

Journal of Public Policy and Administration (JPPA)

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF WOMEN'S PEACE BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN NAIROBI COUNTY KENYA

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Abstract

Purpose: To examine the challenges and opportunities of women's peace building activities in Nairobi County Kenya.

Methodology: The study used descriptive research design. The study focused on the individual women who were involved in peace building activities. Data was gathered through questionnaires, interviews, and FGDs. In total, the researcher conducted 17 FGDs, consisting of 8-12 people. A total of 386 respondents filled the semi structured questionnaire. Simple random sampling was used to select the respondents to fill the questionnaire. Purposive sampling was used to select the members to participate in the FGDs. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 was used to analyze quantitative data. Percentages, frequencies, figures, bar charts, pie charts and tables were used to present results. Qualitative data was analyzed using coding and thematic analysis. Results were presented in form of themes and verbatim.

Results: When grassroots women talk to youths, the most likely perpetrators of violence, they try to make them understand the consequences of violence. They also make them understand that destroying property only results in the suffering of the community. The study found that the impediments to women's peacebuilding effort include lack of funding, insufficient human resource, tribalism, gender stereotypes and chauvinism, and poor infrastructure. The opportunities that can be used to promote women peacebuilding activities during elections include public sensitization, security and vigilance, and the building bridges initiative.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: Women experience inadequacy in their community activities to uphold peace. The government should come up with proper structures to help fund women groups that normally take part in peacebuilding initiatives. Kenyan government should partner with the international bodies as well such as the UN to empower women through gender equality policies.

Keywords: *women peace building, women challenges, peacebuilding activities*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Peace building refers to measures aimed at reducing risk by solidifying multi-level national and international capacities and laying proper and sustainable foundations for peace and progress while electoral conflict is any conflict that occurs during the pre-election, election, and post-election period. There has been a significant shift in the nature of international conflict. Intrastate confrontations have emerged to be the major threat to global and regional peace since late 1980s. According to Berwind (2012), internal conflicts and conflicts within borders have replaced the ideological conflicts such as the cold war. These conflicts are usually nurtured out of cultural and ethnic tensions, struggle for power, and tribal and religious rivalries. Countries that are caught in these forms of conflicts have been pushed to the economic margins, as they are unable to find accommodation in the contemporary global economic dispensation (Boege, 2006).

Many women's organizations are not only unable to achieve all their goals, but also have a large number of survival problems and need expanded external support. These problems usually include chronic under-funding, which is a more serious problem even for other community organisations. They often need additional training in lobbying, leadership, and management. In fact, new women's organisations occasionally have to not only deal with direct physical violence from security forces and local men, but also the alienation and stigma of influential government and non-governmental organisations. This is usually at high level in post conflict situations where gender discrimination is commonplace. In all these aspects, external support can increase the likelihood of an organisation's success, which can play a very important role, even if it does not play a key role in peace building. However, external support comes with its consequences, which might cause tensions (Maina, 2012).

Conflict brings with it terrible human rights consequences for all involved – children, women and men. The impact of conflict on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of women, in particular, is often devastating. In spite of the fact that conflict has a high level of impact on the lives of women, it is disheartening to note that they are not fully involved in the peace building process because of its gendered nature. Women's interests have been neglected by the peace process, which has resulted in male-centered approaches to peace and security. The intrinsic role of women in global peace and security has remained unrecognized since the creation of the United Nations wing.

In the past decade, many countries have embarked upon the difficult transition from armed conflict towards resolution and peace building. The international community's role in this transition has shifted from narrow humanitarian and relief activities to more comprehensive efforts to foster sustainable peace. At the same time, the community has shifted from a stepped approach from relief to development to one that combines a broader package of concurrent steps. Development organizations have become increasingly engaged in activities during post-conflict, devoting time and resources to supporting this transition.

Some of the main areas of participation and empowerment of women are peace and security, which are closely related to development. For the first time in 55 years, through SCR 1325 of 2000, the UN “takes into account the unrecognized, underutilized and undervalued contribution of women to preventing war, building peace and working toward social justice (Khan, 2016). The potential and actual consequences of resolution 1325 are enormous. This resolution puts pressure on women and men all over the world. Political support from member countries, international organizations and, above all, civil society is growing every day.

It is essential that women be included in the peace building process. Women play important roles in the process of peace building, first as activists and advocates for peace, women wage conflict non-violently by pursuing democracy and human rights. Secondly, as peacekeepers and relief aid workers, women contribute to reducing direct violence. Thirdly, as mediators, trauma healing counselors, and policymakers, women work to ‘transform relationships’ and address the root of violence. Lastly, women actively participate as educators and actors in the development process, women contribute to building the capacity of their communities and nations to prevent violent conflict. This is made possible as a result of socialization processes and the historical experience of unequal relations and values that women bring to the process of peace building (Lisa & Manjrika, 2005).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Resolution 1325, promulgated by the UN Security Council in 2000, the Kenya National Action Plan (KNAP), and the Kenya National Peace and Security Building Policy, stresses the significance of encompassing women in peace building initiatives and their full involvement in all concerted efforts for the promotion and maintenance of security and peace. In countries such as Colombia and El Salvador, women play a significant role in the peacebuilding efforts (Reif, 1986). In Africa, women in Rwanda and Burundi have been recognized for their efforts in promoting peaceful events, especially after the deadly genocide.

Since 1991, when Kenya returned to multiparty democracy, a number of general polls held 1992, 1997 and 2007, have been marked by abnormal violence levels (Warui, 2017). In 2007, the presidential results were disputed, leading to 1,133 deaths and close to 650,000 displacements (Wairuri, 2017). Most of the violence was experienced in the Rift Valley, Naivasha, and Nairobi.

In all these situations, there have been women peacebuilding initiatives aimed at restoring sanity; but one wonders whether these activities have been effective in addressing repetitive electoral conflicts. It is upon this problem that the study sought to examine the challenges and opportunities of women’s peace building activities in Nairobi County, Kenya.

1.3 Objective of the study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the challenges and opportunities of women’s peace building activities in Nairobi County Kenya

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Challenges of women in conflict resolution

In Afghanistan, since the rule of King Zahir Shah and that of later Communist governments in Afghanistan, social norms regarding women's behaviour in most parts of the country have become more conservative and remain so, in spite (or perhaps even because) of the efforts of international actors to change them. This has meant that, while space International has been opened up for women in the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP), for example, very few apply as a result of the social stigma attached to these positions. A woman working in such a male dominated environment typically attracts a lot of criticism from relatives and can be branded unmarriageable or adulterous, for example. This stigma has been strengthened by international approaches toward policing that have turned the ANP into an auxiliary of the ANA, and thus a quasi-military organization that has little room for women instead of one that focuses on civil policing with more non-combat roles. Although women have not generally been involved in direct combat, a number of respondents across all three provinces told stories about women being involved indirectly, in nursing wounded combatants or actively assisting fighters in other ways, through delivering weapons or even killing enemy personnel themselves in the past, in particular during the Soviet occupation. The following statement summarizes the activities women were considered to have been involved in during this era: During the Russian invasion, women were working side by side with men and played their own roles. For example, if men were fighting the jihad, women were helping to nurse the injured mujahideen and provide food, clothing and bedding for them. So, they were working together, and they succeeded in bringing about a great victory (Mahbub, 2012). Importantly, however, women were not involved in combat.

Domestic and sexualized violence were evidenced high rates in post-conflict Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. While the violence can be attributed in part to the entrenched machista culture in Latin America, studies have shown that many male ex-combatants find it difficult to cope with the traumas of war and respond by taking their anger and frustrations out on their families. Yet the DDR process lacks adequate provisions for psycho-social and trauma support during reintegration phases and thus the security reforms to date have been ineffective in mitigating the occurrence of violence against women. The reason for this may be related to the experimental nature of these peacebuilding missions which have failed to recognize the significance of providing psycho-social and trauma support during reintegration, or it may be linked to a lack of resources (both human and financial), or both.

Building a lasting peace that sustains post-war economic, political, and social development requires the full participation of all citizens. Yet it is increasingly recognized that the role of women in post-conflict settings has received inadequate policy attention. According to Theo Ben Gurirab, Namibian Minister of Foreign Affairs (cited in Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2005), attempts to address the human rights consequences of conflict, including the particular impact on women, can only be comprehensive and long-lasting if women play active part in all the relevant processes and mechanisms given the gender-differentiated impact of war on women.

The belief that women should be at the center of peace building and resolution processes is not based on essentialist definitions of gender (Lisa & Manjrika, 2005). The field of sociology makes a distinction between sex, and gender. Human beings are not born 'men' or 'women'. Masculinity and femininity is learned, rehearsed, and performed daily according to Butler (1999). It would be naïve to assert that all women respond in a similar manner in a given situation or that women are 'natural peace builders' (Lisa & Manjrika, 2005). Gender identity is performed differently in different cultural contexts. Gender identity must always be viewed in relationship with an individual's other identities such as his or her ethnicity, class, age, nation, region, education, and religion. It is important to note that there are different expectations for men and women in various sector of the society and gender roles shift with social upheaval. In conflict situation, men and women face new roles and changing gender expectations. Their biological and sociological differences affect conflicts and peace building. In all, most societies value men and masculinity more than women and femininity (Lisa & Manjrika, 2005).

In general, those responsible for political institutions and organisations, as a rule, are the only subject of a peace treaty with a very low level of public participation. Women are usually neglected because they are usually underrepresented at the management level. Foreign institutions have had limited success in enabling the participation of women in peace negotiations. For example, the institute for life and peace provided women's peace groups' access to several peace talks (even if they were granted observer status only) and reconciliation in Somalia (Alaga, 2010).

A common feature of these three approaches is the obvious pattern of dominance, in which men are portrayed as active participants in decision making and women are classified as passive or innocent victims. In fact, men are usually politicians, diplomats, and soldiers who speak, develop strategies, and fight, while women suffer and struggle in the background (MacCarthy, 2011). As the recent armed conflict has demonstrated, women play various roles, ranging from victims, cultural stakeholders and pillars of peace. But since the most brutal lessons of the world are not enshrined on an institutional basis and have little effect on national and international policies regarding war and peace, their knowledge, thoughts and experience should be alienated and minimized (Nakaya, 2004).

The difficulties of achieving general security cannot be overemphasized, but when it comes to women, the problems become even more complex as women have their own set of unique challenges related to security improvements. In general, women were less able to fully participate, due to family responsibilities and lack of child care support, to travel to areas where workshops were being held as well as security campaigns and thus did not fully attain the benefits. Consequently, they missed-out on valuable training opportunities and benefits as they sacrificed their own ambitions and stepped back into traditional roles. In essence, women reintegrated themselves back into civil society post-conflict. The return to these traditional patriarchal roles, however, did not mean that women were safe from violence post-conflict.

They also had to deal with violence stemming from the psychological and social impacts of the violence itself. The reason for this may be related to the experimental nature of the peace building NGOs and the government which may have failed to recognize the significance of providing

psycho-social and trauma support during reintegration, or it may be linked to a lack of resources (both human and financial), or both. While the formal security improvement have been weak in terms of addressing the security needs specific to women, women themselves have been finding ways to address their concerns and promote their efforts.

Opportunities of women in conflict resolution

In Rwanda, for example, the Rwandan women started to organize politically in order to deal with their new needs. This organization can be seen, for example, in the creation of new NGOs. So far, they have been successful and had received support from the international community. An example of this was the creation of the organization “Campaign for Peace” in Kigali. This organization particularly addresses women’s critical needs in the post-conflict and grouped with Pro-Femmes in order to be more successful (Newbury & Baldwin 2000). Women have also started to access important political positions. This has been a process. In the aftermath of the genocide women were not immediately empowered to become politically active. Between 1994 and 2003 women only held 25.7% of parliamentary positions (Hugg, 2010). In 2003, however, a new constitution was adopted and this brought positive changes for women’s rights.

In support of women’s peacebuilding efforts, the Liberian government has implemented a number of African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and UN conventions on women’s rights and gender equality (Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia, 1998). Likewise, it has adopted a National Action Plan (NAP) for implementing UNSCR 1325, reformed the police unit to employ more female officers, and put in place a National Plan of Action for preventing and addressing issues of sexual and gender based violence (UI-4, July 2015).

Further efforts to enhance the women’s peacebuilding roles in Liberia saw the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) Office of Gender Advisor (OGA) setting in place a framework for gender mainstreaming in Liberia’s disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme (UI-7, July 2015). Moreover, the post-conflict government has accorded women more positions of public leadership and decision-making than its predecessor, seeing as women head prominent government institutions and are instrumental in the role of law developments (UI-8, July 2015). Notwithstanding this progress, the momentum of sustainable peace in the fore-mentioned countries remains subject to a complexity of factors, as are women’s peacebuilding efforts. According to Rehn and Sirleaf (2002), the question of implementation and domestication of policy blueprints by member states is a continuous challenge for many African states. In areas where states have implemented the policies, the charge of translating them into viable projects also remains a major challenge.

Research by Butler, Mader and Kean (2010: 22) indicate that from 1990 to 2010, only eight percent of women were involved in the facilitation of peace processes worldwide. These challenges are aside the conventional perceptions of patriarchy and other specificities that place men at the higher echelons of the society as resilient and able leaders compared to women. This is further compounded by society’s obliviousness and indifference to the fact that women like men and every other citizen of the world, possess equal rights that should be valued and reinforced (Banks, 2008). Apparently, the works of women organisations, especially at the grassroots levels, remain

challenged by their limited if not lack of access to resources; excess domestic duties; lack of employment, education and training capacities to engage in economic or income generating activities and public speaking advocacy (UI-2, July 2015). In essence, the general outlook of the women in peacebuilding discourse presents flipped perspectives of successes and challenges. The overall requisite for their practical involvement in decision-making and peacebuilding, especially in the post-conflict has become more prevalent and a necessary strategy for attaining the process objectives. In essence, women's evolving roles nationally and internationally continue to provide them the platform to broaden their opportunities and abilities as peace builders (Barakat, 2005).

Therefore, all types of organisations can be important to addressing the general weaknesses of existing peace-building strategies; lack of attention to women's needs; marginalization of gender analysis and lack of efforts to question the more inaccurate forms of masculinity in institutions and society. In addition women's organisations have the potential to achieve many goals of peace: increasing women's income; increase the number of women who become leaders and representatives in order to increase efforts to decrease the male culture of dominance in politics, government institutions and society. Women and girls remain vulnerable during and after armed conflicts, sometimes even during peace agreements. Many factors contribute to this high vulnerability.

In Haiti and Liberia, United Nations agencies support the government's efforts to develop national gender equality policies and prepare reports on the implementation of all forms of the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (Varisco, 2010). Other countries have created national capacity to eliminate discriminatory laws and revise laws that introduce new legislation in line with the convention. It is very important to promote the role of women in the media. Women must be empowered in disputed areas so that female media workers can report on the impact of conflict on women.

2.1 Theoretical review

Social Exclusion Theory

The thesis is based on the theory of social exclusion, a multidimensional cycle of progressive social disintegration, alienation and involvement of organizations and individuals from community and institutions in the usual normative practices of the society in which they live (Silver, 2007). This is due to their age, sex, color / race, and classes, individuals and groups can be discriminated against. The consequence is that individuals or groups afflicted cannot fully participate in society's cultural, social and political contexts.

Women experience social exclusion in most other ways because of their gender. In fact a direct consequence of the white women being marginalized by workers and undervalued housework is the feminist movement of the 1970s (Moosa, 2005). Therefore the feminists say that men and women should engage fairly with due respect to their ability in the labor, the public and home sectors.

Luchsinger (2010) asserts that women are systemically excluded from the public domain (and war) in a circumstance of conflict and post-conflict situation which is hard to get out from. The Vicious

Cycle of Exclusion is called, in the words of Luchsinger. Women are exempted from the process of creating peace accords and remediation frames, resulting in inadequate attention for the correction of gender inequality and women's insecurity. As such, women's interests are not discussed and their capacity and willingness to contribute to peace building and reconciliation remains unused. MacCarthy (2011) suggests that women's engagement decreases chances of achieving lasting peace, but they still represent a significant part of the population.

It is important to social inclusion that involves affirmative action to improve the behaviours leading to or contributing to social exclusion. Social integration is described by the World Bank (2013) as a process to improve people's capacity, opportunity and dignity and to involve people in society on the grounds of their identification. This refers to intentional interventions by the organizations of the government. This is illustrated by the fact that Rwanda, for example, has the highest women's representation in the world (Mzvondiwa, 2007). Sensitive initiatives designed to increase the number of women, specifically at decision-making level, can be responsible for the success of a country growing from this conflict (Maina 2012).

The point is that any appraisal of social exclusion must differentiate its importance as an analytical explanatory term from its political use in order to justify new forms of interference in policy (Arthurson & Jacobs, 2004). Policies targeting, for example, at antisocial behaviour by more coercive means is sometimes justified by alleviating the social exclusion issues faced by the tenants living in public housing properties. We conclude that given its theoretical limits on social exclusion, it is probably an important aspect of the evolving Australian housing policy agenda for political and practical reasons (Arthurson & Jacobs, 2004).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study used descriptive research design. This study was conducted in Nairobi County of Kenya. Nairobi was selected because it is a hotspot to electoral violence. The study focused on the individual women who were involved in peace building activities who are, 34 women groups who were engaged in peace activities, IBEC officials in Nairobi (6) sub county police commanders, youth groups, (6) sub county administrators and local and international peace organizations. This study used purposive sampling to select IEBC officers, senior police officers, local organizations peace leaders, international organizations peace leaders, and sub-county administrators. Snowballing was used to select individual women peace builders. Simple random sampling was used to select youth groups and women groups. The study used two methods of data collection: primary and secondary data collection. For primary data collection, the study gathered data from the participants selected. Data was gathered through questionnaires, interviews, and FGDs. Questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data from individual grassroots women who played a significant role in the peacebuilding process between 1992 and 2017. The instrument had clear questions based on a 7-point Likert scale. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data from the key informants, who included IEBC, police, local and international organizations peace leaders, and sub-county administrators. The questions were open-ended in nature to give the respondents room to offer as much information as possible. The researcher did a pre-test of instruments through a pilot study in Nairobi County. To ensure reliability, the

researcher carried out a pre-test of instruments within Nairobi County: Kayole, Umoja II and Kawangware. The International Business Machines (IBM) Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 22) was used to analyze quantitative data. Percentages, frequencies, figures, bar charts, pie charts and tables were used to present results. Qualitative data was analysed using coding and thematic analysis. Results were presented in form of themes and verbatim.

4.0 FINDINGS

4.1 Response rate

Out of the 300 targeted participants who were issued with complete the questionnaire, 255 duly filled and completed the questionnaire while 45 failed to respond to all questions in the questionnaire. Out of the expected 25 interviews, the researcher managed to conduct 19 interviews, which was 76%.

Table 1 Response rate

	Respondents	Response Rate (%)
Quantitative Survey	255	85
Interviews	19	76
FGDs	17	85

4.2 Demographical information

This study involved women aged above 18 years, women groups, youth groups, NGO directors, IEBC officers, sub county administrators, and police officers. The researcher settled on women aged 18 years and above because they were old enough to participate in peacebuilding activities. In terms of ethnicity, the study was well represented as there were more than 5 ethnicities involved in the study.

Elections Participated

The study sought to find out women's peacebuilding activities during post-electoral violence since Kenya adopted multiparty democracy. Participants who had taken part in more than one election were encouraged to tick each of them. From the study, only 0.4% of the participants took part in the 1992 elections, with the number slightly increasing to 0.9% in the 1997 elections. In 2002, 4.9% of the participants took part in the elections. 2007, 2013, and 2017 saw an overwhelming increase in voting patterns, with 21.5%, 30.5% and 41.8% of the participants taking part in these elections respectively.

Table 2: Election Participated

Year	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1992	2	0.4	0.4	0.4
1997	5	0.9	0.9	1.3

2002	28	4.9	4.9	6.2
2007	125	21.5	21.5	27.7
2013	176	30.5	30.5	58.2
2017	241	41.8	41.8	100.0
Total	577	100.0	100.0	

From the patterns in table 4.5, most of the participants were relatively young, as only a cumulative total of 6.2% took part in the 1992, 1997, and 2002 elections. On the other hand, accumulative total of 93.8% took part in the 2007, 2013, and 2017 elections. It therefore means that the study findings were largely based on the 2007, 2013, and 2017 elections.

4.3 Challenges

For any successful peacebuilding activity, there must be sufficient funds. Most peacebuilding activities including those at the grassroots level, encompass going round different places. For any successful peacebuilding activity, there must be sufficient funds. Most peacebuilding activities including those at the grassroots level, encompass going round different places. To find out the challenges that women faced in their quest to contribute towards the peacebuilding process during electioneering process, the study sought to know if individual women peace builders had enough support in terms of funds to help them conduct their activities in the previous election(s).

Table 3: Availability of Funds and support

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somehow Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somehow Agree	Strongly Agree
I did not have enough support in terms of funds to help me conduct my activities in the 1992/1997/2002/2007/2013/2017 election	4.2	9.4	0.8	28.6	12.2	44.7
I did not have adequate support in terms of human resources to help me conduct my activities in the 1992/1997/2002/2007/2013/2017 election	5.1	1.6	11.4	31.4	10.2	40.4

From the findings, 2.4% strongly disagreed, 2% somehow disagreed, and 9.4% disagreed. On the other hand, 28.6% agreed that they did not have enough support in terms of funds to help them conduct their activities, 12.2% somehow agreed and 44.7% strongly agreed. Cumulatively, 85.5% of the participants lacked adequate funding to enable them to conduct their activities. Among the respondents, 5.1% of the participants strongly disagreed that they did not have adequate support in terms of human resources to help them conduct their activities in the previous election(s), 1.6%

somehow disagreed, while 11.4% disagreed. On the other hand, 31.4% agreed, 10.2% somehow agreed while 40.4% strongly agreed. Cumulatively, 82% of the participants agreed that one of the challenges they faced was lack of adequate support in terms of human resources to help them conduct their activities. Although women played a large role in the peacebuilding process in the previous elections, lack of support from other people made it hard for them to achieve their goals (Krause, 2004).

Similar results in a study by Paffenholz and Spurk (2010) revealed that four decades of violent conflict have inflicted serious harm on the Angolan population and on women in particular attributed to the insufficient security personnel. The gendered impacts of conflict and poverty in Angola are evident, as reflected in lower human development indicators for women than men. With lack of human security still an everyday reality, women and children comprise the most vulnerable groups, and along with old men, have typically comprised up to 80 per cent of the internally displaced population. Nakaya (2004) and Luchsinger (2010) revealed that women are sometimes not supported because of the misconception that they are only passive participants.

4.4 Opportunities

Through public sensitization, improved security and vigilance, and the building bridges initiative, women's peacebuilding activities during elections can be enhanced. Public sensitization can be used to help overcome the challenges facing women in their quest to participate in peacebuilding activities. Quoting one participant,

...The public should be taught on their roles so that the public cannot be swayed by the ethnic politics that has engraved our country. Our department through sensitisation we are really trying to get to the people so that we can educate them on issues of peace in the community...

Sensitization will not only help to overcome tribalism but gender stereotypes as well. Effective security and vigilance measures create a good environment for peacebuilding activities. Adequate security and vigilante can help strengthen women peacebuilding activities during polls. As observed under challenges, lack of enough security causes fear among some women groups' members, making them flee for safety. From the study, a number of youth groups reported that they provided vigilance services to ensure that no violence erupts in their areas.

Apart from the vigilante groups, security systems can provide quality services if well-maintained. Quoting one police officer,

...In 2017 was the worst of all. I played my role as a police informant and also as a peace builder in terms of bringing people together and telling them that violence will not take us anywhere so we should cooperate and recognize each other as brothers and sisters.

Apart from maintaining law and order, police officers can also be used to guide and advice the public on being responsible for their actions and desisting from violent activities.

The recent bridging bridges initiative provides a good opportunity to intensify the involvement of women in peacebuilding activities.

As one participant reported,

People fight because of the lack of equity in governance. Something like the handshake has also brought a lot of peace in the Nairobi and we want to enhance it.

With the building bridges initiative calling for peace among various warring tribes in Kenya, women will find it easy to intensify their peacebuilding activities in two ways. First, they will ride on the building bridges campaign to spread their message, which corroborates the one spread by the building bridges brigade. Second, they will enjoy a peaceful working environment as most people will now be calm after the handshake. With a tranquil environment, women groups can spread their memberships to deeper places, in the process, enhancing their peacebuilding mechanisms. Local and international peace organizations can also benefit from the increased tranquility to disseminate their peace activities across the country. Recruiting new disciples not only steady them for the task ahead but also equips them with necessary competencies to spread the word of peace.

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

Besides, the advice provided by women helps to stop inhumane activities such as burning of houses and killing and wounding others. When grassroots women talk to youths, the most likely perpetrators of violence, they try to make them understand the consequences of violence. They also make them understand that destroying property only results in the suffering of the community. Apart from the grassroots women and women groups, the role of women in leadership positions, for example, MCAs and administrators, and peace organizations help ensure that the input provided by female peace builders is recognized.

From the findings, the peacebuilding activities that women in Nairobi County have participated in since 1992 are: having dialogues, providing advice, compassionate role, warning people of imminent violence, public sensitization and civic education, peace talks, stopping rumor spreading, and offering psychosocial support. The study found that the impediments to women's peacebuilding effort include lack of funding, insufficient human resource, tribalism, gender stereotypes and chauvinism, and poor infrastructure. The opportunities that can be used to promote women peacebuilding activities during elections include public sensitization, security and vigilance, and the building bridges initiative.

5.2 Conclusion

Most women indicated that their activities were inhibited by lack of funds. Most of them are normally forced to use their own scanty funds for their activities and to accommodate the displaced and the sick. In as much as grassroots women have a compassionate heart towards helping those in need in times of crises, their economic status cannot allow them to do that as well as sustain their own families. Therefore, lack of enough funds debilitate women's peacebuilding efforts, especially during electoral conflicts.

Besides, operating with limited personnel also hamper peacebuilding initiatives, as some activities such as engaging perpetrators and conducting sensitization and civic education required many volunteers. In the informal settlements, most women are engaged in small-scale businesses and other activities to provide for their families. For this reason, it becomes hard to divide their time between making a living and conducting peacebuilding activities. Another factor that contribute to the disintegration of women and youths groups is tribalism. With different ethnicities divided along different political lines, it becomes hard integrating peacebuilding groups into one. Gender stereotypes also hamper women peacebuilding activities as most of their roles during elections are not well acknowledged.

5.3 Recommendations

- Women experience inadequacy in their community activities to uphold peace. The government should come up with proper structures to help fund women groups that normally take part in peacebuilding initiatives.
- Just like the youth and women development fund, the government should set aside some fund to help women groups that are actively involved in peacebuilding.
- Kenyan government should partner with the international bodies as well such as the UN to empower women through gender equality policies.
- Women should be empowered so that they can have an equity leverage as a strategy to back the women in their participation in peacebuilding initiatives.

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