and it was also not possible to travel to South Sudan to gain the specific cultural perspectives from cultural leaders. Future studies will need to pay attention to cultural leaders to obtain their voices in the analysis of the potential of women in general and the limitations for their participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

6.13 Research Location

The study was carried out in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Yumbe District. The Bidibidi settlement covers an area of 250 square kilometres. According to the government reports cited

by the senior government official of the Yumbe District Local Government during the interview, the settlement has an estimated population of 285,000 refugees. The settlement is composed primarily of under-utilised 'hunting grounds' considered by the host community as unsuitable for agriculture.

The area consists of low, rolling hills and mostly rocky soil. Bidibidi is divided into five zones, and each of these zones is divided into clusters, which are further divided into individual villages surrounded by host community settlements. Refugee leadership structures parallel Uganda's own local governance model, which is composed of ascending levels of local councils. At the village level, there is a RWC1; at the cluster level, a RWC2; and for each zone, a RWC3. These are decided by elections overseen by the OPM. The RWC at each level is headed by a chair (Dawa 2019: 7).

For the specificity of the results, I decided to focus on two zones from five, that is, Zones 1 and 2. These zones were chosen because they host refugees from different ethnic groups from South Sudan. Zone 1 is the reception centre where Ugandans and South Sudanese are effectively found interacting on a daily basis. Figure 6.3 depicts a map showing the research area.

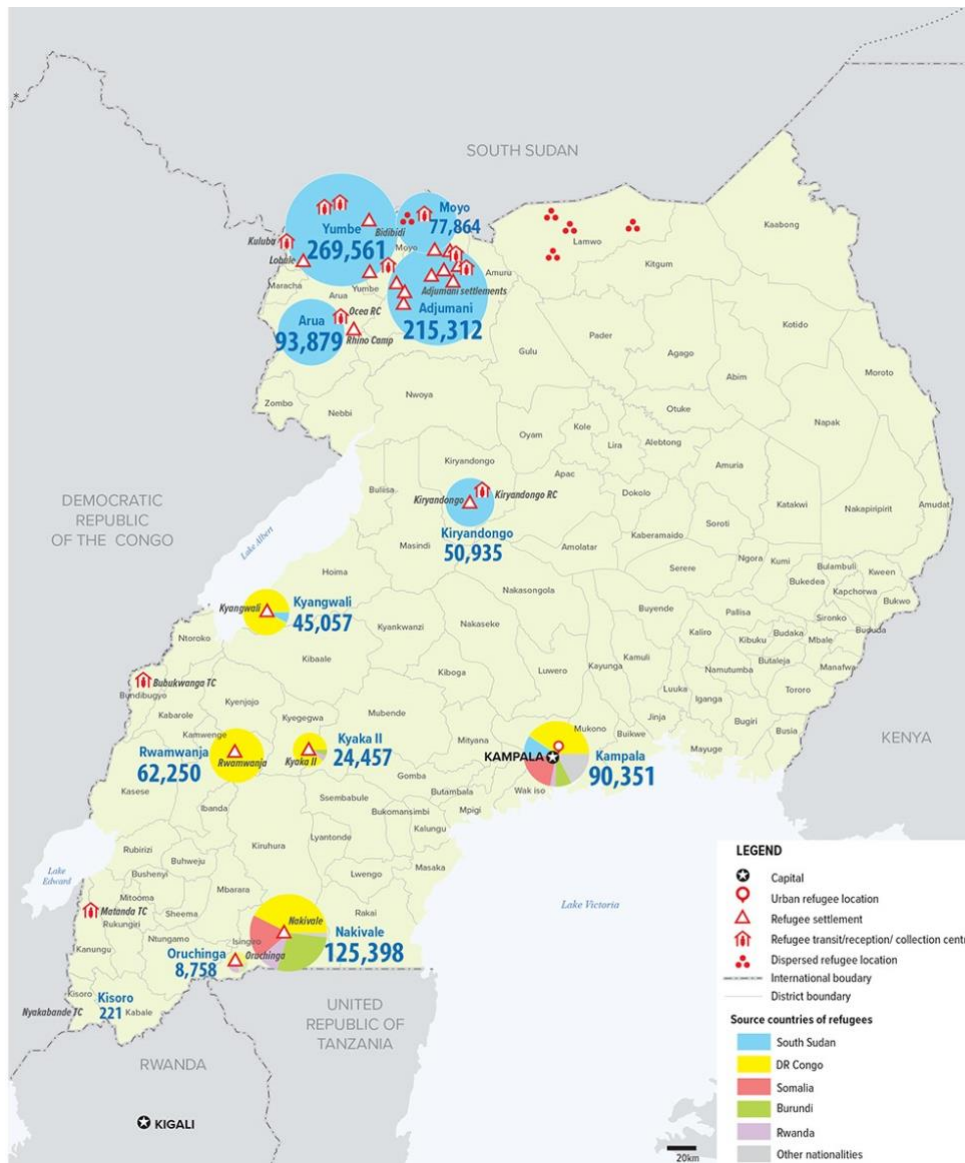


Figure 6.3: Map showing Bidibidi refugee settlement In Yumbe District of in West Nile region, Uganda (Source: Dawa 2018:46).

6.14 Summary and Reflection

This chapter has explained the research design, context, and methodology guiding the study. It has also elaborated on the philosophical assumptions guiding the study. The chapter detailed the stages during data collection. The study took the form of a mixed methodology (qualitative and quantitative) study on the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Zones 1 and 2 were selected and in each zone, six villages were sampled for data collection in Bidibidi refugee settlement, Yumbe District, Uganda. The fieldwork started in May 2019, and it ended in July 2020. My major sources of data included observations, semi-

structured interviews, surveys, focus group discussions, field notes, and journal reflections. In addition to obtaining data from the research participants, I also held interviews with key informants who were national experts, including the Office of the Prime Minister responsible for refugees in Uganda. Appendices III to VI include the questionnaires, interview guides, and focus group questions employed for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, the international rescue committee, Caritas International, the Danish Refugee Council, the residence district commissioner and his deputy in Yumbe District, the Yumbe District Local Government community development officer, and representatives of civil society organisations (CSO) and women and peace experts. Furthermore, I collected and analysed important documents and artefacts to complement the data. In the next chapter, the major findings of the study, based on the three research objectives, will be presented.

During this process, I learnt different dynamics such as the art of flexibility as an important trait of a good researcher in an unstable context such as a refugee settlement. During the fieldwork, I learnt that women and men considered it necessary to work together as a team to build sustainable peace. This disqualifies many of the feminist arguments of UNwomen that state that gender equality can be achieved if one focuses on building women. Instead, I learnt that gender equality cannot be achieved if one focuses on women alone because the men feel left out and sabotage any efforts that involve women. I also learnt that women who had access to some resources were being disrespectful to the men who were not able to be the ‘traditional bread winners’ – this confirms the traditional African view that a man, as the head of the family, must provide.

Lastly, using mixed methodology including action research was an experience that provided me with an opportunity for learning and unlearning in the process of the research. For example, I had to unlearn her practice of ‘traditional academic research’, and she had to help her research team, the OPM, and the research participants to understand why the action research was important in her study – this received a special recognition from the RDO who stated that “in my years of working with refugees, I have never come across a researcher who comes to collect data and comes back to train participants based on the recommendation from her finding” (RDO speech during training closing on 13 August 2019).

CHAPTER SEVEN:

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the method of the study which adopted a mixed methodology approach to collect data from a variety of sources. Data pertaining to the study were collected from respondents comprising refugee and host community women and men through observations, individual interviews, focus group discussions, semi-structured questionnaires, key informant interviews, document analyses and action research that was implemented at the end to achieve the research objective. The data collected was used to identify common themes for action research.

This chapter presents the major findings and analyses of the data relating to the first research objective, that is, to examine the roles and capacity of women in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Uganda. In order to better understand the role that women play in peacebuilding and conflict transformation, I chose to focus on the participants' peacebuilding practices as my unit of analysis, and I drew on personal observations, interviews, questionnaires, and focus group discussions as my main sources of data. Evidence from the data suggests that women can indeed play an important role in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in specific ways: (a) Motherhood and childcare as traditional peacebuilding mechanism, (theme 1); (b) women as source of information leaders/mediators, used to promote community resilience (theme 2); (c) intermarriages between communities (marriages as a bridge between host community and refugees (theme 3) and (d) Social support psycho-social and spiritual healing to resolve and transform violent conflicts (theme 4).

The second part of the discussion addresses the second objective which is to identify the reasons for the limited participation/exclusion of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation and to establish approaches for engaging women and men to work together in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Under this objective, I used certain thematic approaches to discuss the findings. The last part of Objective 2 was addressed through Objective 3, which was an intervention through three days of training for capacity building. The factors that contributed to the low/limited level of women participation were (a) a lack of access

to resources for women including inadequate levels of education/training for women (theme 1), (b) gender-insensitive infrastructure in the settlements (theme 2), (c) cultural barriers that restrict women's participation in public life and a general lack of focus on peacebuilding and conflict transformation (theme 3), and (d) including men into women peacebuilding programs is more beneficial as this facilitates relationship building for sustainable peace (theme 4). The third objective was to implement peacebuilding and conflict transformation interventions (AR) focusing on building the capacity of 20 women and men in responding to conflicts in the settlement. The process of the action research and its final evaluation is presented.

7.2 Findings and Analysis relating to Objective 1

7.2.1 Introduction

Objective 1 of this study, as given in Section 1.15 of Chapter 1, is:

To examine the roles and capacity of women in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Uganda

The roles of women are discussed below firstly as identified in literature and by data from the study around these roles.

Women's roles in peacebuilding across conflict areas, over the years, highlight the importance of moving women beyond the "humanitarian front of the story" (Organisation of Human Welfare) (OWF 2016:1). Women have influenced and can continue to influence peacebuilding processes as that they go beyond defining peace as the absence of violent conflict and focus on the principles of inclusion, good governance, and justice. Women need to be present to discuss issues such as genocide, impunity, and security if a just and enduring peace is to be built (Peacebuilding Manual/Women's Role in Peacebuilding 2016). Women can either be victims of conflict or agents of peace. Frequently women have averted conflicts and have been responsible for resolving conflicts. Peacebuilding needs the involvement of women for many reasons, one has been noted by a good number of scholars – Sjoberg (2014: 135), Ndey (2015: 7), Maina (2016: 193-194), and Opinia and Bubenzer (2011: 1-2) – that during violent conflicts and wars, women are forced to assume new roles as heads of families, providers, combatants, and freedom fighters, as confirmed by the literature.

Women are "naturally" peaceful (Galtung 1996: 40; Potter 2004: 4): Women have played a variety of roles throughout history; their gender identities allow them to carry out some forms of peacebuilding that men cannot carry out (Sadiki 2010: 46-78). In addition, because conflict affects women and men differently, some women have found it advantageous to draw on skills,

assets, and capacities that are available to them in oppressive patriarchal systems and harness these for productive use in peacebuilding.

Women as source of information and communication: Women as sources of information and in breaking communication gaps in a community represent important qualities of women: patience, the capacity to listen, networking. In Bidibidi, many women run small businesses which enables them to be mobile and move from one location to another. This mobility of women in their economic activities allows for gathering and sharing information in an informal way. This also can help explain why there is less conflict between refugee women and host community women as they are meeting at marketplaces, selling and buying the same things. This mobility and informal networks also help women to be in a position to gauge the mood of the community and gather information that could aid peace process. This was clearly demonstrated among the refugee and host community women who are able to share information across the two communities.

Women and mothers and peacemakers: Motherhood and childcare. That children learn from their mothers is clearly understood throughout all cultures. In Africa there is a saying, “a child is who the mother is”, meaning a child picks the character of the mother. The role of women in peace-building and peace-making with specific reference to motherhood is yet to be given sufficient attention, as it often assumed to be women’s nature and/or a general societal imposed responsibility without isolating its implication on societal peace processes.

Of particular interest is the role of woman as a mother, guardian, and educator. In effect, the mother’s love for the child starts from the period of pregnancy. This same love is made manifest right through birth through to adulthood and beyond. It is the mother as the first educator of the child who can provide moral, social and cultural values as well as a skill that can include the skill of mediation and peace-making, a key aspect of a harmonious home.

Women and intermarriages facilitating peace: Marriage is an important institution in African culture as well as all cultures. In Africa, you do not marry an individual but the family, the clan and the tribe. One respondent said:

if you had a conflict with another tribe or clan and your daughter gets married there, that would end the conflict because you become one family (Interview, 10 August 2018).

Marriage and intermarriage in African tradition have significantly served a source or agent of peace among warring factions. Women’s role in marriage as peacemaker and peacebuilder in traditional African society is based on their position as mothers and wives of the combatants.

Women are for the most part uninterested in war and conflict in that wars can make them widows and heads of families as the men go to war and leave them. Further, women want their children to live fulfilled lives and they would not want to see their sons die for a war that could have been avoided. Marriage and inter-marriages encouraged cultural diffusion and a sense of oneness that assisted in no small ways to achieve harmony in the system. African tradition respects the position of an in-law, and it is unimaginable to start waging war against your in-law realizing that such action may affect your own grandchildren and family. It is important to note that this intermarriage is not among all the ethnic groups, especially the Nuer and Dinka, who for cultural norms and beliefs will not allow their girls to marry outside of their tribe. In addition, a Uganda man would generally not be able to afford to raise all the cattle that would be demanded for marrying a Nuer or Dinka girl.

Women as offering social support: Women are seen giving support to other women, they have formed groups in churches and markets where they support each other and share their resources. Respondents of the general survey were asked to describe how women are contributing to peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The responses that they gave are presented in Figure 7.1.

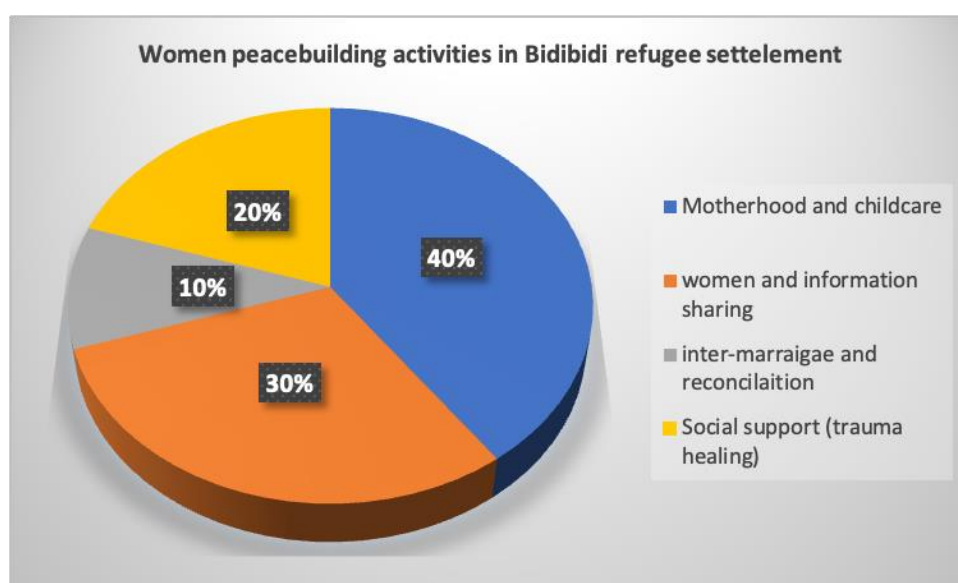


Figure 7.1: Pie chart showing responses (represented as percentages) on women's actions that led to peaceful coexistence. (Source: own data).

Data in Figure 7.1 indicates that 40% of the respondents saw motherhood as a key to peacebuilding, 30% believed sharing information was an important aspect that contributes to peaceful co-existence, 20% believed that social support given by women (psychosocial

support, religious teaching etc.) contributed to peace and 10% thought that marriage, especially inter-marriage, played a key role as women begin to move across cultures. The response of the majority conforms to the literature and theories reviewed that woman generally, by their nature and socialization, are more peaceful and peace-loving, and they play an instrumental role in and are often at the centre of mediations and dialogues in the settlement, though mostly informally. For example, the writings on the role of African women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation by Nwapa (1992, 1995a, 1995b,) regarding women's roles in traditional African settings and how they use their roles as mothers and wives to non-violently transform conflict, are confirmed in the Bidibidi refugee settlement where women have formed groups at the community level such as in churches, schools, and markets. In these spaces, they support each other morally, financially, and psychologically. A participant stated the following:

In those days, women would be the ones taking care and training children with good moral especially in relation to respecting elders, women are left at home as guards to take care of the home and the man knew the woman was there to keep the children and households safe, you did have to mind of what would happen if you went hunting and digging all day.

This confirms the writings of Arabi (2011: 195) and Maina (2016: 192) that women have the ability to care for their relatives and children in times of war. Furthermore, the respondents noted that with the help of the Implementing Partners (IPs), women have formed saving groups and peace clubs that provide a platform for them to participate in meetings, speaking to fellow women to encourage them while providing psychosocial support and advice. There are also women centres where women and girls meet to discuss peace issues coupled with the platform provided by the various churches through their teachings.

During the surveys, the research team wanted to confirm the different roles of women and men during conflict. The respondents were asked to mention the different roles given to women during violent conflicts this was also to confirm of there is shift in women's roles during conflict. The responses are presented in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Responses on the roles given to women during armed conflicts.

Roles		Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Providing for the security of the household	25	62.5	62.5
	Securing shelter	9	22.5	23.5

	Making decisions and managing affairs	2	5	7.5
	Providing the fighting forces with food	1	2.5	2.5.4
	Ensuring comfort for the fighters	1	2.5	2.5
	Total	38	95	100
Missing System		2	5	5
Total		40	100	100

The table above show results of roles of women given during conflict. The percentage is divided by 40. The results from Table 7.1 show that the majority (25, or 62.5%) of the respondents believed that women provide security for the household during violent conflicts, while nine (22.5%) thought that women secure shelter for the fighters, two (5%) of the respondents stated that women's roles include making decisions and managing affairs, and only one (2.5%) of the respondents answered that the role of woman was to provide the fighting forces with food. Similarly, one (2.5%) of the respondents was of the view that women ensured comfort for the fighters. The results suggest that the power and importance of women can be seen in times of war and conflict where they take the responsibility to protect and provide food.

The results from Table 7.1 are supported by the story of Ayikoru Joyce of Yumbe District¹⁰ which provides an example of how women can effectively use their power as mothers and wives to have collective needs to the advantage of peace. In addition, women are seen in promoting community resilience in the settlement. This is demonstrated through the work of women leaders who have been trained on alternative dispute resolution, who have engaged in peacebuilding activities through drama for peace in the settlement, and who participate in community therapy trauma healing and counselling services for fellow women.

¹⁰ See also section 5.8 of this thesis.

It transpired that woman had also taken leadership roles in the settlement, especially in Refugee Welfare Committees (RWCs), through which they are promoting an integration of local approaches to global peace initiatives. For example, women had formed peace clubs where they work with their male counterparts and other community structures to sensitise the community and coordinate peacebuilding activities and even advocate for women's rights. These findings conform to Maina (2016: 196) and other authors' views regarding women taking on new responsibilities including leadership during the conflict.

When the respondents were asked about the roles that local women leaders play in peacebuilding in the settlement, they gave varied responses, which are presented in Figure 7.2.

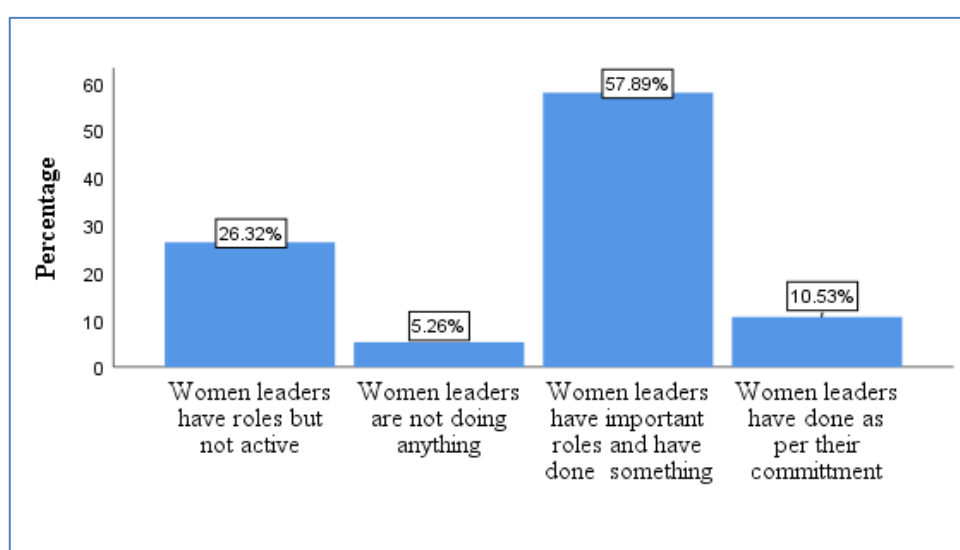


Figure 7.2: Bar chart showing responses on the role of women in peacebuilding in the settlement.

The results from Figure 7.2 indicate that the majority of the respondents (22 or 57.89%) stated that women leaders had important roles and have done something in the community, while ten (26.32%) of the respondents stated that women leaders had roles but were not active, only four (10.53%) of the respondents stated that women leaders had carried out their commitments, and two (5.26%) of the respondents stated that women leaders were not doing anything. The response of the majority was supported by some participants who reported that women in the refugee settlement do most of the domestic work of looking for food/income for the families, and care for children at the household and community levels which contribute to peacebuilding, because where their basic needs are met, there will be fewer conflicts and less

violence. Unfortunately, this homecare done by women is not documented and because culturally, this is believed to be their work, it is not seen contributing to peace.

Further support for the role of women in the community is obtained from literature which confirms that women did that which was necessary for their families with decorum, and they shouldered the responsibility of providing material resources for the upkeep of their families, which meant engaging in economic activities such as farming, manufacturing, trade, and craft-making outside of the normal household duties (Veldwijk 2011: 157; Berger 2018: 10; Mulamula 2017: 2).

When respondents were asked how refugee women relate peacefully with host community women, the respondents highlighted that women engage in creating peaceful relationships with host communities as they engage in alternative livelihood activities to respond to issues of food shortage. They also guide fellow women and children in peacebuilding. Women are involved in child protection which caters for both refugee and host community children, and they compose songs and drama about peace and psychosocial support for both communities. In addition, women leaders and female opinion leaders are often involved in conflict resolution at the family level but are not decision-makers and act more as observers, according to participants.

In addition, it was observed that women in the settlement have invested time in creating peaceful relationships with host communities by doing barter trade with host communities such as exchanging food for firewood instead of going to the gardens of host communities to pick their firewood, which has been a major issue escalating conflicts between the two groups. From observations made during the field research, women are also at the forefront in engaging in alternative livelihood activities to respond to issues of food shortage while raising children. Women owned most of the small businesses in the settlement (Dawa observation notes, May 2019).

However, it is important not to forget that women have played diverse roles in support of war and other forms of violence in nationwide conflict and in the settlement, from being warriors to supportive wives and mothers and caregivers. This can be seen in countries such as Sudan, El Salvador, Liberia, Mozambique, Northern Uganda, Rwanda, South Africa, and there is evidence that suggests women's participation in war and conflict is not only as victims but as active fighters (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002, Summerfield, 2013, Liebling-Kalifani et al 2011, Enloe 2000; Sjoberg 2012, 2013). In FGDs with refugee women and men (separate FGDs), the women agreed that at times they insulted and accused their husbands of not providing for their

families. The men stated that they felt useless because they had no access to resources, and this caused more domestic violence (FGD 7 May 2019). This was confirmed in a KII with senior staff of the Danish Refugee Council who recounted the number of times they had to intervene in addressing violent conflicts in families that arose as a result of women accused of being disrespectful to their husbands (Interview with Danish Refugee Council staff, 7 May 2019).

Corroborative evidence from literature of African scholars indicates that women had power to control social life. For example, in Zimbabwe, the *Nehanda*, a woman spirit medium, used to perform traditional ceremonies that ensured good rains and harvests (Muvingi 2016: 108). This is supported by the interview results where it was clearly revealed that during cattle raiding, women of Dinka, Nuer, Murle and other cattle-keeping tribes would sing songs overnight celebrating youths who had gone to raid. This is that which they stated:

We would wait in anticipation of their arrival with cattle raided from other tribes, we would cook and have big ceremonies that was led by elders. Any young man who was afraid of going to raid was considered women and is not respected (Dawa interview notes, May 2019).

In addition to this, when a young Nuer man was interviewed, he lamented:

Before I run to Uganda there was fighting, my father and mother wanted me to join and I refused, they despised men and influenced my brothers to all hate me, I was left alone, and sometimes my mother would not give me food calling my 'coward'. One day I decided to come to Uganda, I am here all by myself, all my family members are in South Sudan, when I try to call, my father refused anyone to talk to me; they all despise me, but I do not regret my decision (Dawa interview notes, May 2019).

Similarly, in Uganda, there is substantial evidence that women of different tribes could still influence the youth to take part in violence or peace. These findings suggest that the women in the settlement have capacity and can indeed play an important role in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in specific ways. As women are at the core of community life, they therefore can effectively participate in community reconstruction through utilizing their experiences in conflict resolution. The findings from the field research support the view that women's strategic position at the family and community levels enhances their resourcefulness for promoting community resilience through trauma healing, taking care of war victims, providing for their families, teamwork, and promoting the integration of the local approaches with the global approaches to peacebuilding practices through peace committees.

Furthermore, the respondents were asked if they had a peace committee in their community, the details of their responses are presented in Figure 7.3.

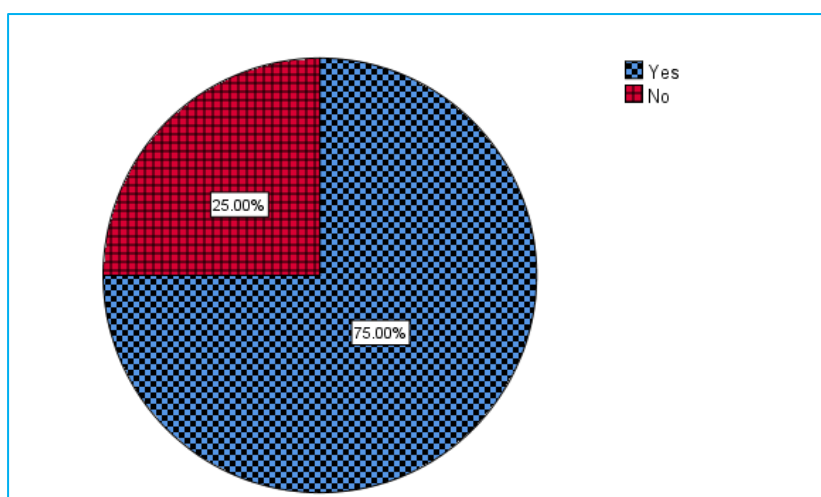


Figure 7.3: Pie chart showing the responses on whether there are peace committees in the settlement.

The findings from Figure 7.3 indicate that the majority of the respondents (31, or 75.00%) agreed that they had peace committees, while nine (22.00%) disagreed. This implies that some of the respondents were not aware of the existence of peace committees in the settlement. This suggests a lack of awareness which can have a significant impact on women's participation in peacebuilding as noted by Issifu (2016: 142-3) in his article on local peace committees in Africa and the unseen role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

7.2.2 Peace Committee Membership Composition

I inquired into the composition of the peace committee to find out the number of women in the membership. The responses of the respondents are summarised in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Responses on the number of women in the peace committee.

Options	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Not sure	8	20.0	20.0
No women	1	2.5	22.5
A few	20	50.0	72.5
Many	5	12.5	85.0
N/A	6	15.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	

The results from Table 7.2 show that women were did not know of committee's membership as indicated by the majority twenty (50%), while eight (20%) of the respondents were not sure, six (15%) answered 'not applicable', five (12.5%) believed that there were many women in the committee, and only one (2.5%) reported a lack of women in the peace committee. The majority response suggests limited knowledge of the committee's membership, which in turn may imply that the role of women in peacebuilding is not well known. The findings of Angom (2018: 148-168) indicate that during the Juba peace talks, the activities of women were not taken seriously, and she argues that these are some of the reasons that contribute to marginalisation of women, reflecting a culture of silence and exclusion.

Subsequently, the respondents were asked to give suggestions for women's active participation in decision making. The respondents suggested the involvement of women in family decision-making, especially for the marriage of a girl child. A respondent reported the following regarding Nuer and Dinka culture:

You can choose a man but the decision whether you marry that man or not is dependent on your father and uncle. First, they will want to know if the man is from their tribe and secondly if he has enough cows. Nuer and Dinka can't allow their girls to marry far for the fear that they won't be able to know if something happens to her but at the same time, when you marry that man meets the requirements, he will marry you and you are not allowed to come home even if he beats you every day and threatens to kill you. You can't decide to come back because that is a shame for your family, they will need to return the cow and yet your brothers need to get married.

This was a contradicting story: first, it is stated that the woman cannot marry someone from far away because the woman's family wants to know what will happen to her, which appears as though the family is protecting the woman, but when the woman marries someone who meets the demands of the marriage, the woman cannot come back even if she is beaten. There is need for women to decide for themselves and if they are empowered to know their rights, they could challenge their families. The respondents asked if having women leaders such as in RWCs and LCs, and training women in community policing and helping women to learn their rights, would increase their participation. Most (91.76%) of the key informants stated 'yes' and added that capacity building and training in peacebuilding, human rights and peaceful coexistence is core. They remarked that having empowered women leaders would help to resolve the conflicts and protect women since they are at the forefront of them.

They also stated that most conflicts in the settlement are due to the competition for scarce resources which mostly affects women's daily lives regarding access to firewood, water, and

food. They mentioned that it would be good for the women leaders in the settlement to emphasise peace through women in the leadership roles by way of campaigns, mediation, and sensitising the community on domestic violence and GBV. In addition, a respondent lamented that her experience of war has taught her a lesson, thus, she felt that contributing to peacebuilding was important. She stated that women like her should think of generating peacebuilding ideas, talk to husbands and children about peace, and promote the sensitisation of fellow women and others about peace.

It was discovered that women also engaged in advocating for peace and human rights in the settlement and are involved in conflict transformation/resolution campaigns and mediation. Some women in the settlement have also been trained by implementing partners to manage GBV cases and general protection issues, to lead reconciliation initiatives, to create women groups, and train fellow women in peacebuilding and child protection. A few of those women were seen being active, however, their interventions were not documented anywhere which makes their work invisible. This is consistent with the argument that most times women's efforts are not really recognised (Sjoberg 2014),

Generally, women are doing that which they can in their capacity for peace in the settlement. However, the negative perception of women being under men has greatly impacted them, causing the poor representation of women in leadership positions, coupled with the perception that issues of peacebuilding are men's issues. Key informants told the research team that

Women's contribution towards the welfare of the community and family has been taken for granted; that is why they don't have the liberty to access resources and assets.

When they participate in livelihood projects, the projects are sabotaged as men demand women to give the money that they have earned from their small businesses. A respondent told the research team:

Yes, the men can dig, we work together but when it comes to the time of harvest, the man goes to establish the market price and comes back and asks you to take for example one basin of millet to the market, he already knows how much money to expect, if you make a mistake of using part of that money even for purchasing household needs, you will have serious problem. Even though you worked together and took the goods to the market, it is up to the man to decide if you should have some of the money or not.

This is a confirmation of the powerlessness of women as they are dominated by the patriarchal system.

During the training developed through this study (see subsequent chapter), one woman who gave her consent to use her real name, Hellen, told the research team:

I was born in Uganda and grew up here until 2005 when my parents decided we should go back to South Sudan. I know these Lugbaras they are good people. I was brought up by a single mother with the help of the Lugbara. My mum would rent land from them for farming, when the harvest was ready, she would share with those who did not have. My mum taught me how to be strong even without a husband. I got married but my mother in-law did not like me, my husband was never at home, so I spend most time with my mother-in-law. I got tired of the suffering, one day I decided and left and told my husband I will not allow his mum to humiliate me. It is now five years I left but that did not stop me. I know my people look at me as spoilt girl but what else can I do. I wanted to have another child, so I decided to have another man and get pregnant, but before I got pregnant, I told him I only wanted the child so when I conceived, I told him and made it clear that it was over, and I was just two months. I gave birth and my baby is 9 months now. I take responsibility for my decision and want work hard to give better life for my children. I am not afraid of anything because if my mum did it, I can do it. This training has given me the most powerful tool to be what I really wanted to be.

I finds Hellen's use of the statement "I take responsibility" very striking, because it signals her determination to claim her new identity as an independent woman and therefore a powerful person. In this regard, the training provided Helen with the lens to view herself from a completely different perspective. She no longer views herself as an insignificant, powerless, and undisciplined girl in her community. She feels that she is now an equally powerful person because she can now relate her story to the lessons of the training. Her new gained skill has not only allowed her to recognise herself as a powerful person, but it has also allowed her to view herself as being equal to a man. She spoke energetically in a deep voice of a typical Lugbara man while nodding her head and punching into the air to demonstrate how she felt as she walked like a man in the room, which made the participants at the workshop burst into a prolonged laughter.

7.3 Findings and Analysis relating to Objective 2

Objective 2 of this study, as given in Section 1.15 of Chapter 1, is:

To identify reasons for the limited participation/exclusion of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation and to establish approaches for engaging women and men together in addressing women's lack of participation/exclusion.

I wanted to understand the factors that are limiting women's participation in the camp. As we have already seen in 7.2, women are mostly seen in track 6 and 7 of peacebuilding process and even then, they still have some limitations to their full participation.

The themes identified were lack of resources for women (funds), gender-insensitive infrastructure in the settlements, lack of knowledge and skills, cultural barriers that restrict women's participation in public lives and general lack of focus on peacebuilding and conflict transformation, and an inadequate level of education/training for women. The themes identified in section 7.1 guided the discussion of Objective 2. From the different data sources, women are seen as being generally peaceful and peace-loving despite their limited participation as observed by the respondents. One respondent in Zone 2 noted that:

Women have inherent characteristics that make them more peaceful and peace loving. For example, when our sons start a fight here, it is we the women who console, council them and say please do not do this, you are brothers when they fight and get hurt, it is we mothers who face the pain.

This observation is in conformity with the views of Galtung (1996: 40) and Potter (2004: 4) regarding the inborn qualities of women which also concur with the essentialist feminist theory that women's overall peacebuilding ability emanates from their innate peace-loving nature and that women have always been affiliated with reconciliation and peacebuilding; hence their inherent ability is to influence peace. Even with the above-mentioned common knowledge, women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation initiatives has been limited according to the findings of the study. This was attributed to the lack of access to resources including education and training that would facilitate their participation in any activity in public life, including conflict transformation and peacebuilding. The respondents in the study largely agreed that the level of participation of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation is minimal because of the lack of access to resources and they thought that there was a need for deliberate affirmative action to see women take more active roles and participate in the process of peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

According to the findings, women take part in activities in churches and other informal groups as opposed to formal conflict transformation and peacebuilding activities because in the former, they do not need specific skills and they do not feel as though they are competing. They stated that men mostly do not stop them from going to church but would question if they go for community activities like peace activism. This finding confirms the seminal research of Burns *et al.* (2001: 258) in the United States of America who found out that women had a higher involvement than men in some factors related to participation in religious associations. Women's religious activity is seen as acceptable to men in this study as well.

The study revealed that the limited participation and exclusion of women are escalated by the gender-insensitive structures in the settlements. Across the settlements, the structures are

patriarchal from the community level, including for the host community. The local councils and refugee welfare councils' system is dominated by men at the top (RWC3 and LC3) in the entire region let alone the refugee hosting districts. One cannot find a single woman who is a member of RWC3 or LC3. There are woman representatives in the councils but not at the top. This leaves women to think that those top positions are for men, as one participant relayed to the research team during an FGD:

Even if you want to compete, the men will tell you this is men's work, even other women will see you as being disrespectful so avoid this kind of issues, women tend to leave the top leadership to men, and those who get to the lower level are most appointed not really election by ballot like for men.

This type of practice and thinking leads to a culture of discrimination and exclusion against women, as they cannot compete for political seats that could support their participation in different platforms including for peace and improve their leadership and voices globally. When asked which factors limit women's participation in or promote their exclusion from peacebuilding activities, the results are that:

The largest group (27.1%) of the respondents stated a lack of knowledge as the major factor for the lack of participation of women,

22% believed that there was a lack of support for women participation at all levels including from humanitarian actors,

18.6% stated that there was a lack of encouragement and low self-esteem of the women themselves,

11% stated that women are often not invited to be part of these activities by the organisers,

10.1% stated that family often discourages women from participating, and

8.4% of the respondents stated that fear of other tribes prevents women from participating in peace activities.

In my view, the fear of other tribes and women's low self-esteem is very interesting. Firstly, it means that the women from the different tribes are afraid of each other because of the tribal nature of the war in South Sudan. Secondly, women are also not courageous enough to try to fight that fear. Thus, combined with the lack of knowledge in conflict transformation and peacebuilding, it is understandable that these women did not even want to try to work together for peaceful co-existence. This finding was key in determining the action research intervention. It allowed me to secure a neutral location that allowed different tribal groups to feel safe and it gave the women the chance to reflect as my co-facilitator, Mr. Lam, and I debriefed them every evening after dinner – in the time that they would normally be with their children and

taking care of the family, they suddenly had time to reflect on their ability. Furthermore, in the general survey, the respondents were required to give their opinion on socio-cultural factors affecting women's participation. The responses of the respondents are summarised in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3: Distribution of responses regarding socio-cultural factors affecting women's participation in peacebuilding.

Factors		Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Level of education	21	52.5	52.5
	Cultural norms	12	30.0	82.5
	Tribal difference	5	12.5	95.0
	others	2	5.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	

The results from Table 7.3 indicate that the largest group (52.5%) of the respondents stated that the level of education was the major factor, while 30% stated that cultural norms are also a factor of concern, followed by tribal differences and other factors. According to the findings, the largest socio-cultural factor that hinders women's participation in peacebuilding in the settlement is the low level of education of most women. The results indicate that the respondents noted that most of the women were not educated, and the few who were educated lacked the necessary skills that were required. This finding is in tandem with the result of a study carried out by Pacari, a feminist scholar, in her study of the political participation of Ecuadorian indigenous women, who revealed that "One possible explanation for lack of women's participation is women's lack of education and training" (Pacari 2002: 7). In addition, Kumar *et al.* (2018: 1) confirmed this in their study in Cameroon that revealed that there was a close relationship between women's education and their political participation, implying that the more educated a woman is, the greater her participation in the political arena.

Cultural barriers were another factor that were found to affect women's participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Most women cited commitment to domestic work as a hindrance to their participation in peacebuilding initiatives. The patriarchal setup of the communities and a common practice of some men not allowing their women (those married) to participate in peacebuilding activities also featured in the general surveys and women

leaders' interviews as a key hindrance to women participation in peacebuilding initiatives. An example is given of a Village Health Team (VHT) member who was stopped from working by her husband after completion of her training. Some cultural beliefs and practices also hinder women's participation in peacebuilding. The study inquired into the extent to which socio-cultural issues affect women's participation in peacebuilding. The results are given in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4: Responses on the extent to which socio-cultural factors affect women's participation in peacebuilding.

Extent of factors		Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Low extent	6	15.4	15.4
	Moderately	6	15.4	30.8
	High Extent	19	48.7	79.5
	Very High Level	8	20.5	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	
Missing System		1		
Total		40		

The results from Table 7.4 indicate that the largest group (48.7%) stated that socio-cultural factors were at a high level, 20.5% stated that the factors were at a very high level, while those who rated it as moderate and low were 15.4% each, respectively. The response of the majority implies that the level of awareness of participants on socio-cultural issues affecting women's participation was high.

Although many of the reasons given for women's limited participation in peacebuilding are related to economic and socio-cultural factors, it is also strongly noted that their participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation is partly inadequate and minimal because there is a limited level of support given to women by the institutions involved in peacebuilding in the settlement. It is also critical to note from the findings that no single implementing partner in the settlement is directly involved in peacebuilding in the settlement, instead, most partners integrate some peacebuilding initiatives in their everyday programming. Some of the initiatives

include training paralegals, peace committees, and the formation of peace clubs, among other, most focus is put on protection which is rather the legal framework of peacebuilding.

In another development, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the place of women in public life. Their responses are presented in Table 7.5.

Table 7.5: Responses on women's place in public life as defined by culture.

Response		Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Strongly Disagree	3	7.7	7.7
	Disagree	11	28.2	35.9
	Neutral	4	10.3	46.2
	Agree	14	35.9	82.1
	Strongly Agree	7	17.9	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	
Missing System		1		
Total		40		

According to Table 7.5, the findings indicate that 35.9% of the participants, who constituted the majority, agreed with the fact that women's place is in the private space, as compared to 28.2% who disagreed.

The above-mentioned findings are in agreement with the literature that relates women's lack of participation to their lack of time due to their domestic obligations, their lack of socialisation outside the home, and their lower social capital and weaker asset base than men owing to discrimination in schools and in the market within a male-dominated society. In addition, though women are found to be participating more in religious life, the affiliation of women to religious life has some ambiguous implications for their subsequent recruitment into political activity, given that some religious institutions keep women out of leadership positions and participation (Burns *et al.* 2001: 255).

The research team also wanted to know women's position economically and how this impacts their participation and exclusion. Among the economic factors affecting the participation of

women in peacebuilding, access to funds was rated the highest, as highlighted by the respondents. The results are presented in Table 7.6.

Table 7.6: Responses regarding economic factors affecting women's participation in peacebuilding.

Economic Factors	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Access to funds	13	32.5	32.5
Means of livelihood	8	20.0	52.5
Access to employment	8	20.0	72.5
Level of income	9	22.5	95.0
Others	1	2.5	97.5
N/A	1	2.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	

The results in Table 7.6 indicate that 32.5% of the respondents in the general survey stated that women's participation in peacebuilding is affected by access to funds, 22.5% stated that the level of income is a major economic factor affecting women's participation, while access to employment and means of livelihood were each accounted for by 20% of the responses. The literature confirms that women are mostly less privileged than men because women traditionally do not own properties and these beliefs and attitudes can become worse from conflict that affects women's livelihoods.

Madu notes that in many countries, a culture of discrimination and violence against women and girls is present prior to the conflict and this leads to exclusion and poverty, thus affecting women's lives (Madu 2012 cited in Madu 2016: 102). Respondents' responses on the extent of the effect of economic factors on women's participation in peacebuilding are presented in Figure 7.4.

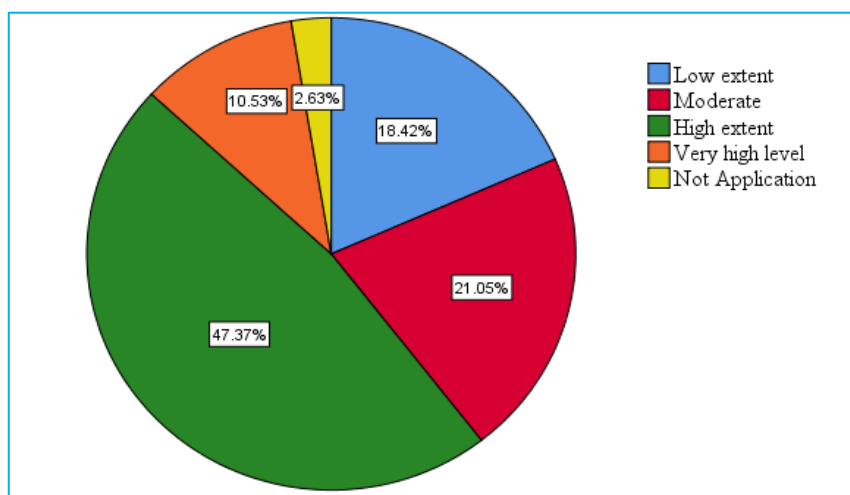


Figure 7.4: Pie chart showing the extent of economic factors affecting women's participation in peacebuilding.

The findings from Figure 7.4 show that eighteen (47.4%) of the respondents believed that the extent of the effect of economic factors was high, while eight (21%) felt that the extent was moderate, four (10.5%) thought that the extent was very high, seven (18.4%) stated that it was at a low extent, and 2.6% stated that the question was not applicable. From these findings, it can be deduced that economic factors affect women's participation. In addition, a respondent stated the following as a key informant:

If a woman does not have food for her children, how can we even expect to go for peace club meeting? For me as a mother, my priority is to make sure my children can have a meal at the end of the day.

This statement is a demonstration of the close relationship between economic factors and women's social life. I have experienced this in my life especially as I undertook my PhD studies, I am not able to work and have less access to income that would facilitate her social life. The situation is such that when people invite one out, one wants to contribute even if the people are not expecting it, it is not possible to join people and not contribute. The research team discovered from the study that some women are not even in the savings group because their life is about daily bread, from hand to mouth, and they isolate themselves from the social life that would give them orientation and build their confidence as leaders in the community.

During the FGDs and KIs regarding which type of support the women needed to fully participate in peacebuilding activities, the question yielded the following responses:

the majority (44.7%) of the respondents opted for skills training for peace support which would enable women to participate fully,

while 33.8% of the respondents stated that financial support is that which women need to fully participate, and

12.8% stated that cultural support was needed,

Those who stated that women needed physical infrastructural support and religious support accounted for 5.8% and 2.9%, respectively.

This finding indicates that the level of knowledge and skills and low level of financial support or access to it is affecting women's participation. The literature confirms that the low level of education and access to financial support leads to discrimination. The lack of women's access to education and women being unable to become financially independent, prevents them from participating in governance and peacebuilding which is important as this helps them to prevent war-related sexual violence that leads to "rejection of women by families and friends" (Sjoberg 2014: 46; Albutt et al. 2016: 4-6; Quattrochi et al. 2019: 2, Shepherd 2011: 504-521).

During the fieldwork, the research team had heard much about peace clubs, and the team wanted to know the purpose of these peace clubs. The team realised that there was confusion between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and guessed that it was as a result of a lack of knowledge for both the implementing partners and the respondents. In the settlement, it was found that there were protection partners working with the police and other security forces. Theoretically, this was a legal form of peacekeeping, but because of the limited understanding between peacebuilding and peacekeeping, most research participants, including implementing partners, cited protection as peacebuilding efforts. This type of confusion undermines efforts in planning for community peacebuilding in the settlement.

During my field research, the humanitarian experts and government officials whom I interviewed while carrying out this study were eager to give their input and also to receive the findings of this study. For example, during my interview and after sharing the preliminary findings, I received the following feedback from the Refugee Desk Officer (RDO) from the OPM, who stated:

This finding is extremely important for OPM, I will share these findings with my bosses in Kampala and OPM should use this scientific finding because it will help to focus our interventions better. The OPM is the main partner in charge of peacebuilding, peaceful co-existence in the settlement, however, lack of resources limits what OPM can do, in essence OPM is expected to do coordination and monitoring while partners do the real implementation of activities that build peace. Funding is extremely limited because peacebuilding activities are not considered as lifesaving activities by donors (Email response from RDO, 15 July 2019, 11:02am).

This is also coupled with the lack of technical peace experts among partner staff which leads to the poor quality of peacebuilding activities. The respondents were asked if there were

organisations specifically focusing on peacebuilding and conflict transformation – their responses are presented in Table 7.7.

Table 7.7: Responses on whether there are organisations focusing on peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Responses		Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	No	3	7.7	7.7
	Yes	32	82.1	89.7
	Do not Know	4	10.3	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	
Missing System		1		
Total		40		

The results from Table 7.7 indicate that the majority (82.1%) of the respondents agreed that there were some organisations such as IRC, Caritas, Here is Life, World Vision, Save the Children, and the Danish Refugee Council, among others, that focused on peacebuilding and transformation in the settlement, but when the research team asked about the effectiveness of the organisations' peacebuilding activities, the respondents gave varied answers, as presented in Figure 7.5.

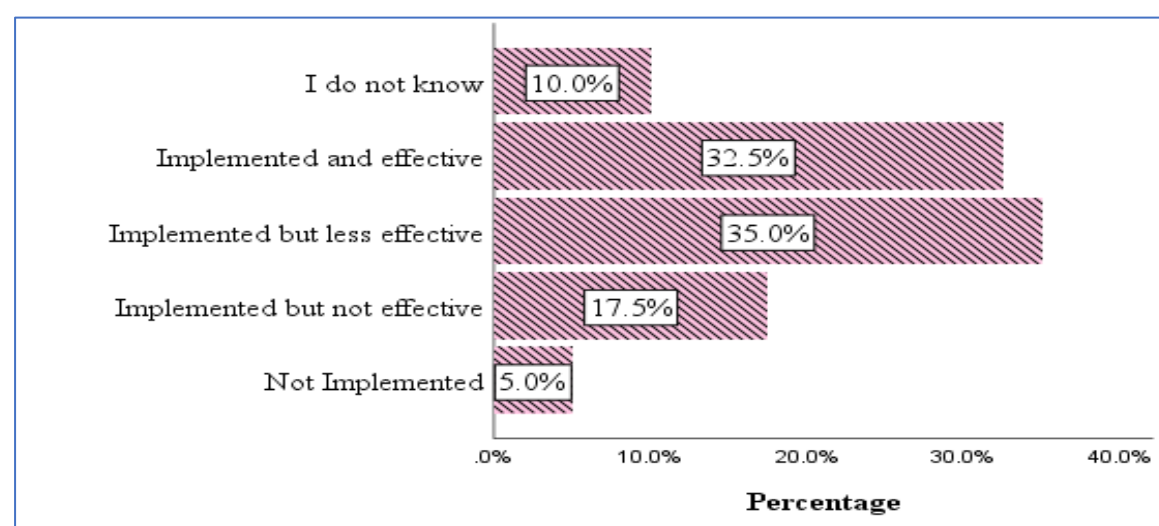


Figure 7.5: Bar chart showing responses on effectiveness of organisations in peacebuilding activities.

The results from Figure 7.5 indicate that the organisations implemented peacebuilding activities but less effectively, as evidenced by the majority of the respondents (14, or 35%), while 13 (32.5%) of the respondents indicated that the implementation of peacebuilding activities was effective, seven (17.5%) of the respondents believed that there was implementation but that it was not effective, two (5%) stated that there was no implementation, and four (10%) did not know whether there was implementation. These results suggest confusion between peacebuilding activities and protection activities implemented by partners, hence the argument for the justification of this study for capacity building.

The research team wanted to know what the respondents thought about a collective effort of women and men working together to respond to conflicts and advocate for more participation of women in peacebuilding activities in the settlement.

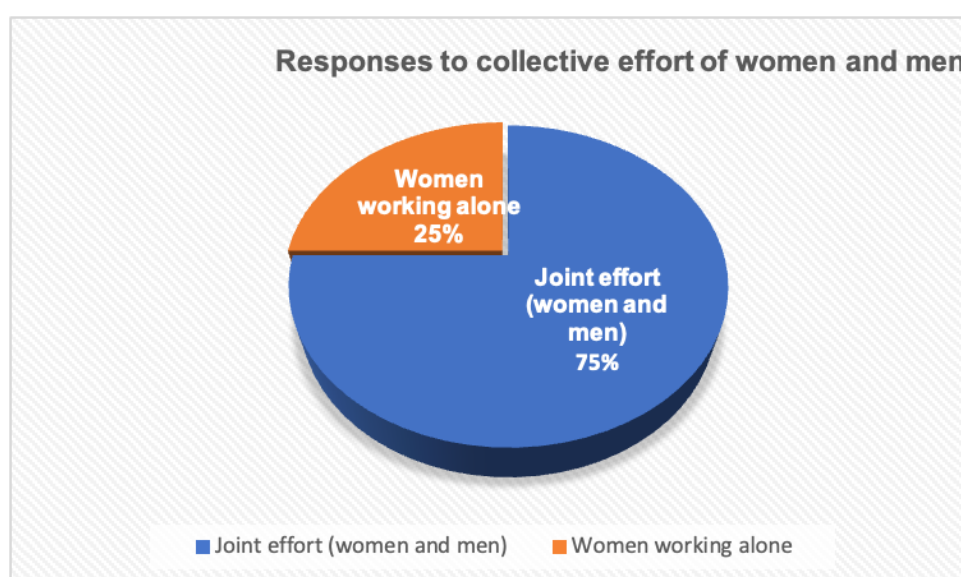


Figure 7.5: Pie chart showing the extent of economic factors affecting women's participation in peacebuilding.

There was a general agreement that women and men should work together from the total of 124 respondents, where 75.0% argued for women and men working together and 4 of them that 25.0% zeroed to women being the definite solution to women's problems and that if men will never support women as expected, if they do, they do so with a hidden agenda. This figure of 75.7% means that unique opportunities still exist for engaging women and men to work

together in peacebuilding and conflict transformation and to work together to address women's lack of participation/exclusion. Women's full and equal participation at all levels of society is a fundamental human right. During times of conflict, women's participation in resolving conflict and negotiating for peace is especially important to ensure that women's rights are protected, experiences are recognised, and that peace lasts (UNwomen 2018, Speake 2013:7, Kumalo and Roddy-Mullineaux 2019:2-4, Buchanan 2020:23, Rahmaty and Jaghab 2020):2-5., Westendorf 2018:433).

For example, at a national level (Uganda), women have participated in advocating for peace, are involved in conflict mediation, advocate for the respect of human rights, and are involved in conflict transformation campaigns, according to the findings of the study. During the study, the research team asked about the adequacy and recognition of women's role in any peace process in the settlement; most respondents reacted that women's contribution towards peacebuilding and the welfare of the community and family has been taken for granted and has not been recognised. This highlights the fact that women are being excluded by the male-dominated structure and by their own belief that peacebuilding is not their place, as stated by Jok (2005 cited in Hove and Ndawana 2014: 1). This is why they do not have the liberty to access resources and assets. There is generally a negative perception of women being under men which has greatly impacted their participation in peacebuilding, and this needs to change by including both women and men at the peace table.

An example of women not being considered as equal was given by a respondent who mentioned that women and children are not recognised in most cultures in South Sudan. He gave an example that:

If you went to the home of a South Sudanese, and man is not around they will tell you there are no people at home ... when a visitor comes, it is a woman's role to welcome the visitor and then inform the man, the woman does not say anything to the visitor. She welcomes the visitor, gives him water, tea etc. and the man discusses with the visitor even if that visitor is your relative. It is only when your mother or sister comes that you as a woman can talk to them freely because culturally, a husband is not supposed to talk to his mother or sister-in-laws.

This gives the picture of the position that women hold in the South Sudanese community and subsequently, the role that they play in peacebuilding processes and in public life in general.

Although women's role in peacebuilding processes in the settlement has been identified as inadequate, there are positive strides and steps being made to enhance the relevance of women in peacebuilding processes. The representation of women in leadership positions such

as RWCs, peace committees, and other leadership positions offer platforms for women to engage in peacebuilding processes with men.

7.4 Findings and Analysis relating to Objective 3

Objective 3 of this study, as given in Section 1.15 of Chapter 1, is:

To implement peacebuilding and conflict transformation interventions (AR) focusing on building the capacity of 20 women and men in responding to conflicts in the settlement.

This action research intervention was developed to build the capacity of 20 women and men in learning how to effectively respond to conflicts, GBV and build sustainable peace in the settlement. The process had to be systematic in order to achieve the objective of capacity-building and of sustainable peace. The action research intervention started with a baseline survey that informed the development of a pilot study, and the pilot study informed the development of data collection tools. Subsequently, field data collection followed, and the data collected was used to identify common themes for action research. A team of five researchers and the principal investigator went to the field for three days in Bidibidi settlement. A total of 166 individuals were reached, this included 18 individuals as KII, 42 individuals in FGDs (4 FGDs were conducted), 94 survey questionnaires were administered and 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted.

During the study, the participants took part in various exercises such as defining the key themes for the workshop, the methodology of the workshop, the monitoring of the group and individual activities for eleven months, and the evaluation and validation of the workshop at the end of the study. The validation workshop was notably very insightful as participants suggested solutions to the underlying challenges to women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in the settlement.

It is important to note that the data collected in a mixed methodology was used to inform that action research. Below is a presentation of the stages of that inform the action taken.

Action research data

Apart from the identified themes, there was need to have basic information to develop the action. The data presented in Table 7.9 added to determining the training needs and the content including the method of facilitation. These were the education level of the participants; their gender; their occupation; the relationship between gender, education, and occupation;

the time that the participants have spent in Uganda; and also, the security level. The aspect of security was important to determine the training location and duration. The research team asked the participants to indicate their level of education in order to establish the highest level attained – their responses are presented in Table 7.9.

Table 7.9: Distribution of respondents by education level.

Education Level	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
None	4	10.0	10.0
Primary	14	35.0	45.0
Secondary	18	45.0	90.0
Tertiary Institution	4	10.0	100.0
University	0	0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	

Table 7.9 indicates that the majority of the respondents (18, or 45%) stopped at the secondary level as compared to 14 (35%) of them who had primary education, while only four (10%) attained tertiary education and an equal number did not go to school, and none of them had attained university education. The result implies that the majority of the respondents had some basic education that would help them to participate in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

The primary occupation of the respondents in relation to their income and social status, and hence their participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding, was investigated. Their responses are presented in Table 7.10.

Table 7.100: Distribution of respondents by occupation.

Occupation Status	Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Employed	9	22.5	22.5
Self-employed/Business	4	10.0	32.5
Unemployed	20	50.0	82.5

Student	2	5.0	87.5
Others	5	12.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	

According to the findings from Table 7.10, the majority of the respondents (twenty, or 50%) were unemployed as compared to nine (22.5%) who were employed, four (10%) were self-employed or in business, two (5%) were students, and those who had other occupations such as being volunteers, house helpers, and farmers were five in number (12.5%). These findings were significant in helping me to reflect on and understand the types of participants with whom I was working and what their expectations would be apart from gaining skills, since they also had other responsibilities.

In a quest to know the level of education and its relationship with access to employment, an analysis on the level of education, gender, and occupation was carried out. A close relationship was generally found between the level of education, the level of occupation, and gender. It emerged that the less educated people had less access to employment opportunities. As shown previously in Table 7.9, the majority of the participants (45%) stopped at secondary education, followed by primary education at 35%, tertiary education at 10%, no education at 10%, and none had a university education. A comparison of the level of education and occupation of the respondents is presented in a cross-tabulation in Table 7.11.

Table 7.11: Cross-tabulation of the education level and occupation of the respondents.

Education level	Occupation of Respondent					Total
	Employed	Self-employed/Business	Unemployed	Student	Others	
None	0	1	2	0	1	4
Primary	1	2	10	0	1	14
Secondary	7	1	6	2	2	18
Tertiary Institution	1	0	2	0	1	4
University	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	9	4	20	2	5	40

The results from Table 7.11 indicate that from the respondents who were employed, one (11.1%) stopped at the primary level of education, the majority (seven, or 77.8%) stopped at the secondary level of education, and one (11.1%) stopped at the tertiary institution level, whereas from those who were self-employed, two (50%) stopped at the primary level of education and constituted the majority, as compared to one (25%) who did not have basic education and one (25%) who completed secondary education. From the respondents who were unemployed, the majority (ten, or 50%) stopped at the primary level of education, six (30%) attained a secondary level of education, two (10%) did not go to school, and two (10%) completed their education at tertiary institutions. When the research team asked why people who had completed primary school became employed, the team was told that those occupations were mostly for unskilled daily workers that did not require a specific skill.

The research team wanted to know the relationship between the occupation and gender of the respondents. A cross-tabulation table was generated, and the results are shown in Table 7.12.

Table 7.12: Cross-tabulation of the sex and occupation of the respondents.

Sex of Respondents	Occupation of Respondent					Total
	Employed	Self-employed/Business	Unemployed	Student	Others	
Male	6	1	4	0	3	14
Female	3	3	16	2	2	26
Total	9	4	20	2	5	40

The results from Table 7.12 indicate that of the respondents who were employed, the majority (six, or 66.7%) were male as compared to three (33.3%) who were female; from those respondents who were self-employed, the majority (three, or 75%) were female in comparison to one (25%) who was male; and for those respondents who were unemployed, the majority (16, or 80%) were female as compared to four (20%) who were male. This indicates how gender is related to occupation and that it impacts women's participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

Furthermore, the research team wanted to know the duration that the participants had lived in the settlement in relation to the dynamics of education, occupation, and income level, and how these influenced their lives. The respondents' responses are summarised in Figure 7.6.

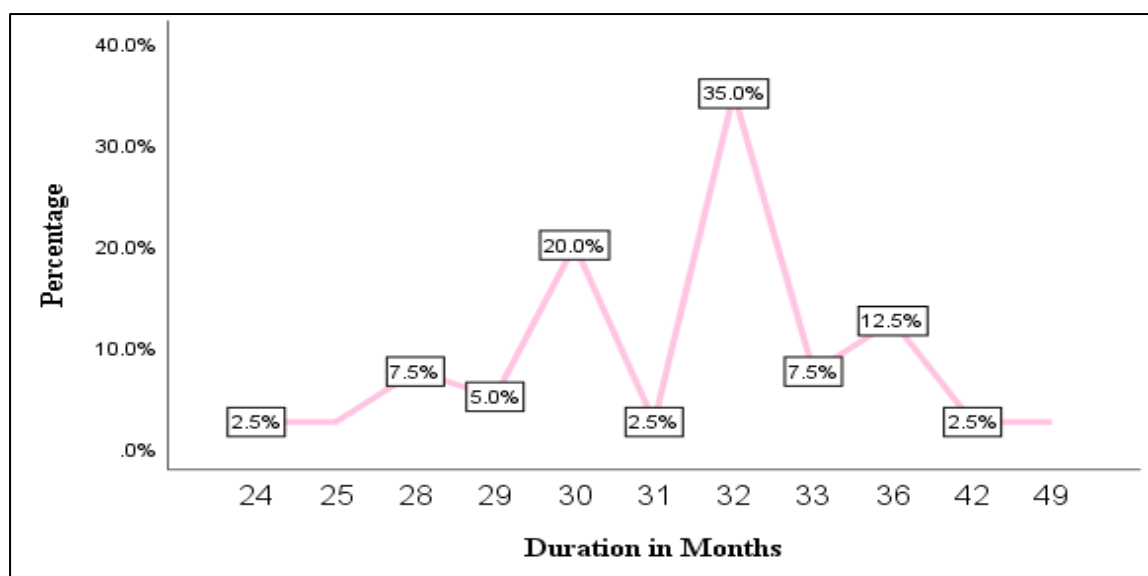


Figure 7.6: Graph showing trend in the duration that respondents had lived in the settlement.

Figure 7.6 shows that the majority of the respondents (fourteen, or 35%) had lived in the settlement for 32 months, followed by eight (20%) who had lived for 30 months, five (12.5%) had lived for 36 months, three (7.5%) had lived for 33 and 28 months, respectively, two (5%) had lived for 29 months, while those who had lived for 49, 42, 31, 25, and 24 months each had a percentage of 2.5%. This implies that on average, most respondents had lived in Uganda for at least two and a half years. It was surprising how they were able to stay for this long period and not be able to start a livelihood.

Furthermore, the research team wanted to know how safe the respondents felt staying in Uganda. This prompted the team to ask the respondents, in the general survey, how they felt regarding the general security in their current area of residence. The responses generated are presented in Table 7.13.

Table 7.13: Responses on general security in the area of residence.

Responses		Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Very Secure	9	23.1	23.1
	Secure	27	69.2	92.3
	Not sure	1	2.6	94.9
	Insecure	2	5.1	100.0

	Total	39	100.0	
Missing System		1		
Total		40		

The results in Table 7.13 indicate that the majority of the respondents (27, or 69.2%) stated that they felt secure; nine (23.1%) stated that they felt very secure, mentioning the absence of armed fighting as compared to the conditions in their country; and only two (5.1%) of them believed that they were insecure, citing sporadic tribal attacks and clashes/threats from the host community and conflicts arising from resource utilisation, particularly when women went to fetch firewood and other resources such as at the water points.

Identifying key themes for action

After compiling the data, I organised a one-day workshop to discuss the findings of the study with key research participants including key informants. During this workshop, the research team and participants identified the key themes that were recurring (capacity building for peacebuilding and conflict, conflict transformation, designing peacebuilding initiatives and funding (peace project proposal), gender-based violence/advocacy and referral pathways. Based on this, the participants discussed some key issues that could have been untouched during the fieldwork. The participants looked at the data presented in the tables 7.9, 7.10, 7.11 and 7.13 and the qualitative data to guide them in recommending the key topics of the action research including the venue and duration. Because of the nature of the training and the category of the participants being mostly women, it was recommended to take them out of their daily setting to give them a chance to concentrate without being interrupted by domestic issues. Therefore, a decision was reached to bring them to Arua in the Youth Centre, which is considered safe and quiet, for three days of residential training on conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Having worked in South Sudan and Uganda with the refugees, it was not a challenge to make the material context-specific and culturally relevant, ensuring that references were kept in conformance with the different cultural aspects of the lives of the host communities and the refugees.

Development of a Training Manual

The above identified themes were used to guide the trainers in developing the training manual. Prior to her study, I had developed various manuals for nonviolent conflict transformation,

gender, peacebuilding, GBV, and Human Rights. Some of the content of these training materials included topics that specifically suited the themes upon which the research team had agreed. In consultation with the participants, my research support team, co-trainer, and gatekeepers, a module was developed including three broad sections, as explained below

Table 7.8 presents the timetable for the conflict transformation and peacebuilding training for refugees and host communities from Bidibidi Yumbe Settlement.

Table 7.8: Timetable/schedule for Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding Training for refugees and host communities from Bidibidi Yumbe Settlement at St. Daniel Comboni Youth Centre, Arua (12-14 August 2019).

Monday, 12 August 2019			
Morning 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and General introductions • Expectation/ Contributions/Fears • Overview and purpose of Training • Official Opening • Housekeeping – ground rules, sharing responsibilities and tasks • Official Opening (OPM, Arua District Local Government, Yumbe District Local Government and Media) 	Afternoon 1	Conflict analysis (the Human knot)
Morning 2	Understanding conflict	Afternoon 2	Understanding violence and its effects
Tuesday, 13 August 2019 [RESPONSE – Tools and Framework]			
Morning 1	Mapping conflict and actors	Afternoon 1	Responding to conflicts

Morning 2	Tools for peacebuilding, conflict transformation (Mediation, Negotiation, and Dialogue)	Afternoon 2	Peacebuilding framework
Wednesday, 14 August 2019 [Planning and Delivering]			
Morning 1	Gender and peacebuilding	Afternoon 1	Gender-based violence
Morning 2	Responding to GBV and reporting (referral paths)	Afternoon 2	Mobilising and organising for peace (Advocacy) Developing of individual and group projects Conclusion and Closure (OPM, ADLG, YDLG, media)

The implementation of the training action

A three-day capacity building training session was delivered to the participants. The training took place between 11-14 August 2019. The training was facilitated by Mr. Lam Cosmas, a senior peace scholar, and me. During the training, Mr. Cosmas and I focused on the gaps that were identified in the mapping for the intervention. Both Mr. Cosmas and I are certified trainers of nonviolent conflict transformation of the Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation (SweFOR) and Do No Harm, conflict-sensitive programming with Collaborative Development Action (CDA) and a trained trainer of peace and reconciliation at the Duke University, and a trainer of Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). Mr. Cosmas and I had the advantage of having all the tools at their disposal to facilitate the workshop. The decision to have a co-trainer who was an experienced peacebuilding trainer was excellent. Both Mr. Cosmas and I had worked in South Sudan and with the refugees in Uganda. In addition, Mr. Cosmas spoke fluent Juba Arabic, a language spoken by most participants. This made my work very easy. The first day of the training focused on the themes of conflict, conflict transformation and violence, day two

focused on peacebuilding and sustainable peace in communities and the last day was spend on GBV and developing action for community interventions.

The training took a participatory approach including group work, self-reflection exercises and demonstrations. Depending on the topic, the group was either mixed or separated according to gender to have a fair presentation. In one of the group sessions, the participants came back with answers that highlighted the fact that participants knew that peace was not merely the absence of war but meant the general well-being of an individual. This corresponds to the literature where Caparini defines peace as not simply the absence of violence (Caparini 2017: 214; Oshadhi 2016: 106; Shields 2017: 6-7). A number of participants were able to mention that which they considered as peace included the absence of poverty, good health, no quarrels, equality, love, having access to basic needs, and available social amenities, although they considered the absence of war as a core element of peace. Generally, these findings affirm that which Galtung (1967: 12) states regarding peace being a “synonym for stability or equilibrium”. Figure 7.7 depicts a participant’s pictorial view of what peace means.

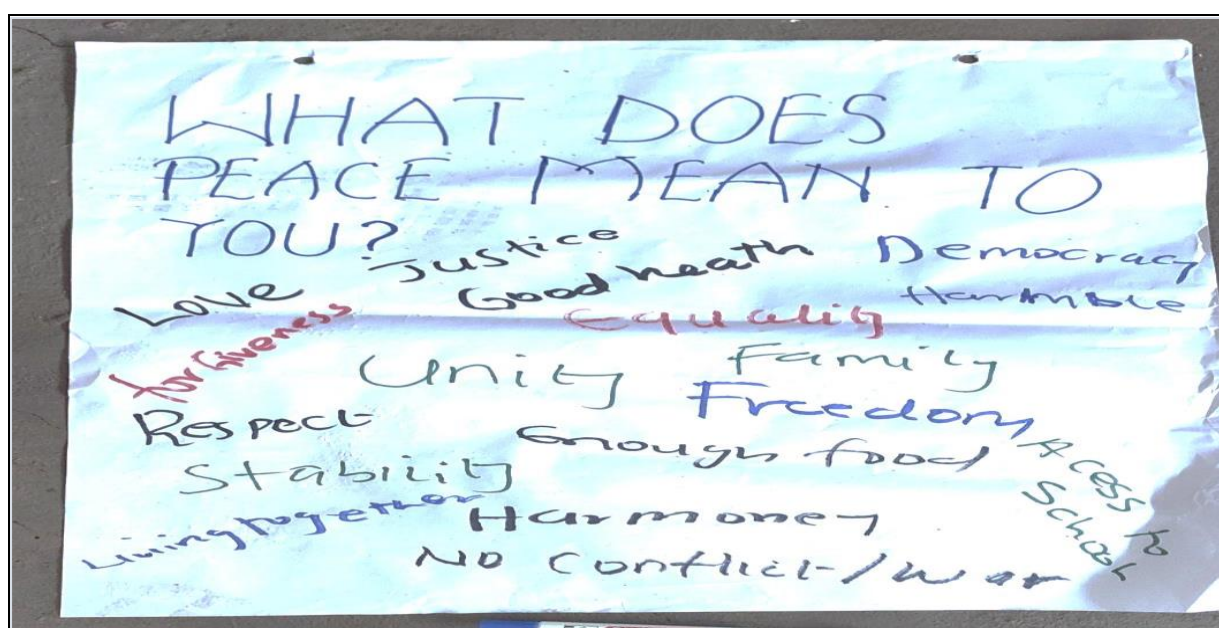


Figure 7.7: Photo 1, Credit: - Dawa, I. (August 2019) the photo shows a participant’s concept of peace.

During training, the trainers probed about peace and what security meant in a peaceful country. The participants were sent out for group work and came most of their answers indicating to the fact that they do not have to run every day, and they also felt that the presence of community policing in the settlement allowed them to feel safe. One participant lamented

that “*In fact, every day when something happens, we have OPM, UNHCR to report without them, we would never be safe*”. This statement suggests that the security of the refugees is completely dependent on a system and in the event that something happens to the system, then they will not be prepared to secure their own safety. This also reminds one of the facts that giving skills that support community-based interventions that are developed and monitored by community members is more sustainable than a government system that has very many factors for which it accounts.

During the training, participants were asked to write down their understanding of peace and conflict in their local language. Table 7.14 presents a summary of that which the participants stated regarding what conflict is, and Table 7.15 presents what the term *peace* is in the participants’ mother tongue.

Table 7.14: Participants’ statements regarding what conflict is.

Language	Conflict and explanation
Aringa/Lugbari	Ngiringiri – when there is disagree with someone, when you are angry at someone
Kuku-kuku-Acholi	Ayelayela – an idea that cannot be shared, each one sticking to their own idea, no agreement, the way you look at things is different
Lotuko	Arem – misunderstanding between two or more people in a community, for example, encroaching into someone’s property
Bari	Rerenya – is misunderstanding or disagreement of someone’s opinion. Someone saying what you’re saying is wrong, I am right. It happens between two or more people
Madi	Longuzuru – it is an opposition between two or more people, each one sticking to their idea
Kakwa	Moro – looking for trouble
Mikoko	Swahili – something that brings disagreements

These definitions make the participants to own their definitions, the view it as it happens in local context as opposed to being defined by Western scholars.

Table 7.15: The term *peace* in the participants’ mother tongue (responses to the question: what is peace in your mother tongue?).

Language	Peace
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Dinka	Dor
Nuer	Mal
Arabic	Salam
Kenya	Mulembe Abaluya
Tutsi kinrundi	Amahoro
Lugbari	Asianzu
Luo	Kwer
Luo/Acholi	Kuc
Lingala	Kimia
Kakwa	Taling

One woman said, “for me peace means having food for my child every day and being able to move around without fear”.

Another participant (a man) said “in our community if you as a man is not able to provide food for your family, you are considered ‘a woman’ and this can make you angry and there is no peace”.

It is clear from their definition there is commonality between the term’s peace and conflict. Conflict has something to do with fighting while peace has something to do with being together in community which perhaps is what Lederach (2003) refers to as relationships.

Gender based violence was generally understood as fighting between men and women. Participants used the following terms

- 7.4.1.1.1.1.1 Beating women
- 7.4.1.1.1.1.2 Fighting with women
- 7.4.1.1.1.1.3 Refusing to give food to a woman
- 7.4.1.1.1.1.4 Not respecting a man as the head of a family
- 7.4.1.1.1.1.5 Not sending girls to school

From the above description, GBV was mostly seen as an issue between a man and a woman. The participants, however, were able to identify clearly the underlying causes of GBV, for

example, power imbalance, drug abuse, war and conflict, harmful gender norms. One man said, *“in Arinaga culture a woman is not supposed to eat chicken, and this is still observed in some families”*. This is a classic example of harmful traditional practices in communities.

When asked if women were aware that such harm practices violated their rights, most of the women seem not to relate GBV to human rights.

One lady said “for me, it is respect to my husband and in laws, if I eat chicken, what will my husband eat? Besides, the whole village will start singing your name if they see you eating chicken”.

After a long discussion, the participants were then given the facts about GBV, how it occurs, preventive measures and referral paths in the camps.

Half of the afternoon of the last day of the training was spent on designing peace building initiatives including fundraising strategies for peace projects. The participants were divided into two groups (zone 1 and 2) both mixed refugees and host communities. Each group identified key “hot topics” and spots where they were going to focus. These included community sensitization of GBV, causes of conflicts, community dialogues on identified issues and formation of peace clubs.

During the different stages of the field work and training, key statements were made by KII as below:

The programme manager and team leader from the Danish Refugee Council stated:

Women are left behind, even in this RCW structures where they have been left one post that must be filled by a woman; it is still hard to get a woman to fill that post. There is no real peacebuilding activity in the settlement, both DRC [Danish Refugee Council] and IRC are helping to create peace clubs in school but since the funding is from UNHCR, we are doing this behind their back because the funds are not for that activity. We also do not have a technical person for peacebuilding. So, it is trial and error (Interview, 7 May 2019).

The UNHCR protection assistant stated:

This research is going to be eye opening for us, we have done several baseline surveys but none of them focused on analysing women issues specifically, it is seen as crosscutting issue. Now we have to find a way to respond to the needs of women (Interview, 8 May 2019).

The Yumbe District Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) stated:

Your research touches a sensitive topic we have been struggling to present to partners for funding ... Now we have scientific evidence in our hands to tell the partners what to do. Peacebuilding must get funding because we have seen conflict escalating and partners keep telling us they do not have money. With this finding, let me here what excuse they will give. They either do this or we will ask them to leave Yumbe because we do not want war again in our backyard (Email, 9 July 2019).

During the action research, the RDO, who was present at the opening and closing of the training, stated the following:

I am extremely impressed with your approach, all these years I have worked with refugees, I have seen researchers come, collect data and never come back, you have collected data, analysed it, shared the finding with us and developed a practical intervention. This is how we should do research if we want change. Thank you for supporting the GoU in its refugee intervention, I am also glad we have such expertise here (RDO speech, 12 August 2019).

During the closing of the training, the RDO Arua commended that researcher for being an action-oriented study and confessed that he has received many requests for research in the settlement, but this was the first time he has seen research develop an action from finding ways to empower the people (closing remarks RDO Arua, 14 August 2019).

The settlement commandant, who was also a participant during the training, stated:

When I received the invitation, I was sceptical and I said I should come and see for myself, now I have seen and gained knowledge. We have partners in the settlement who claim to be doing peace work but none of them has done or is doing what you have done. This is a good skill that is going to help us manage conflicts better. If we get stuck, we shall call you (Settlement commandant speech, 14 August 2019).

The evening of the last day of the training, (14 August 2019), the first training evaluation was conducted. The evaluation was carried out to see whether the training had met its objectives of the intervention. The reason to evaluate the process was to reflect on the training process itself as well as to assess the outcome impact. The workshop evaluation was carried out immediately after the workshop on the last day of the workshop, while the outcome impact evaluation was carried out after eleven months.

During the evaluation, all participants attested to having learnt a lot, as this was the first kind of training giving them specific skills of peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The participants, however, requested to continue receiving support, especially in the field of funding raising, as the partners do not effectively see it as an important component of an intervention. They also requested that they be visited or called from time to time during their practices. The group divided itself into two groups of Zones 1 and 2 and developed action points to be undertaken in the zones, and women were encouraged to take leadership in areas that they had significantly lagged behind. It was then agreed that I continue visiting and

monitoring their progress from September 2019 to June 2020 before the next evaluation could be carried out.

During the eleven months period, the participants carried out their activities in the communities. I reached out to partner organisations (Caritas, world vision DRC) who had some peacebuilding initiatives in their programs to introduce the groups and lobby for support. Participants received stationery and refreshments from the partner organisations in order to undertake their community activities. Because of the long distances, most technical support from me was done through telephone conversations. Some participants who visited Arua before the lockdown due to Covid-19 had a chance to meet face to face with the trainer and obtain more support for their activities.

6.7.6 Impact Evaluation of Action Research

Impact evaluation is an important aspect of action research. Continuous monitoring and evaluation is at the core of AR. The goal is to continually refine the implementation of an initiative at every stage and reduce variability and increase reliability (Khan and Tzortzopoulos 2016: 119). For AR to achieve its goal, it is necessary to provide well-established evaluation criteria in order to establish impact. Because peacebuilding and conflict transformation are long-term group efforts, it will be unrealistic to carry out an impact evaluation. For this reason, I decided to carry out that which she terms a 'short-term impact' evaluation after eleven months from the time of the action research.

Due to the restrictions of Covid-19, it was very difficult to plan for the evaluation of the action research. However, with the support of the OPM, I was able to bring together the participants for a one-day evaluation of the research on 15 July 2020. I was given instructions to follow Covid-19 measures, which included providing face masks, hand sanitisers, and handwashing facilities. There was a strict rule in keeping social distances during the activity. The OPM provided one village health team to observe that all the precautions were followed.

The evaluation was designed in a way such that participants started by sharing their individual experiences from the time of the training until the time of the evaluation, what had changed, and their success stories and challenges, and subsequently, they presented their original group plan and that which they had done as a group thus far. During the evaluation, several issues arose, and I also observed changes in the team dynamics:

- There was an increase in the number of women actively engaged in conflict management initiatives in the settlement.

- More community members have joined voluntarily as peace club members.
- Trained members have facilitated several community dialogues.
- Members have lobbied for peace funds and thus far have been supported by Caritas.
- Women were more open and active in sharing at this time as opposed to during the training.
- From the 20 people trained, 15 of them were still active while five, mostly refugees, were not seen by their groups. It was reported that some of them changed their residence and others went to South Sudan and were caught before the Covid-19 lockdown. This is typical of the refugees who are mobile most of the time. However, it was also a pleasant gesture to see that more community members are joining the club even when they had not been trained and had asked for capacity building to enhance their skills and knowledge needed for conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

After several hours of discussion, it was clear that there was a need to continue with this initiative, and the community empowerment for peace and development West Nile (CEPAD-WN), team agreed to continue working with the peace clubs even after I finished my study. The two groups were asked to draw another plan based on their current experience clearly stating the time, activities, resources, and location. They were reminded of the SMART objectives for the new proposal. After the impact evaluation, the peace clubs (groups) were handed over to CEPAD-WN, a community-based organisation that grew as a result of the research activity and is now the leading peacebuilding institution in the West Nile region.

The figures (7.8-7.11) show different pictures taken at different stages of the research starting with data collection, action research and evaluation of action research. There are pictures that show activities of CEPAD the CBO that has grown to be fully fledged as result of the action research and demand for continued training by stakeholders.



Figure 7.8: Photo 2, Credit: - Dawa, I. (6 May 2019) The research team finalising the data collection tools at Irene Dawa's residence (research home) in Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.



Figure 7.9: Photo 3, Credit: - Dawa, I. (8 May 2019) Focus group discussion with refugee and host community leaders in Zone 1, Bidibidi refugee settlement, Yumbe, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.



Figure 7.10: Photo 4, Credit: - Kadabara, B., Senior research associate (12 May 2019) Irene Dawa (researcher) explaining the purpose of the training to participants and the Refugee Desk Officer (RDO) Arua during the opening of the training at St. Daniel Comboni Youth Centre Ediofe, Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.



Figure 7.11: Photo 5, Credit: - Kadabara, B., Senior research associate (12 May 2019) Group photo with RDO and participants after the official opening at St. Daniel Comboni Youth Centre Ediofe, Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.

7.5 Summary

The first research objective sought to examine the role that women play in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Uganda. The findings of this study reveal that women can indeed play a significant role in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. In understanding this, the theories used for the studies confirm the important role that conflict can play in enhancing the transformation relationships between women and men (Lederach 2010), and that transformation is a proactive bias towards seeing conflict as a potential for growth (Galtung and Fisher 2013). Other important aspects are women's traditional peaceful nature to promote peace in their communities by supporting their communities and their inclusive approach in working at the community level. Their local approach and involving communities are allowing peacebuilding in the settlement to be interactive and community centred. I observed that when men were presenting during the action research, they wanted to lecture and were reactive to questions that challenged them, but when women were given the stage to present, the method shifted from unidirectional lectures to interactive discussions, where everyone in the training hall became learners, and the women were open to questions and accepted constructive criticism. The interactive inclusive approach of the women's presentation did not only increase men's active participation but also increased the men's interest in working with the women and accepting them to take leadership for their formed peace clubs in the zones. Through the work of the women in the zones, the participants who were not part of the action research have been involved in the follow-up activities and women have taken it upon themselves to mobilise the community for peace. Further, the participation of women is facilitating and validating the role of women in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in the settlement. This is helping to bridge the gap in peacebuilding in the settlement. The next chapter presents the summary of the findings and implications.

CHAPTER EIGHT: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Introduction

This study sought to explore the role that women can play in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Yumbe District, Uganda. Through the use of mixed methodology (qualitative and quantitative), the study examined the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation – the sampling was carried out in Zones 1 and 2 and in each zone, six villages were sampled for data collection in Bidibidi refugee settlement, Yumbe District, Uganda. The specific research objectives that guided the study have been included in Section 1.15 in Chapter One.

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings for two objectives of the study, highlighting their implications for practice, policy, and theory. First, the four key findings relating to Objective 1 are discussed under the main heading: The role of women in improving peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The four themes relating to the findings as seen in section 7.1, Chapter Seven (a) Motherhood and childcare as traditional peacebuilding mechanism, (theme 1); (b) women as source of information leaders/mediators, used to promote community resilience (theme 2); (c) intermarriages between communities (marriages as a bridge between host community and refugees (theme 3) and (d) Social support psycho-social and spiritual healing to resolve and transform violent conflicts (theme 4).

The second part of the discussion addresses the second objective of the study which is to identify the reasons for the limited participation/exclusion of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation and establish approaches for engaging women and men to work together in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Under this objective, I used some thematic approaches to discuss the findings, and the last part of Objective 2 has been addressed through objective 3 which was an intervention through three days of training for capacity building. The factors that have contributed to the low/limited level of women participation are those already discussed in sections 7.1 and 7.3 above which included Themes: lack of resources for women (funds), gender-insensitive infrastructure in the settlements, lack of knowledge and skills, cultural barriers that restrict women's participation in public lives and general lack of focus on peacebuilding and conflict transformation, and an

inadequate level of education/training for women and conflict transformation and including men into women peacebuilding programs is more beneficial as this facilitates relationship building for sustainable peace once again, implications for practice, policy, research, and theory are considered. The third objective, which is the action research, is discussed in tandem with the other two objectives.

8.2 The Role of Women in Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding

The findings of this study suggest that women have a major role to play in conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Women's strategic position at the family and community levels enhances their resourcefulness for promoting community resilience through (a) Motherhood and childcare as traditional peacebuilding mechanism, (theme 1); (b) women as source of information leaders/mediators to promote community resilience (theme 2); (c) intermarriages between communities (marriages as a bridge between host community and refugees (theme 3) and (d) Social support psycho-social and spiritual healing to resolve and transform violent conflicts (theme 4).

The findings of this study suggest that women in Bidibidi have played a significant role in peacebuilding at the community level. Most importantly, women have been found to promote a community-based approach to peace through their peace clubs, church groups, intermarriages, information sharing, etc. Women in Bidibidi, including Aringa women, are also helping in trauma healing and counselling, and they sensitise their communities on domestic violence etc.

The role of Aringa women in peacebuilding has a history, and a case in point is Joyce Ayikoru's story of working with women to bring their men back home during the conflict in Yumbe District 1986-2002, as presented in Chapter Five. The story of Ayikoru Joyce is an example of how women can use their power as mothers and wives to address their collective needs to the advantage of peace.

The use of informal groups acts as a support structure for women who are the most vulnerable to obtain support and sharing their community suffering and successes strengthens the women's role at the community level – such an act is imperative to the success of community resilience leading to peace. Excluding women is very poignant for their security and the community because women have access to the community at all levels, and in their families,

they educate their children and transfer knowledge, hence they are custodians of community resilience and peace.

During the action research, women's inclusive and participatory approach contributed to the increased participation of men during the training, making them become more attentive and engaged in the training. During the monitoring, I noticed that their peace club activities in the zones had attracted more men than the research team had trained. Further, the participation of women was found to be making the conflict transformation process less confrontational and a more peaceful process at the community level because women tend to be less adversarial in their approach to conflict resolution, this was seen at water points where conflicts are inevitable most times because of the long waiting hours. Through the use of drama, the women are able to translate their cultural knowledge and bring it to the formal counselling groups.

The women use drama as a traditional tool to explain the effects of war and conflict and how this can affect the lives of victims. It is noted here that in Africa, men and women (mostly elders) hold most of the information in their memory through songs, poetry, and other forms of recitation. Therefore, logistically, in the absence of written information or where people are unable to read and write modern literature on the effects of war and how it affects women, it is the women who have always acted as the custodians of knowledge. This person-centred approach is also used by women in educating and instilling in children the appropriate moral, ethical, cultural, and societal values and constitutes an essential dimension of the social obligations of African women as individuals and culturally informed social groups (Nakutunda-Tagboa 2016: 33; Afisi 2010: 229).

8.2.1 Implications for Practice

The seminal African literature of Nwapa (1966, 1970, 1980, 1982, 1984, and 1986) confirms women's roles in traditional African settings and how they use their roles as mothers and wives to non-violently transform conflict. Afisi (2010: 229) argues that socially, the success and unity of the family, including sustainable marriages and the bearing of children, are greatly contingent upon the African woman. A key finding of this study is that the women can indeed play a major role through their local cultural practices of motherhood and childcare, information sharing, intermarriages social support psycho-social and spiritual healing through trauma healing, peer counselling, drama, and songs and they use informal and formal systems to build community resilience. Ayikoru's story highlights the role that women can play as mothers and wives to connect with other women to resist the violence of their husbands and bring peace to their community. Through the use of drama and counselling, the women are able to

trace the history of violence that has impacted the lives of fellow women and through drama, they are able to show different coping mechanisms that can be used by refugee women. It is important to note that this type of knowledge that is used by the women is not obtained from books, and most of these women are not even educated.

In Bidibidi, women continue to use informal forums and their efforts are not effectively recognised and are undocumented, as the study has found. One of the ways in which women's efforts can be made more visible is by creating formal forums such as women dialogue forums or women peace clubs, and they should be given resources including offices where they can sit and work together as a team. During the action research, I was able to understand that where women are underrepresented in decision-making fora, deliberate action to redress the imbalance is necessary.

Participation in planning and decision-making processes has the additional benefit of increasing a sense of commitment to and ownership of any plan's objectives. Women should be encouraged to advocate partners to document their work. They should be encouraged to practise their drama and compose more songs related to the effects of war, and they can network with young artists to support them to write drama, poems, and songs to improve their understanding of practices for peacebuilding. They should tap into the wealth of cultural knowledge that the members of the local community, such as the elders, have and use these elders as resource persons to improve skills for peace. Local knowledge, as one has seen in the African tradition, has the potential to considerably improve women's advocacy for peace and contribute to peace, both locally and internationally.

8.2.2 Implications for Policy

Women's participation in conflict transformation should become a pre-requisite for implementing partners. In the context of a country such as Uganda, where 86% of the refugees are women, the possibility of using women as key actors to effect a positive change in the community is very high. Under such a scenario, a woman can be used as a tool from the convenience of her own home, and she can draw her courage and energy from the local community resources (formal women peace clubs) to improve the community's practices for peace. Since this is not yet the policy in place, the OPM and UNHCR may have to consider a policy of making peacebuilding a core thematic area in refugee programs and allocate a budget to local community-based organisations that are currently the ones focusing on this theme and that have few resources to empower women for peace.

Over the years, Uganda has committed to promoting gender equality and the role of women in development, and addressing issues of Violence Against Women, Girls and Children (VAW/VAC). The country has various beneficial frameworks including the Uganda 1995 Constitution, the Vision 2014, the National Development Plan II, Uganda Gender policy (2007), the Domestic Violence Act (2010), the Prohibition of FGM Act (2010), the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (2009), the Penal Code Act (Amended 2007), and the Local Government Act, among others. Institutions such as the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development; the Equal Opportunities Commission; the National Planning Authority; and other government institutions and CSOs have also promoted gender equality and the economic empowerment of women. These institutions have made efforts to address issues of Violence Against Women and Girls, and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights.

Globally, this call is embedded in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other frameworks that emphasise the achievement of gender equality and women empowerment. However, most times, such useful policy documents remain on paper with limited attention being given to implementing them. Therefore, one of the ways in which women participation can be achieved is through emphasising the full and meaningful participation of women and by using their traditional practices and formalising their groups, giving them recognition as activists and parties to conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

8.2.3 Implications for Theory and Research

Several scholars (Alonso 1993: 11; Brounéus 2014: 128; Galtung 1996: 40-43; White 2003 cited in Madu 2016: 102; Jacob *et al.* 2000; Jacob 2000: 13; Enloe 1991; Alison and Moranda 2009: 86; Wiper 1986 cited in Angom 2018: 16) recognise the crucial role those local women play in conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Both Lederach (1997, 2003) and Galtung (1969) place emphasis on the importance of sustainable peace at the community level that gives space to women.

After conflict, women take on the traditional male role and must manoeuvre through existing institutions, navigating between markets to government departments, in order to provide for their family's welfare and security (Reinke and Amanda 2016: 3; Maina 2011 cited in Maina 2016: 193-194; Opinia and Bubenzer 2011: 1-2; Veldwijk 2011: 157-158; Anderlini 2010; AWPSG 2004; Theobald 2012: 23). Subsequently, they are more prepared to confront any challenge in the transitional period (Theobald 2012: 23).

Women also have another important role in Africa, and the social and economic foundations that characterise women's roles provide them with the platform to engage in political activities, especially through their trading networks, hence establishing their roles in peacebuilding (Bhatnagar 2015: 21). In the settlement, just as in the African tradition, women shoulder the responsibility of providing material resources for the upkeep of their families, which means engaging in economic activities such as farming, manufacturing, trade, and craft-making outside of the normal household duties (Veldwijk 2011: 157; Berger 2016: 10). Just as in the African tradition, these women have engaged in activities that have supported their economic activities and empowerment at the community level contributing to peace locally and globally.

8.3 Factors contributing to Women's limited participation/exclusion in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation

The findings of the study also suggest that women face severe challenges or barriers in their efforts to contribute to conflict transformation and peacebuilding. The gender-insensitive infrastructures, inadequate knowledge and skills of women, and cultural barriers restrict women's lives. Several participants in the study confirmed women's engagement as peacebuilders even before the research and training though as informal engagement. They had formal groups such as the savings group but that were not specifically attributed to their peacebuilding practices. The gap between the access to education and resources for women after conflict has been a major concern among scholars and has called for increased action (Schirch 2004: 10-11; Galtung 1969; Lambourne 2004: 15; World Bank 2011: xv-xvii; UNwomen2018). When women have access to that which they need, their participation becomes better. The action research aimed to directly address some of these issues that were affecting the women especially with regards to their skills and knowledge for conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

However, I observed that a major challenge that many women faced while doing their peace work was their excessive engagement with their domestic work. From the data, the research team discovered that women are overburdened with their domestic responsibilities that they are culturally expected to do. This seems to affect their ability to manage both their traditional roles and carry out peace activities. As a result, time for peacebuilding tends to be diminished.

During the 11 months of the action research, this frequently resulted in fewer peace club meetings and mostly men being asked to facilitate the meetings because the women came

late as they had been busy with domestic work. The women themselves expressed concerns over the time required to organise communities and the attitude of some men towards women. They noted that organising for peacebuilding from the community level was very cumbersome and time-consuming. It involves moving into the communities, talking to people and convincing them to allow the women to lead the meetings which is ideally difficult in a traditional patriarchal Muslim community in Yumbe District which still does not see the importance of women in leadership. In an interview, Joyce Ayikoru relayed to me that one of the reasons for the failure of PRAFORD was that the men did not want to be led by women – this is why, many times, she used her husband for community mobilisation (Interview, 6 May 2019).

8.3.1 Implications for Practice

The women need to be further supported in community mobilisation and presentations of their activities, particularly with respect to time management between their domestic work and peacebuilding initiatives. They need to develop the skills for effective time management during the mobilisation of communities. This will require them to develop a culture of allocating time and days for each activity and learning to adhere to their timetable. They will also need to ensure that they allocate responsibilities for both men and women and leverage the support of the men who were trained with them during action research to support them in community mobilisation. The women will also need to consider participating in the formal structures in the settlement (RWC structures, community protection groups, school management committees, etc.). They need to show their interest and learn to ask for support from organisations working with women because many organisations reported during interviews on the lack of interest on the part of women to participate in formal structures. This will help them to gain experience, develop confidence in themselves, and reduce their inferiority complex.

8.3.2 Implications for Policy

The action research carried out with 20 participants has proved to be adequate for women to realise their importance in peacebuilding, and it has also helped men to see the hidden potentials in women. During the action research, a question was directed at women on what they think of working together with men. From the total of 12 women, eight (66.7%) argued for women and men working together, and four (33%) believed that women were the definite solution for women's problems and that if men are included, it will become what they called men show. Those who advocated exclusively for empowering women argued that once men became part of the empowerment, they would take the "Glory" of any success. The women stated that men are double faced in nature and gave an example of a recent Sudanese

struggle and argued that during the signing of the agreement to form a transitional government, it was men who were at the table, and they described men in a very caricatured manner.

They asserted that in Sudan, women like Alaa Salah, the 22-year-old who was seen as an iconic symbol of the protest, was nowhere near the peace table. They stated that in some of their homes, men state that “Women do not exist”, and that which exist are “traditions and morals that women must follow”. Those who preferred men to be part of the solution argued that most men behave in the way that they do because they have not experienced the hidden talents of women and their masculinity is covering the facts – they only see the cursory part of women because this is what they have known since time began. They believed that men will always see educated and talented women as a threat in the beginning, but as time progresses, when they see, that women can contribute to the common good of society, they will change. This group argued that excluding men is not a gender-sensitive manner of addressing women’s issues and can lead to domestic violence.

One significant finding of the study that triangulated the argument of women working with men was obtained during the general survey with 124 participants, where 93 (75%) believed that men and women must always work together, and 31 (25%) believed in women empowerment alone. Firstly, this suggests that even at the local level, the phenomenon of the exclusion of women is known to women and it is not uncommon; it is deeply rooted in the societal umbilical cord. Hence, men and women both recognise the need for collective effort to respond. Secondly, it suggests that there is a realisation among women at the grassroots level that they do not only belong where society and culture define their destiny to be. Women see men as partners for development as opposed to men seeing women as competitors, and therefore if both were empowered, they could work to change the structure that justifies the culture of violence and exclusion of women.

During the three days of training, I observed that women’s participation increased daily. On the last day, the research team created two groups and the men unanimously agreed that the women should take leadership of those groups. In the evaluation, I observed that some women were still more comfortable with having men as leaders. Therefore, this means that the implementing partners and communities should consider reviewing engaging women and men with one another and avoid standalone activities for women. The activities should be made in such a way that women are tasked to take the lead. Implementing partners should consider allocating women-friendly resources to the hands of the women and encourage them to use

the resources including training to enhance their knowledge, skills, and experience into building their professional lives – the women should also be encouraged to always lobby for resources and ask their male counterparts to support their lobbying and advocacy. Placing resources in the hands of the women and allowing them to use the resources in their plans enhances their ability to use the resources for peacebuilding activities.

8.3.3 Implications for Theory and Research

The role that women play in peacebuilding and conflict transformation among the research participants is consistent with and affirms the relevance of Lederach's (1997, 2003) and Galtung's (1969) conceptualisation of conflict transformation which starts with rebuilding relationships to achieve the goal of sustainable peace. From Lederach and Galtung's perspective, people are active transformers and change makers including in conflicts, because conflict acts as a motor of change. This view is supported by Dudouet (2006), Curle (1997), and Kelman and Fisher (1972) who state that conflict transformation is about transforming the very systems, structures, and relationships that give rise to violence and injustices. The meaning of transformation, they argue, involves the transformation of the very systems and cultures that breed conflicts, and conflict transformation is the lens through which a new design is created and made available for both men and women to work for sustainable peace.

Through the process of transformation, Lederach (2003: 14-17) argues that individuals and communities build themselves and reconstruct and renegotiate their identities, and new relationships are created which is the heart of transformational processes. For the transformation of communities, cultural practices that disrespect women must be abolished if one wants better relationships between women and men. This is because, from Lederach's (2003) perspective, relationships are central to transforming conflicts. Therefore, transforming relationships can be viewed as a tool that women have made available through the adoption of and adaptation to improve their peacebuilding practices despite the challenges that they are facing. The women's acts of transforming have not only led to community resilience but have also transformed their common identities and allowed them to become resourceful members of the community who are appreciated by their local community. This study has contributed to one's understanding of the role of women as dynamic representational resources in resource-constrained refugee contexts such as that of Bidibidi refugee settlement in Uganda.

8.4 Summary

This chapter summarises the major findings of the study. It began with a reminder on the central objectives guiding this study and went further to highlight the major findings of the study regarding the role that women can play in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Yumbe District. It also discussed the implications of each finding for practice, policy, and theory and research and ended with a general conclusion.

8.5 Conclusion

Based on the evidence presented in the preceding chapters, the chapter concludes that women have a major role to play in conflict transformation and peacebuilding in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Yumbe, Uganda. Specifically, women can build peace by enhancing their traditional roles as mothers, informers and central members of the daily lives of the community. Women were found to have an empowering impact on men when they were given leadership roles. Women were also found to have considerable potential to transform the dynamics of conflicts and to change the relationship between men and women by encouraging the men to be more interactive and community-centred in their approach. Furthermore, women were found to facilitate the integration of local peacebuilding knowledge through intermarriages between different cultures, marriages felicitate relationships and defuse conflict in Africa. They are found to promote teamwork and cooperation and support in communities.

These roles that women play in conflict transformation and peacebuilding have implications for practice, policy, and theory and research. Women should be encouraged to embrace their participation and balance their domestic role with public life, and this can be done by offering them core training. The Government of Uganda through the OPM should provide the necessary resources to facilitate women's full participation. Capacity building should emphasise women's role in conflict transformation and peacebuilding with a focus on traditional practices for easy understanding in such a context. Continuous skill enhancement programs should all be gender-sensitive and emphasise support for women at all levels. In this chapter, I discussed the summary of the findings and its implications. In the next chapter, the contribution of the study to literature and knowledge, including possibilities for future research, will be discussed.

During the evaluation, the participants were asked to draw the life in pictures. This exercise help participants to keep truck of their life goals. Where you came from, where you at present and where you want to see yourself in the future.



Figure 8.1: Photo 10, Credit: - Dawa, I. (2020) Members of the peace club presenting life in pictures from the time of the training during research evaluation at Bidibidi refugee settlement, Yumbe District.

CHAPTER NINE

CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY TO LITERATURE AND BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

9.1 Introduction

Given the growing focus on the limited participation of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation discourse, numerous normative, discursive, and critical analyses have been undertaken on the participation and contributions of women to conflict retransformation and peacebuilding. Therefore, this study made contributions to the emergent literature on this discourse, as well as to the fields of conflict transformation and women and peace studies. A key contribution of the research entitled *“The role of South Sudanese refugee and Ugandan women in peace and conflict transformation, Uganda”* is that it is one of the first studies to have comprehensively examined the contribution of refugee and host community women to peace and defined a strategy and framework for women and men to work together in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in such a context. Not only did the study delve into exploring the factors that exclude/limit women’s participation in Bidibidi refugee settlement, but it also looked into their strategic opportunities and the efforts that they have made for the meaningful and substantive integration into the implementation of peacebuilding processes in the settlement.

The study also made contributions by expounding on the women-peacebuilding discourse to embody a comprehensive narrative of a history that has witnessed remarkable changes in the ability of African women, especially in the Great Lakes, and indigenous women to move incrementally from their roles during colonial rule as silent participants in mainstream economic, social, and political developments in their nations state to proactive members of society contributing to the fight for independence of these states as seen in Rwanda, Burundi, South Africa etc.

This research looked deeply at and examined ways in which women in the settlement and host communities have informally contributed to peace. The study found that women built social support systems, mobilised support to help fellow women, and implemented informal peacebuilding activities (track 6 and 7) of peacebuilding process. Further contributions were

made by establishing that the challenge of the lack of peacebuilding activities in the settlement constitute a key question for theory, policy, and practice. The study made an input that in theory, the framework of peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and social inclusion provides the window of opportunity for the redefinition of women's roles as well as the platform for women to take up leadership positions from top-down to bottom-up and vice versa. Then, in the context of refugee settlements where cultures vary, the study ascertained that the realisation of such theoretical standing calls for the abilities of government (OPM) and institutions (UNHCR and its IPS) to establish and practically implement processes that are equally inclusive and people-centred, and gender-responsive to the diverse gender interests of women, not as issues but as needs.

In the area of addressing the challenges to women's peacebuilding roles, the study noted that the strategies in place are bottom-up mechanisms where women are not existent, and there are also no resources that target women's informal peace processes. The RWCs lead any process of intervention in the settlement, and there are a few women in subordinate positions in this system. This has led to a decrease in the number of women represented in formal offices and an increase in GBV cases as most of the RWC structures are traditionally patriarchal and women fear reporting issues affecting women to men in power. Because of this, the study contributed to this effect through Objective 3, that is, *to implement peacebuilding and conflict transformation interventions (AR) to build the capacity of 20 women and men in responding to conflicts in the settlement.*

During the action research, the study recommended to OPM, UNHCR, and implementing partners to start addressing the bottom-bottom approach that focuses on institutions that are not gender-sensitive. This suggestion necessitates that implementing partners and stakeholders, including UNHCR, should go back into the communities to ask the leaders and people about that which they, as a people, can do and are doing to increase women participation in the community; which resources have been put aside to support women, at a partner level; what accountability and coordination mechanisms are in place; and what the key messages are upon which they drive and encourage the building and sustainability of their communities for peace. This will help to bring women to track 1 (government) track 2 (professional) conflict resolution) and track 5 (research training and education), once women sit at these tracks, their voices and will be heard and their issues can be addressed at all levels.

Operating and implementing partners need to engage communities to participate and enlist responses and solutions that emanate from the people themselves, seeing as they have

knowledge of what is happening and why it is happening and are in a better position to develop and own the process of inclusive peacebuilding. UNHCR and OPM should prioritise resources for peacebuilding and develop an operational framework that builds this bottom-bottom strategy and complemented by the inclusive approach (track1-through 9) of peacebuilding process, this would most likely increase women's participation.

The approach also served as an essential point of departure for assessing the amount of empirical evidence and literature on women and peacebuilding with refugees and host communities through which the study was able to establish that there was a sparse narrative in the areas where the study identified gaps in literature. In addressing the gaps, the study made several contributions to knowledge. Firstly, it put into perspective the nexus between women's role in peacebuilding and conflict transformation by moving from historical to contemporary perspectives and an engendered understanding that women's exclusion/limited participation in peace and conflict transformation is not so new a phenomenon and has been long-established on varied responsibilities and approaches. Secondly, it moved from the inclination of generalisation by embracing women in their peacebuilding ability, from the essentialist and feminist theories. The study explored the applicability of the theories of peacebuilding and conflict transformation and embedded into the social inclusion theory to derive a framework of inclusive peace as a strategy for women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation and angle that has not be explored by peace scholars. The study asserts that women's roles, experiences, and interests of war determines how they respond to conflict and that the goal of peacebuilding should take into account these experiences if the goal is to build sustainable peace.

The study's finding of women's lack of access to resources including educational opportunities, training, and limited knowledge and skills for peacebuilding is not a new theme in the peacebuilding discourse but rather a repeated theme that calls for attention in policy and practice. The action research was an attempt to take the first step to address this gap. This was done by training 20 research participants to enhance their skills in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

After the training, I took the initiative to work with the 20 participants 11 months. During the training, the teams were divided into two zones to form two peace clubs. The two clubs prepared a peacebuilding plan in an activity called "designing local peace initiatives". This included activities, responsible persons to lead, and a funding strategy to support their local interventions between August 2019 and July 2020.

The area/location and the target population of the study was a major contribution to knowledge. This was the first academic action research undertaken in Bidibidi refugee settlement and Uganda refugee programme on the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation involving refugees and the host community. Another significant contribution to existing knowledge was the use of mixed methodology in this context. Most studies undertaken in this context use qualitative methods, the mixed methodology that brought about different data collection tools, and the study sample, and the data analysis method Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) gave a chance to discover the qualitative and quantitative picture of the issues that had to be addressed.

Another key contribution of the study was the methodological use of action research, which was used to bring women and men together for three days of training. By using action research, the study was able to identify the hidden talents of women and how they have been contributing to peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Bidibidi refugee settlement. The action research was a key tool used to support the participants in understanding how to respond to issues that were identified during the fieldwork. The different conflict transformation and peacebuilding tools that were taught to the participants helped to understand the key issues and how best they could respond to them.

Unlike most traditional academic research, I took the first step to build the capacity of the research participants to be able to address their own issues. This was to answer the primary aim of the research which was to understand the existing opportunities and limitations in women's participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding and to build their capacity to transform socio-economic, cultural, and political conflicts in the settlements.

In this study, the action research shifted the focus of the study to giving tools for addressing local issues through training the participants instead of identifying the issues and giving recommendations. I believe that local issues need a local solution, therefore, building the capacity of the community was a major contribution because it has led to the reduction of cases of violent conflict since there are early warning and response mechanisms in place to help participants respond to conflicts before they become violent. This ability to conduct action research to tackle this continuing gap in the capacity of women has added to the body of knowledge. Hence, a major contribution. Figure 9.1 is a photo of a participant presenting a peace work plan during a training session in St. Daniel Comboni Youth Centre, Arua.

Another important contribution of this study has been the establishment of an infrastructure for peace. In 2017, after clearly identifying the gaps in peacebuilding in the refugee settlement,

I developed an initiative response to the gaps. My plan was formalising a Community-Based Organisation (CBO) that she had registered in 2014, the Community Initiative for Peace and Development (CIPAD). The focus at that time was empowering schoolgirls to stay in school by providing reusable sanitary pads for girls in rural schools and building libraries in these schools.

In 2016, due to the South Sudanese refugee influx to Uganda, I wrote a project proposal to Partera International through the Baptist church of North America who sent one consultant with whom I trained 25 Ugandan and South Sudanese urban refugee youth for seven days in conflict management. In 2017, the idea became clearer to empower communities in conflict management as the conflict escalated, I decided to revisit the mission and vision of CIPAD and registered with the Arua District community development office as Community Empowerment for Peace and Development West Nile (CEPAD) West Nile but still focusing on youth empowerment and girl child education and added peacebuilding as a key strategic theme.

The aim CEPADWN is empowering communities for peace and development through training, research, and advocacy. In 2018, I wrote a proposal for the CBO to Stiftung Umverteilen in Germany for £10,000 for a project called *empowering women for peaceful co-existence between refugees and host communities*. In 2019, after seeing the results in the field, the donor decided to renew the funding until now CEPADWN receives annually donation from Stiftung. The project has expanded to Rhino camp and Palorinya refugee settlements. CEPAD currently recruited four of the five research associates for projects, with the senior research associate being the executive director (ED) of the organisation. In May 2020, CEPAD received peace through digital funding from Peace Direct to implement virtual peace activities during Covid-19, and in July 2020, CEPAD and YSAT wrote a joint project and received funding from OXFAM for a project called *saving lives now and for future through conflict transformation*. The CBO has won the admiration of OPM, UNHCR, and the implementing partners as the only peacebuilding institution in the settlements in the West Nile. At the end of 2020, the German Federal Ministry awarded CEPAD 30,000 Euros to build capacity of refugees and host communities in the Rhino camp and Palorinya settlements. CEPAD right receives funding from OXFAM Novib, the German development services and the Protestant association in Germany called AGIOMONDO for three-year partnership to respond with land and resources to reduce conflicts in West Nile with one development worker supporting the organisation for three years and one consultant for three months doing overall conflict assessment and impact of Covid-19 in the West Nile, CARE International through European Union Civil Protection and

Humanitarian Aid (EHCO) to empower women in menstrual hygiene management and GBV in Imvepi refugee settlement, IFA and Stiftung in Rhino camp and Palorinya. In June 2021, CEPADWN became national NGO registered with Uganda NGO Bureau Reg. No 6530 and received 5 years' operating licence. CEPADWN now full function board of directors and established three field offices in Rhino camp, Palorinya and Imvepi Refugee settlements and has 15 fully paid staff. At the time of writing, I have taken myself out of the institutional management to avoid a conflict of interest with my research. I did write proposals, design training material, and identify trainers as needed.

For more information, one can visit the website at <https://cepadwestnile.org/> and the Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/cepadwestnile.org>. This is one strategy that I have for empowering women for participation; this is a big task and the demand for conflict transformation in the settlement is much more than that which CEPADWN can respond to. Therefore, this calls for the attention of all actors including the Government of Uganda through the OPM to prioritise peacebuilding in the settlements. My overall objective is to make CEPADWN a women-founded and women-led organisation in the West Nile region to champion women's role in public life for sustainable peace and development in Uganda. One of the projects done by CEPADWN is the rainbow community library in Atratraka, Galia primary schools and all saints secondary schools in Marach district in 2015-2017. The picture below was taken inside the library in Atratraka during a visit to the library to supervise the use of books by teachers and students. The rainbow library is one of the best furnished libraries in the districts with over five thousand books, computers and iPads for modern learning and teaching.



Figure 9.2: Photo 12, Credit: - Dawa, I. (10 June 2016) the rainbow community library constructed by CEPAD West Nile to improve academic performance in rural schools in Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.



Figure 9.3: Photo 13, Credit: - Dawa, I. (15 August 2019) A woman presenting a GBV tree during the first training organised by CEPAD West Nile in Rhino camp settlement on peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.



Figure 9.4: Photo 14, Credit: - Dawa, I. (17 August 2019) Group photo of the first participants trained by CEPAD West Nile in Rhino camp settlement on peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.



Figure 9.5: Photo 15, Credit: - Dawa, I. (20 December 2019) Group photo of the CEPAD West Nile's members of the general assembly after the 2019 general assembly at hotel sanitary in Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.



Figure 9.6: Photo 16, Credit: - Dawa, I. (August 2019) Women participants doing a GBV analysis tree during training at Denial Comboni Youth Center Ediofe, Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.

Stated briefly, the study adopted an interdisciplinary approach and used action-oriented approaches to convey the role of women in peacebuilding by locating the broader study in terms of how the exclusion or limited participation of women is understood from deeper critical literary, theoretical, and analytical perspectives. It also looked into women's efforts to appraise the evolving thoughts that if women are bestowed more opportunities in leadership in the settlements, Uganda could achieve unprecedented levels of reduction in violence between refugees and host communities as well as development, taking into consideration the roles that women play in their everyday actions of rebuilding their communities, states, and nations in the context of conflicts. Figure 9.7 is a striking example of a change in gender dynamics on day two of the training. I could see the women taking the chairs and the men sitting on the floor, which would normally be the opposite in South Sudan and Uganda.



Figure 9.7: Photo 17, Credit: - Dawa, I. (13 August 2019) Participants brainstorming during group work on the role of women in peacebuilding at St. Daniel Comboni Youth Center Ediofe, Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.

9.1 Suggestions for Further Research

The research findings and areas to which the study made a contribution drew attention to the need for future research. For this reason, it is important to conduct future research to mainly explore the role of interaction between educated (elite) women and grassroots women, and how this can influence the outcomes of peacebuilding processes. The role of peacebuilding funding and how it affects women's participation. A study of such kind is necessary because most studies focus either on the rural or the urban women (elite women do access donor funds most times). There is no study that brings the two categories together, at least in such a context therefore it makes it difficult to define the role of lack of resources was which a key factor in women exclusion in relation to donor strategy. When examined separately, the voice of the elite women and their visible contributions to peacebuilding often dominate those of the

rural women who feel excluded and marginalised. Therefore, conducting such a study and sharing the findings would most likely give women and policy makers a strategy of including women from all walks of life in conflict management and making donors accountable at all levels.

Additionally, most studies examine the role or link between women and peacebuilding and recurrently employ or recommend the bottom-up approach. As suggested by the study, blending the bottom-up approach with the top-down approach would be relevant to peacebuilding, and this is most certainly an interesting area of research to consider. Such a research study can explore the significance of the bottom-up and top-down approaches with the aim of making empirical recommendations for policy and practice.

In conducting research on the refugee and host community women experience, the study also mentioned the role that women have played in peacebuilding in countries such as Northern Uganda, Liberia, Rwanda, and Northern Ireland. Further research on comparative case studies that can effectively focus on these continents and other continents would be important. Such a study would shed more light on the various ways in which women contribute to peacebuilding and how distinct their role, interests, and strategies are in different continents. Also, literature on refugee women and the contribution to peace in the host countries would benefit vastly from a study that capitalises on making a comparison between other refugee hosting countries in the continent with the aim to find out how refugee women cope with and adapt to new cultures in order to work towards peaceful co-existence with host communities.

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APPENDIX I: Letter of Information



Title of the Research Study: Women in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation: Peacebuilding with South Sudanese Refugees in Uganda

Principal Investigator: Irene DAWA

Supervisors: Dr. Sylvia Kaye and Prof. Geoffrey Harris

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study: Women in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation: Peacebuilding with South Sudanese Refugees in Uganda

The aim of the study is to understand the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation, identify gaps and design training to build the capacity of refugee women to transform socio-economic, cultural and political conflicts and build peace in refugee camps.

Dear participant,

I'm a doctorate candidate from Durban University of Technology (DUT) in Durban. My research activities focus on....

Outline of the Procedures:

1. Collecting data from women and men on peacebuilding effort in Bidibidi refugee camp
2. Assess the participation of women and men in peacebuilding process

3. Assess the role of women peacebuilders and identify capacity gaps
4. Design and implement an action research for capacity building in peacebuilding and conflict transformation

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant: This is a very low risk study and there are no discomforts to you expected.

Benefits: Both you and researcher will benefit from this study. **Reason/s why you May Withdraw from the Study:** you should participate voluntarily. You have the right to withdraw from the inquiry at any time and for any reason without any adverse effects.

Remuneration: There is no remuneration for you and no form of inducement will be offered for participation in this study. But snacks will be provided to the participants.

Costs of the Study: Participants are not allowed to cover any costs of my study.

Confidentiality: Anonymity and confidentiality will be guaranteed through the use of acronyms. Access to data will be limited to study personal and information collected will be locked in a safe place and destroyed after five years. You will be told about the concepts of anonymity and confidentiality which will be applied to this study and if participants would like to be named, then they will be named as agreed.

Research-related Injury: Should there be any study related injury, the psychologist skills will assist me in remediating to the situation.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

Please contact me **+256772668698**, my supervisor **+27720703603** or the Institutional Research Ethics administrator on **+27 (0)31 373 2375**. Complaints can be reported to Prof. C. E. Napier - Acting Director, Research and Postgraduate Support. Contact number is **+27 (0)31 373 2577**.

APPENDIX II: Consent Form



Statement of Agreement for your participation in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher (**Irene Dawa**) about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study.
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher (Irene Dawa).
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent of participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to take part in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during this research which may relate to participation will be made available to me.

Full Name of Participant.....Date.....

Time.....Signature / Right Thumbprint.....

I, herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher:.....Date.....Signature.....

APPENDIX III: Key Informants Guide



Dear respondent my name is **IRENE DAWA**. I am collecting data for an academic study titled “The role of Women in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation: An action research with South Sudanese refugee and host community women”. The aim of the study is to understand the existing opportunities and limitations to women’s participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding and build their capacity to transform socio-economic, cultural and political conflicts in the settlements.

Designation:	Zone:
Sex:	Duration:

WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT TRASNFORMATION

1. Let’s talk about some of the roles /activities of women in the settlement?
2. What specific activities do women do that contributes to building peace in the settlement?
3. Are women’s roles adequately recognized in any peace process in the settlement?
Yes/No and why
4. In case a conflict arises in the settlement, who takes the lead in resolving the conflict and why?
5. What barriers contribute to low participation of women in peacebuilding activities in the settlement?
6. What resources are available for women to participate in peacebuilding processes?
7. How can women be involved in peacebuilding and conflict at all levels?

8. Why are there less women in the RWC systems?
9. Mention any other suggestions for women in leadership?

APPENDIX IV: Women in Leadership Semi-Structured Interview



Women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation

Dear respondent my name is **Irene Dawa**. I am collecting data for an academic study titled “The role of Women in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation: an action research with South Sudanese refugee and host women”. The aim of the study is to understand the existing opportunities and limitations to women’s participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding and build their capacity to transform socio-economic, cultural and political conflicts in the settlements.

I would appreciate your taking the time to answer the questions I will ask. It should take about ten minutes of your time. Your responses are voluntary and will be confidential, you will not be asked for personal identifying information and the data collected will not be used to research ways to improve women participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Part 1: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

- a. Level of women’s understanding of peacebuilding, their proactive and preventive contribution to conflict transformation
 - i. How would you describe peace in this community?
 - ii. Describe the situation of peacebuilding in this community?
 - iii. How do you engage women to participate in peacebuilding activities in this community?

- b. Challenges Facing Women in Peacebuilding

1. Describe the factors that are promoting/ hindering peacebuilding in this community
(Probe for age, level of education, income, culture practices, and religion)
2. Do women have their own ways of peacebuilding and what are these ways that they use?
3. What would be your hope for women's participation in peacebuilding in this community?
 - a. Explain your answer above
4. What activities do women do that is considered to be contributing to peacebuilding?
5. How does cultural beliefs affect women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation?
6. Are there institutions that promote peacebuilding in your community? If yes? What do they do ***Probe for the institutions***
7. What is the level of support given to women by the institutions involved in peacebuilding? ***Probe for explanation***
8. How would describe the role of women leaders in this settlement?

APPENDIX V: FGD Guide



Focus Group:	Number of participants:
Venue:	Time:

The following questions serve as part of a research project carried out by Irene Dawa- a PhD candidate of Public Administration and peacebuilding at the Durban University of Technology International Centre for Non-violence, Durban, South Africa on “*The role of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation: An action research women South Sudanese and host community women in Bidibidi settlement*”.

1. What are the women in this settlement doing to contribute to peacebuilding and conflict transformation?
2. What would you say are the mechanisms and strategies best works for women in achieving peaceful co-existence in the settlement?
3. What are some of the main barriers/limitations to women’s participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in the settlement?
4. What can be done to increase/ promote women’s participation in peacebuilding processes in the settlement?
5. Mention institutions that could/should support women participation in peacebuilding processes in the settlement and how?

6. How do you think these institutions can support women participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation?

APPENDIX VI: Women in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation Survey



General survey

Dear respondent my name is **IRENE DAWA** I am collecting data for an academic study titled “The role of women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation: An action research women South Sudanese and host community women in Bidibidi settlement”. The aim of the study is to understand the existing opportunities and limitations to women’s participation in conflict transformation and peacebuilding and build their capacity to transform socio-economic, cultural and political conflicts in the settlements. I would appreciate your taking the time to complete the following survey. It should take about ten minutes of your time. Your responses are voluntary and will be confidential, you will not be asked for personal identifying information and the data collected will not be used to research ways to improve women participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Part 1. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Interviewee Information:

Interviewee Name:	Zone/Village
Date:	Time:

1. How old are you?

18-25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46-55 ☐ 56-65 ☐ 66+ ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

4.

2. Sex

Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

5.

3. What is your highest level of education?

None ☐ Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Tertiary institution ☐ University ☐

4. What is your primary occupation? (choose one option)

Employed ☐ Self-Employed/business ☐ Unemployed ☐ Student ☐

other.....

5. What is your nationality?.....

6. **Are you a refugee or Uganda?** (Refugee settlement)

7. **How long have you lived here?** (Years and months).....

8. How would you describe the general security issues in your current location?

6. (Circle 1= very secure, 2= secure, 3= not sure, 4=insecure, 5=very insecure)

7.

8. 1 2 3 4 5

9.

10.

11. Probe more for the response given above

PART 2: ECONOMIC FACTORS

What economic factors affect women participation in peacebuilding?

Access to funds () Means of livelihood () unfriendly Economic Policies () Access to
employment () Market dynamics () level of income () others

.....

To what extent do economic factors affect women participation in peacebuilding

Not at all () Low extent () moderately () High extent () Very high level ()

PART 3: SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS

What socio-cultural factors affect women participation in peacebuilding?

Level of Education () Cultural Norms () Political affiliation () Tribal differences ()
other.....

To what extent does socio-cultural factors affect women participation in peacebuilding?

Not at all () Low extent () moderately () High extend () Very high level ()

Below are statements on socio-cultural factors that affect women participation in
peacebuilding. Kindly indicate your level of agreement with statement

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Conflict makes women to take more roles. Women are the one taking care of families (Heads of households) during conflict and have no time to participate outside their homes					
Political and legal frameworks have Favoured men roles in peace processes					
Women's lack of access to skills and knowledge affects their involvement in peacebuilding and conflict transformation					
Culturally the place of women is in private space, so they are not expected to be participating in peace and conflict issues					

PART 4: CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN IN PEACEBUILDING

Which of the following best suits the role given to women during violent conflicts? (Choose one)

1. Providing for the security of the household ()
2. Securing shelter ()
3. Making decisions and managing affairs ()
4. Participating in combat and noncombat war activities ()
5. Providing the fighting forces with food ()
6. Ensuring comfort for the fighters ()

12. PART 5 COMMUNITY PEACEBUILDING

13.

Section 1	Community peacebuilding in the Settlements		
Describe what you call peace in your community			
Does your community have peace committees (PCs)	Yes	No	I don't know
If yes who are the, member of the PCs (women, men, give ratio) give details			
How many women are part of the PCs?	1. Not sure 2. No women 3. A few (please give number) 4. Many (please give number)		
What are the major activities of the PCs	14.		
Do you see conflicts arise in your community?	15. Yes	No	Do not know
If yes, mention the conflicts?	16.		
If yes to the above, what efforts are been made to resolve them? And who leads it?	17. 18.		
Do women actively respond to these conflicts	1. Yes 2. no 3. sometimes 4. not sure		
If no, why			

Section 2	Women perception on peacebuilding and conflict transformation
How do you see your level and your role as a woman in peacebuilding and conflict transformation (choose only one answer)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Don't know/can't say 2. My level of participation doesn't matter 3. It's about just to know about the subject 4. Other's role is important, but I should also participate 5. My active level of participation should be there 6. I think, it's not possible without my level of participation
Describe some activities that women do that contribute to peaceful co-existence between refugees and host communities	19.
Do you think women activities that contribute to peace are being recognises?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No
If No to the above, why?	20.
Do women participate in any peace meetings held in your community?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No 3. sometimes
If yes, what kind of meetings and at what level?	21.
What factors promote/limit women's participate/ in the peace peacebuilding activities (tick response)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. lack of knowledge/skills 2. No invitation to participate 3. No focus on peacebuilding activities 4. Access to resources 5. Too much domestic work 6. Fear of other tribes/cultural beliefs 7. Political parties influence

	8. Do not know
What kind of support do women leaders need to fully participate in peacebuilding activities (tick response)	1. Technical training support 2. Cultural support (need to change attitude and believe) 3. Physical infrastructural support 4. Financial support 5. Religious support 6. Others mention here

Section 3: Women leaders in peacebuilding and conflict transformation	
What roles are local women leaders playing in peacebuilding in the settlement	
Share with me some of the problems women leaders face in trying to build peace in the community (list all mentioned)	
Section 4: Institutional factors that influence women participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation	
In the Settlement, are there organisations specifically focusing on peacebuilding and conflict transformation? If yes, mention them	
What is the effectiveness of the peacebuilding programmes implemented by these organisation (choose one answer)	1. Not implemented 2. Implemented but not effective 3. Implemented by less effectives 4. Implemented and effective 5. I do not know
How would you rate the peacebuilding activities by these organisations in your community?	1. Very poor 2. Poor

	3. Neutral 4. Good 5. Very good
How would you rate community-based peacebuilding structures for in the settlements	1. Very poor 2. Poor 3. Neutral 4. Good 5. Very Good
How would rate gender sensitive inclusiveness (women and men) in all peacebuilding activities by these institution?	1. Very poor 2. Poor 3. Neutral 4. Good 5. Very Good
How would you rate the role of the RWCs in conflict transformation?	1. Very poor 2. Poor 3. Neutral 4. Good 5. Very Good
In your opinion, should there be more women in RWCs? give reasons to you answer	1. yes 2. No

PART 6: TRADITIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISMS

- a. In what ways have women been involved in resolving conflicts traditionally in your community? Choose all that apply
 1. Mediation
 2. Negotiation
 3. Arbitration
 4. Advocacy campaigns
 5. Lobbying for peace
 6. Others describe.....

Have the above conflict transformation mechanisms worked? Tick one

Yes ()

No ()

If yes, which ones? Tick below all that apply

Conflict resolution methods	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fairly	poor	Very poor
Mediation						
Arbitration						
Negotiation						
Advocacy campaigns						
Lobbying for peace						
Others						

If not to the above, how do you think women can be involved in peacebuilding? list your answers below

1.

2.

3.

b. Women's capacity

What skills exist among women in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in the settlement?
(List all that is mentioned)

How can women and women's groups if any be strengthened to fully be engaged in peacebuilding and conflict transformation? (List all that is mentioned)

c. Traditional barriers to women participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation

Are women adequately involved in peacebuilding in the Settlements?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Sometimes

If no to the above, what are some traditional factors preventing women from meaningful participation in peacebuilding? (List your answers below)

Are there any women's prevailing attitudes and cultural norms and practices preventing their participation in peacebuilding?

1. Yes
 2. No
22. If yes, which ones? List your answers below
- 23.

In your opinion, can women and men work together for more peaceful co-existence in the settlement?

1. yes
2. No
3. Not sure

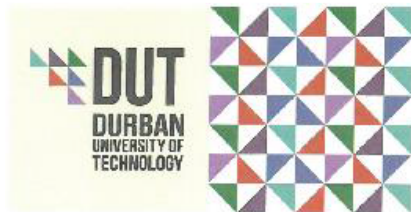
If yes or No to the above, give reasons for your answer

d. Recommendations

1. What steps should be taken to ensure women's participation in peacebuilding activities? (List answers below)

2. With the existing cultures and structures, how can women be supported to participate effectively in peacebuilding and conflict transformation? (List answers below)

APPENDIX VII: Letter to the Office of the Prime Minister, Yumbe District Local Government and Danish Refugee Council



4 April 2018

Dear Friends

This is a general letter to the Office of the Prime Minister, Yumbe District local government and the Danish Refugee Council.

I write as head of the Peacebuilding Programme at Durban University of Technology to introduce Ms Irene Dawa. Irene is a full-time PhD student in the programme whose research topic is *Women in peacebuilding: South Sudanese women in Bidibid Refugee Camp in Uganda*. Her period of study is 2018-2020 inclusive.

I would be very grateful for any assistance you can provide her. By all means come back to me for any clarification geoffreyh@dut.ac.za

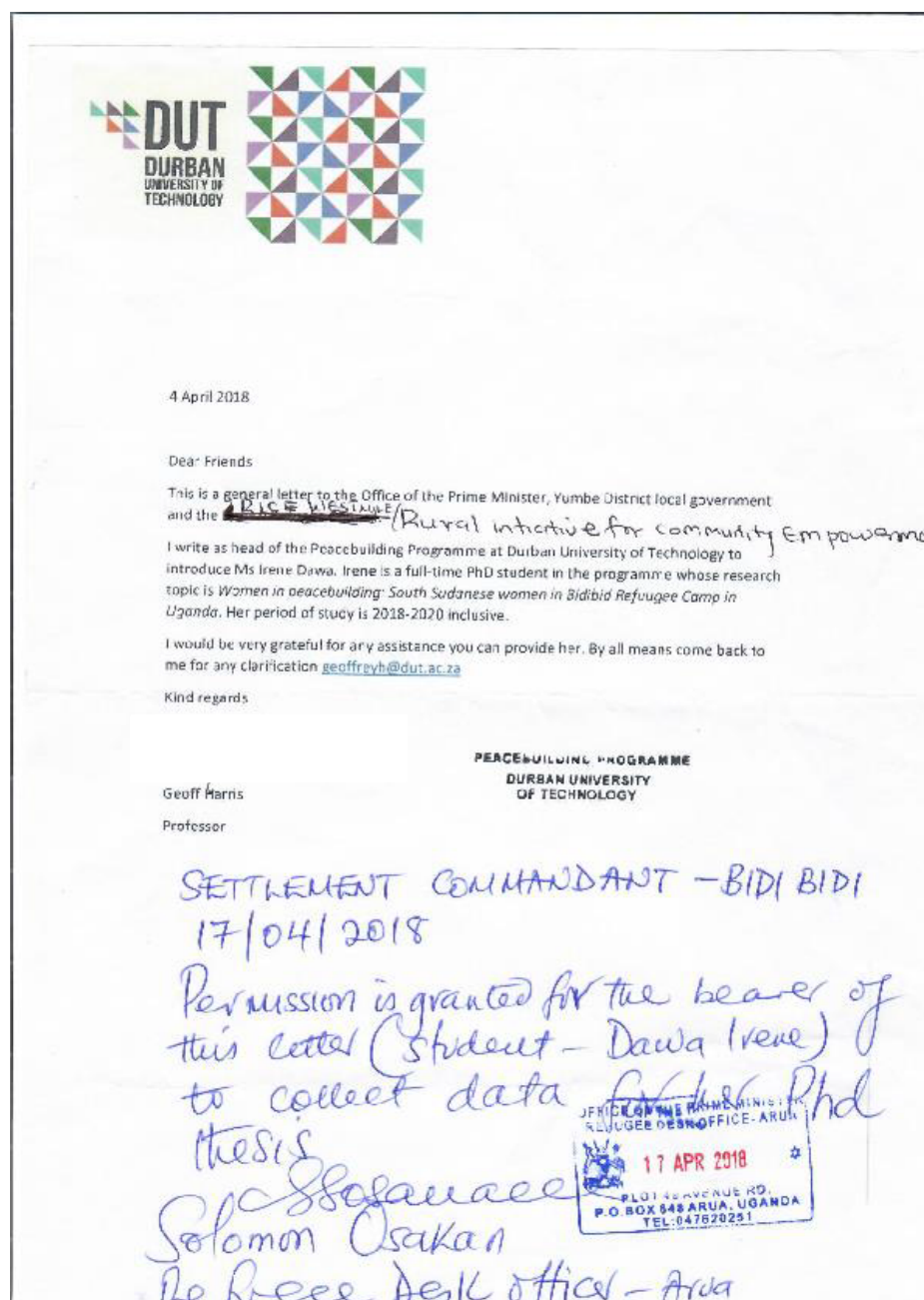
Kind regards

PEACEBUILDING PROGRAMME
DURBAN UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY

Geoff Harris

Professor

APPENDIX VIII: Letter to the Office of the Prime Minister, Yumbe District Local Government and Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment



APPENDIX IX: Permission to conduct Research



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
THE RESIDENT DISTRICT COMMISSIONER - YUMBE DISTRICT
P.O Box 1 – YUMBE.

Tel: +2560784494332/ 0712153838, E-mail wadiamanasi@gmail.com

Our ref: RDC/ADM/80.....

Date: 23rd/05/2018

Your ref:

Peace Building Programme
Durban University of Technology.

Attention: **Geoff Harris**
Professor.

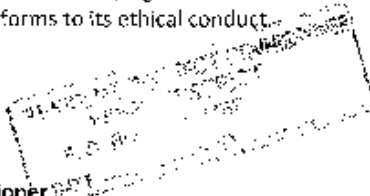
Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your correspondence of 4th April 2018 in regards permission for Irene Dawa. On behalf of Yumbe District Local Government,

I wish to state categorically that, there is no objection for Irene Dawa to conduct research on the topic "Women in Peace building: South Sudanese Women in BidiBidi Refugees Settlement in Yumbe District, Uganda" and therefore permission granted so long as the research conforms to its ethical conduct.

Kind Regards

Wadia Manasi
Resident District Commissioner
Yumbe District Local Government.



Copy: District Chairman- Yumbe District Local Government
Chief administrative Officer- Yumbe

APPENDIX X: Invitation to attend Training in Arua

IMG_1631.jpg

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?tab=wm>



The Chief Administrative Officer
Yumbe District Local Government
Yumbe Uganda,
07/08/2019

**RE: INVITATION TO ATTEND A THREE DAY TRAINING IN PEACEBUILDING AND
NONVIOLENT CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION IN ARUA**

Dear Sir,

My Name is Irene Dawa second year PhD student of Peacebuilding program of Durban University of Technology in Durban South Africa. As part of my research, I am required to do Action Research participants of the area of the research. The "Action Research" is designed to build the capacity of refugees and host communities to respond to conflict that affect their daily lives non-violently.

With this letter, I would request your office to nominate one staff of the district to benefit from this training so that she/he can support the district to work together with the refugees and actors within the settlement to support peacebuilding efforts in the district. The training will be 3 days starting on 12-14 of August 2019 at Arua Youth Centre in Ediofe. The participants will be picked from Yumbe on Sunday 11 August 2019 at 3pm.


The training will be facilitate by Mr. Lam Oryem Cosmas (MA Conflict Transformation, Eastern Mennonite University) – a conflict transformation, peacebuilding, restorative justice and project management consultant and Ms. Irene Dawa PhD Student Durban University of Technology, Durban South Africa, (MA peace and conflict studies, MA, international relations at the catholic University of Sacred Heart Milan Italy)-consultant, women peace and security, GBV, protection and conflict sensitive programming.

I look forward to your kind response to this request.

Yours in peace,
Irene DAWA

Peacebuilding Programme
Durban University of Technology
ML Sultan Campus, Block C
Durban 4000, RSA

APPENDIX XI: Request to conduct Training in Arua

 **DUT** DURBAN
UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY

Request granted

**RESIDENT DISTRICT COMMISSIONER
YUMBE**
26 JUL 2019
P.O. BOX 1, YUMBE
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

The Resident District Commissioner (RDC)
Yumbe District Local Government
Yumbe Uganda,
20/07/2019

**RE: REQUEST TO TRAIN 20 REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITY ON PEACEBUILDING
AND NONVIOLENT CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION IN ARUA**

Dear Sir,

My Name is Irene Dawa second year PhD student of Peacebuilding program of Durban University of Technology in Durban South Africa. I have been in your office several times and shared my fieldwork report with by email on July 15, 2019.

As mentioned in my email, my research has two components, first is the data collection and the second is based on the result from the data, an "Action Research" designed to be implemented with participants and progress of change to be monitored for at least 6-12 months before a final evaluation is done.

With this letter, I would like to request your permission to bring 20 participants (11 refugees and 7 host community members, 1 Representative from OPM office and 1 from Yumbe District Local Government) both Female and men, ordinary community members and leaders for a 3 days intensive training to be conducted in Arua Youth Centre in Idiote from August 12-14 2019. The reason for choosing the venue outside of Yumbe is to detach the participants from their daily routine and environment for total concentration.


The training will be facilitate by, Mr. Lam Oryem Cosmas (MA Conflict Transformation, Eastern Mediterranean University) – a conflict transformation, peacebuilding, restorative justice and project management consultant and Ms. Irene Dawa PhD Student Durban University of Technology, Durban South Africa, (MA peace and conflict studies, MA, international relations at the catholic University of Sacred Heart, Milan Italy)-consultant, women peace and security, G4V, protection and conflict sensitive programming.

I thank you for your support towards the success of my research and contribution to peacebuilding between refugees and host communities in Uganda.

Yours in peace,
Irene DAWA

peacebuilding programme
Durban University of Technology
ML Sibhu Campus, Block C
Durban 4000, RSA

APPENDIX XII: Acceptance to be a Gate Keeper for Action Research

<p>P.O. Box 481, Arua - Uganda Front Desk: +256 - 372 - 280576 Cell: 0712 353669, 0774 215673, 0752 200563 / Fax: +256 476 420208 Email: ricearua@yahoo.com / ricewn@gmail.com / Website: www.riceuganda.org</p>	
<p>Date: 24/05/2018 Irene Dawa Durban University of Technology Durban, South Africa</p>	
<p>Dear Maddam,</p>	
<p>RE: ACCEPTANCE FOR BE A GATE KEEPER FOR THE ACTION RESEARCH</p>	
<p>In reference to your letter dated 12th May 2018 asking for RICE-WN to participate in your PhD action research as a gate keeper, I hereby commit the organisation to support you in this endeavour. This is because the research topic: "Women Peace and Conflict Transformation": Peace building with South Sudanese Refugees in Bidibidi refugee camp in Yumbe district in Uganda" is in line with RICE-WN area of peace building.</p>	
<p>Your commitment in the research is required so that you are able to finish it in the time you stipulated up to 2020. You will also be furnishing RICE-WN with the progress of the research as you promised through the Executive Director or his delegate. We also expect that the research leads to a project proposal as you promised and hopefully consequent funding of the project.</p>	
<p>Any other assistance you need that might put obligation on RICE-WN will be communicated by writing to the Executive Director first.</p>	
<p><i>We wish you a successful research</i></p>	
<p><i>Thank you,</i></p>	
<p><i>Yours in service</i></p>	
<p><i>Pwe Sakari</i> <i>Executive Director</i> <i>Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment West Nile (RICE-WN)</i></p>	
<p>RURAL INITIATIVE FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT - WEST NILE <small>VISION: A united community based culture, resources for holistic development.</small></p>	

APPENDIX XIII: Consent as Research Support Team for Irene Dawa



Office of the Secretary, Africa Working Group GAAMAC 111 2nd Floor Room W 02-01 Ministry of Justice
and Constitutional Affairs Parliament Avenue
Tel: +256-(0)783005075/ (0)705125023 Email: lina.zedriga@gmail.com

28th April, 2018

To whom it may concern

Re: Consent as research support team for Irene Dawa

I hereby confirm that I, *Lina Zedriga Waru* the Executive Director of Regional Association for Community Initiatives (RACI) and Chairperson Global Action Mass Atrocity Crime (GMAC3) is a resident of Kampala/Arua, Uganda of the republic of Uganda.

I confirm that I give my consent and that of my organisation for (*for Irene*) as supporting team during her research on *Women and Peacebuilding "Women Peace and Conflict Transformation": Peacebuilding with South Sudanese Refugees in Uganda*. I will support her throughout her field work as required by the Durban University of Technology Peacebuilding programme in the South Africa.

Do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.
Yours faithfully,

Name: Lina Zedriga Waru (PhD)

Signature: _____ Date: 28/04/2018 Place: Kampala-

4.4 Appendix XIV: Photographs



Photo 9, Credit: - Kadabara, B., senior research associate (14 August 2019) Group photo with chief guest (RDO) Arua and participant representatives cutting a cake to celebrate peace at St. Daniel Comboni Youth Centre Ediofe, Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.

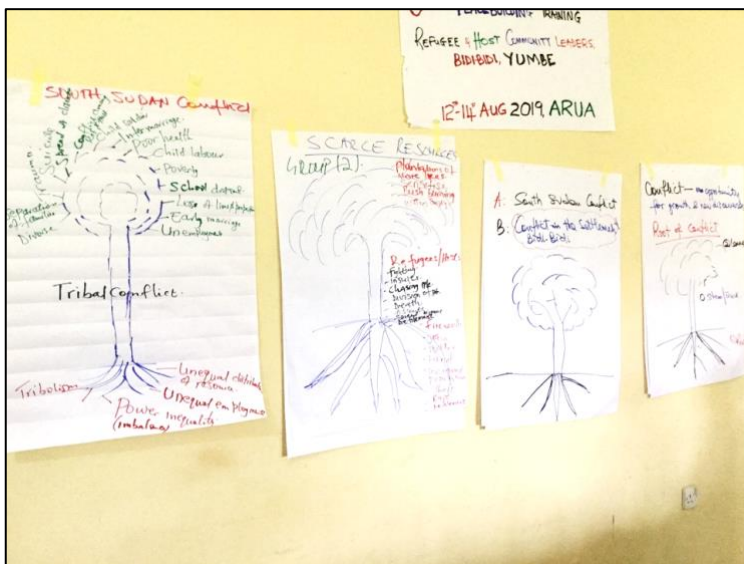


Photo 7, Credit: - Dawa, I. (12 May 2019) Participants mapping conflict using the tool of the conflict tree during the training at St. Daniel Comboni Youth Centre Ediofe, Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.



Figure 7.14: Photo 8, Credit: - Kadabara, B., Senior research associate (14 August 2019) Awarding of certificates to participants at the end of the training by the RDO, senior deputy town clerk Arua district, the senior community development officer of Yumbe District, and the co-facilitator at St. Daniel Comboni Youth Centre Ediofe, Arua, Uganda. Unpublished Photograph.