MEETING REPORT

REGIONAL WOMEN'S CONSULTATION: RESILIENCE, ADVOCACY AND RECONCILIATION

Report compiled by Friederike Bubenzer
and Sarah Kasande

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A report by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
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JOURNEYING TOWARDS REGIONAL RECONCILIATION

In 2013, the South African Institute for Justice and Reconciliation – with South Africa's Department of International Relations (DIRCO) and civil society actors from across the continent (including the International Centre for Transitional Justice, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region etc.) – hosted a meeting assessing the viability of looking at conflicts in Africa through a more regional lens. The resulting IJR policy brief[1] argues that:

> Despite the significant resources that have been deployed to stabilize countries, conflicts in Africa have remained resistant to resolution. Increasingly, conflicts have a tendency to spill across borders, affecting communities in more than one country.[2] In fact, since the end of the Cold War, traditional inter-state wars have been increasingly replaced by intra-state conflicts. However, these intra-state conflicts, more often than not, have an inter-state or regional dimension in the way in which they are resourced and executed. Furthermore, intra-state conflicts usually have a regional dimension, as they include more than one state as either the primary or secondary actor. These regional conflict systems are notoriously difficult to stabilise, as the implicated state actors do not adopt a coordinated regional strategy to promote and consolidate peace. It is therefore increasingly evident that regional reconciliation is required to ensure consolidated peace.[3]

Gender-sensitive redress in regional reconciliation

A key element of pursuing regional reconciliation is securing reparations for those who have suffered human rights violations during conflict throughout a given region. For many years, the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) and the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) have provided technical support to processes for justice, accountability and redress in Uganda through trainings, consultations and strategic research with and for civil society and government representatives. From its engagements in Uganda, the ICTJ has noted with growing concern that there has been a particular lack of redress for women and girls who suffered conflict-related sexual violence in Uganda. In response, the ICTJ – with civil society partners from the Acholi, Lango, Teso and West Nile sub-regions – conducted consultations across greater northern Uganda in April 2015 and published a comprehensive report[4] and policy brief on the long-term challenges and unredressed justice needs of children born as a result of conflict-related sexual violence and their mothers. This retrospective analysis on Uganda provides a glimpse into the future for other countries dealing with similar issues and should serve as a reminder that the enduring consequences of sexual violence and other gendered violations deserve targeted attention at the national, regional and global level. The failure to address these violations and provide those who have suffered with acknowledgement and reparation is very likely to hamper efforts to secure peace and reconciliation in the long term and as people struggle to live with the open wounds of the past.

Throughout the Great Lakes region, the challenges facing women who have suffered conflict-related harms, including sexual violence, have often not been sufficiently acknowledged or prioritised by government policies and initiatives focused on building sustainable peace. This, in part, stems from the fact that the full extent and enduring consequences of the violations that women and girls have suffered – and continue to suffer – is not fully understood. Despite tremendous efforts to include women in the development and implementation of gender-sensitive policies at the local, national and regional level, women across East Africa by and large continue to have limited access to peace negotiations. It has been over 15 years since the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 of 2000, yet women's voices are still excluded or written out of conflict resolution efforts. The absence of women in peace negotiations, and the often poor contributions made by those who claim to represent women, has limited their ability to influence post-conflict justice and reconciliation processes. Indeed, women have limited power and representation in government and other decision-making bodies. The marginalisation of women in these processes limits the extent to which their unique needs, concerns and interests are included in the making of policies aimed at enhancing their lives. The result is that these processes tend to continue to exclude and alienate them from the nation and the state – which, in turn, prevents well-intentioned policies from becoming effective tools for building sustainable peace and change.

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1   Murithi T & McClain Opiyo, L (2014) *Regional reconciliation in Africa: Policy Recommendations for Cross-border Transitional Justice*. Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, Cape Town. Available at http://www.ijr.org.za/publications/pdfs/IJR%20Policy%20Brief%20No%2014%20web.pdf
2   Dress T (2005) *Designing a Peacebuilding Infrastructure: Taking a Systems Approach to the Prevention of Deadly Conflict*. New York: United Nations, p. 132
3   Wallensteen P (2012) Regional peacebuilding: A new challenge. In: *New Routes: A Journal of Peace Research and Action* 4/2012: 3
4   Ladisch V (2015) *From rejection to redress: Overcoming legacies of conflict-related sexual violence in northern Uganda*. ICTJ. Available at https://www.ictj.org/publication/rejection-redress-overcoming-legacies-conflict-sexualviolence-northern-uganda

Despite their relative marginalisation within highly patriarchal African societies, women – constituting, as they do, half the world's population – have played, and continue to play, a crucial role in society both during and after conflict. Acknowledging women's role in society and working towards fully integrating women into post-conflict justice and reconciliation processes is vital, since a focus on gender is an indispensable dimension of reconciliation at both community and state level. Additionally, women's participation in such processes is crucial for informing the design and implementation of policies and programmes that can provide reparations for women who have suffered violations during conflict. Furthermore, in order effectively and sustainably to further regional peacebuilding infrastructure, women must have an equal seat at all tables at which major decisions are planned and implemented. If ignored, women's non-participation in nation-building and their alienation from the state run the risk of severely hampering the national and regional healing and reconciliation process that is vital to the building of prosperous and united nations as well as a peaceful region as a whole. Reconciliation is impossible when half of the population remains excluded from decision-making processes and is deliberately sidelined in the process of shaping a vision that caters to the needs of all citizens.

While women are not a homogeneous group by mere virtue of their sex, women across East Africa generally experience similar violations during and after conflict. Despite operating in different contexts and situations, women's exclusion from the nation and the state continues unabated in many countries. Furthermore, given high levels of migration and fluid borders in the region, factors fuelling women's exclusion generally have similar underlying themes such as patriarchal cultural societal structures, discriminatory social norms, marginalisation, heightened masculinities in the aftermath of war, and the denial of their economic, social and cultural rights, which include the right to education, the right to health and the right to an adequate standard of living. As such, their post-conflict needs are not entirely different from one another. Throughout conflict situations, grassroots women's movements have played a central role in reconstructing their communities as well as advocating for peace, justice and reconciliation. Their views and the needs of post conflict measures are central because these measures affect them directly and impact on the communities of which they are the carers. As such, these women are best placed to provide advice on how, comprehensively, to deal with issues arising in post-conflict situations.

Resilience: A starting point for sustained regional reconciliation

The starting point for the development of sustainable and gender-sensitive regional reconciliation processes is to listen for, and learn about, the practices, assets and resilience of conflict-affected people and to build on these. Understanding the coping mechanisms of individuals and communities in the aftermath should be the first priority to ensure that rebuilding begins upon what is already available, rather than importing new and foreign solutions with low success rates. 'Every group of war-affected people has assets that can aid affected people and strengthen their resilience. In Africa, important assets include traditional practices, clan structures and leaders; elders; healers; religion and religious leaders; women's groups; and youth groups, to name only a few. The key to sustainable interventions is to engage with and build on these while ensuring that outside supports do not undermine existing supports.'[5] This approach enhances local ownership, which mitigates the risk of projects terminating as a result of people not sufficiently buying into, adapting to and identifying with externally imposed methodologies. It requires the development of an in-depth understanding of the ways in which resilience grows; the physical and social spaces where it is nurtured; the lives it affects; and the opportunities for deepening it. The Mercy Corps Framework for Action on Resilience in East Africa states that 'there is growing recognition that achieving resilience within the context of East Africa and other shock-prone environments is founded on the strengthening of key capacities. A focus on capacities enables an understanding of resilience as a dynamic process rather than a static state, with its determinants consistently changing within evolving social, economic, and ecological conditions.'[6] The framework 'seeks to promote a proactive perspective on resilience that emphasizes the importance of learning from and adapting to change in order to achieve transformative improvements in interrelated social, economic and ecological systems.'

5   Wessells M (2008) Trauma, peacebuilding and development: An African region perspective. Paper presented at the Trauma, Development and Peacebuilding Conference, New Delhi, India. Available at http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/pdfs/IDRCclancyhamber.pdf

6   Béné, C., R.G. Wood, A. Newsham, and M. Davies. (2012). Resilience: new utopia or new tyranny? Reflection about the potentials and limits of the concept of resilience in relation to vulnerability reduction programmes. IDS Working Paper, volume 2012 Number 405 in Resilience in East Africa: a framework for action. MERCY CORPS. Available at http://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/EastAfrica%20Resilience%20Framework_November%202013.pdf

THE MEETING

On the basis of the above, the IJR and ICTJ brought together 24 women leaders from Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan over a three-day period at Esella Country Resort in Uganda in March 2016. The purpose was to create a reflective and collaborative space in which to brainstorm the concept of resilience and its relevance to women's post-conflict needs; jointly to explore the sources of women's strength and resilience in the region as well as in individual countries to facilitate the sharing of effective advocacy strategies for redress and reconciliation; and to explore whether a regional network of women working on similar thematic areas could amplify or advance their existing efforts and contribute towards enhancing resilience.

Participants

Participants of the meeting were female community leaders and representatives from women's groups and local NGOs who have experienced some measure of success in their advocacy/campaign and lobbying work. Participants were between the ages of 23 and 55. Given the particularly severe and long-lasting impact of sexual violence on women in each of these contexts, a number of women's groups in the region have developed particular expertise in organising and advocacy related to achieving justice, acknowledgement and reparations for sexual- and gender-based violations, but also for a wider spectrum of human rights violations. As such, the causes represented by participants at the meeting ranged from women's rights broadly to specific challenges such as stigmatisation of, and discrimination against, children who were born out of rape, advocating on behalf of women with disabilities who have experienced sexual violence, working towards enhancing women's inclusion in peace processes and policy formation, developing women-focused micro-finance schemes, promoting women's land rights, etc.

Objectives

The objectives of the meeting were fourfold:

1. To map out, jointly, ways in which women in these conflict-affected areas have overcome hardship; to assess their source of resilience and how it is nourished.
2. To present how, why and when women's advocacy efforts towards having their specific post-conflict needs heard have developed and, where relevant, generated success (and why); to explore targeted strategies/solutions at the community, national and regional level, which aim to repair the harms suffered by conflict-affected women and their children; and to shape policies and programmes that are more responsive to their needs.
3. To exchange experiences and strategies for advancing the objectives that local community leaders seek to achieve in their contexts and the region more broadly, and for shaping environments in which the rights of conflict-affected women are recognised and respected. To open a space for support or joint problem solving, drawing form experiences that have worked in respective contexts.
4. To provide a basis for the formation of a regional networking platform within a safe space where women can meet, share and learn from one another's experiences, celebrate successes, and form new and strategic regional relationships. To explore whether building a regional coalition would be an effective strategy for building power and political capacity among women's groups throughout the region.

SUMMARY OF THE PROCEEDINGS

Understanding resilience

Increasingly, analysts and practitioners working in post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation are pointing out the importance of focusing on the resilience and assets of communities and individuals, rather than focusing only on deficits and challenges.

Resilience can be defined as the capacity of individuals and communities in complex systems to learn, cope, adapt and transform in the face of shock and stresses. Ungar defines resilience as 'a set of behaviors over time that reflect the interactions between individuals and their environments, in particular the opportunities for personal growth that are available and accessible'[7], thereby placing emphasis on the temporality and the role of the ecological system within which relationships are formed. Similarly, Sousa et al.[8] explain that one of the keys to understanding how resilience operates, whether associated with the effects of political violence or violence in other forms (e.g. community violence and child abuse), is to examine it within a framework that prioritises the dynamic interaction between individuals and their environments (Fraser, Kirby, & Smokowski, 2004; Ungar, 2011b).[9] For both children and adults, resilience within contexts of political violence appears to be closely related to the resources available in the surrounding environment – families, communities and greater social and political contexts (what researchers refer to as social ecology) (Betancourt & Khan, 2008).[10]

While all people are shaped by their internal genetic make-up as well as external environmental factors that mould them during life, different people (in terms of age, sex, geographic location, class, culture etc.) tend to respond to the same event in very different ways, highlighting that some people are more and differently resilient than others. As such, some individuals might demonstrate their resilience by staying emotionally strong during or after conflict, whereas others are particularly creative in mobilising resources and people despite contextual hardship. The family network within which an individual is raised can be an important contributing factor to enhancing resilience: where basic needs such as food, shelter, emotional care and safety are met and have been met for a continuous period, individuals tend to develop resilience. Later on in life, a strong family structure can serve as a protective resource for adults and children facing political violence and can provide emotional support while also performing as a source of resilience. Whether individuals access the resources within their environments, and how responsive that environment itself is, determines individual and communal levels of resilience.

Sousa et al. outline a number of factors that operate within the relationship between individuals and their communities to protect individual well-being in the face of political violence. They explain that work can serve a protective role for adults in that it creates purpose, meaning and a sense of normalcy when surrounded by the chaos of political violence and the legacies it leaves. In the face of an onslaught of stressors related to political violence, merely maintaining daily activities of living can be interpreted as an act of resilience. Attending school, work and daily chores each day fosters a sense of normalcy and purpose in the midst of chaos.

To some extent, civic and political involvement and participation can be protective within conflict situations: the research of Sousa et al. shows that a political life may endow feelings of empowerment and dignity on both youth and adults, which in turn offers some protection from the harmful effects of conflict. Culture (expressed, for instance, through cultural ceremonies and events that bring together groups of people) is an important shared collective resource that promotes resilience, particularly within situations of conflict. Cultural ceremonies have the potential to rebuild self-esteem and community acceptance after people have endured atrocities of political violence.[11]

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7   Ungar, M (ed) (2012) Social Ecologies and Their Contribution to Resilience. In: *The Social Ecology of Resilience: A Handbook of Theory and Practice.* New York: Springer Science+Business Media
8   Sousa CA, Haj-Yahia MM, Feldman G & Lee J (2013) Individual and Collective Dimensions of Resilience Within Political Violence. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse* 14(3): 235–254
9   Sousa CA, Haj-Yahia MM, Feldman G & Lee J (2013) Individual and Collective Dimensions of Resilience Within Political Violence. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse* 14(3): 235–254
10   Sousa CA, Haj-Yahia MM, Feldman G & Lee J (2013) Individual and Collective Dimensions of Resilience Within Political Violence. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse* 14(3): 235–254
11   Sousa CA, Haj-Yahia MM, Feldman G & Lee J (2013) Individual and Collective Dimensions of Resilience Within Political Violence. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse* 14(3): 235–254

Asked how participants themselves define resilience, a broad variety of viewpoints emerged. These included 'resilience is the ability to face something difficult and then emerge positively' or 'resilience is encountering hardship and emerging from that hardship stronger and with a solution'; 'resilience is when communities recover and return to the previous way of life' and, finally, 'resilience is finding new and creative ways of taking something old that no longer serves us and making it new'.

Together we are stronger

The important theoretical underpinnings outlined above were affirmed by participants at the meeting who, when asked to identify key sources of resilience in their community, named the immediate peer group within which they work and which offers an ongoing source of strength and support to them. Asked to explain how they find solidarity in togetherness, participants made statements such as 'the more of us who work together, the stronger we are' and 'as a result of my work with [Grace Agenda] I have learnt that the present has nothing to do with the past; I draw my strength from other women'. Delegates from South Sudan added that by coming together as women who all face similar challenges, they had become more resilient and able to fight for issues as a collective. An example was cited from 2014 when women had stood together and lobbied for a sex strike to rally their husbands into ending the conflict.[12] Similarly, they added, women members from the Inter-Church committee, representing different faith groups, would occasionally come together jointly to advocate for certain issues; an example was referred to where the body of a young girl who had been raped and killed was carried to Parliament in a bid to lobby policy-makers to respond to such acts of violence.

Reflecting on their journey in Uganda, members of the Ugandan Women's Advocacy network explained that for them, physically being in Parliament to deliver the petition to MPs on which they had collectively worked for months beforehand, was a really empowering experience. The petition[13] was unanimously adopted. It was stated that for the 500+ members of WAN, this was about collectively working for acknowledgement, embarking on a process of restoring dignity and agency, and a journey that would contribute to some level of healing. As one participant said, 'a problem shared is a problem half solved'.

We are immune ... we have become hardened and resilient

A number of women also commented that time and experience had been critical in their learning to overcome adversity, adding that they had become hardened and resilient as a result of the persistent recurrence of hardship and violence in their daily lives, thus continually becoming better at responding to challenging situations. As such one participant said, 'it is the little victories that matter: each time we overcome something or we conquer a challenge, we emerge stronger and more confident for the next time', or 'we are immune to events, we have had hardship and violence so many times that we have become hardened and resilient'. Throughout the two-day meeting, it became evident that that which women called 'the small victories' (progress made in their various efforts and campaigns) functions as a source of hope for survival and betterment; each small victory empowers survivors to be stronger and more resilient to take on future challenges. This is in line with Ungar's observation that 'indigenous coping strategies are adaptive in contexts where there are few choices for other forms of adaptation'.[14]

Table banking and 'rabita'

Extensive reference was made to the emotional and financial support women garnered from being part of locally driven collective saving schemes. An example that was cited from Kenyan participants was that of the Joyful Women Organisation named 'table banking', which is 'a group funding strategy where members of a particular group meet once every month, place their savings, loan repayments and other contributions on the table then borrow immediately either as long term or short term loans. The women use the money borrowed as capital for their livelihood projects'.[15] A similar scheme, though less organised and less focused on mere financial gain, is women's groups found in South Sudan called 'rabita'. Women take turns to host meetings in their homes to share tea or a meal and discuss matters of common concern and, where necessary, mobilise resources for individuals who are in need. Meetings are generally led by community elders and may include elements of psychosocial support and healing rituals. These informal saving schemes are a source of economic empowerment as well as social support for the women who, in this way, might obtain short-term loans to take their children to school and meet their livelihood needs. They also create safe spaces for sharing experiences and peer support; participating in regular meetings makes women feel less solitary in overcoming hardship and empowers them for continued action.

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12   See http://women.mg.co.za/south-sudan-women-suggest-sex-strike-to-end-war/ and http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-29754506

13   See http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/LRA-war-victims-petition-Parliament/-/688334/2241460/-/9nw04vz/-/index.html and http://justiceandreconciliation.com/media/newsroom/press-releases/2014/parliament-adopts-resolution-to-address-the-needs-of-war-affected/

14   Ungar, M (ed) (2012) Social Ecologies and Their Contribution to Resilience. In: *The Social Ecology of Resilience: A Handbook of Theory and Practice.* New York: Springer Science+Business Media

15   See http://joywo.org/table-banking/

The church

The role of the church and the vast support structures provided by faith-based institutions was mentioned by women from all countries as a critical source of their resilience. Specific reference was made by Ugandan delegates who explained that 'many ex LRA abductees did not have anywhere to turn to so they turned to the churches for support and counselling'. Others referred to their complete faith in God as a supreme leader in whose hands their future lies, as well as to pastors and other religious leaders as key figures in their personal healing journey. Women also said that 'survivors are actually resources to their community – there are action and response teams and community action groups that can guide processes when there are other violations and create hope that this can be overcome'.

Iacoviello et al. explain that the psychosocial factors associated with resilience include optimism, cognitive flexibility, active coping skills, maintaining a supportive social network, attending to one's physical well-being, and embracing a personal moral compass.[16] Despite the immense challenges women face in their day-to-day existence in the East African region in advocating for their human rights and fighting for redress, contributions made by participants at the meeting regarding the sources and capacity for resilience clearly resonate with Iacoviello's model.

Understanding and building on existing indigenous resilience tools in a way that is consistent with individuals and communities' values is an important step in ensuring that redress and human-rights-based development interventions are appreciated and used. In an interesting example that is successfully carried out in post-genocide Rwanda to reconstruct the country and nurture a shared national identity, the government of Rwanda drew on aspects of Rwandan culture and traditional practices to enrich and adapt its development programmes to the country's needs and context. The result is a set of home-grown solutions – culturally owned practices translated into sustainable development programmes. One of these home-grown solutions is Umuganda. The word Umuganda can be translated as 'coming together in common purpose to achieve an outcome'. In traditional Rwandan culture, members of the community would call upon their family, friends and neighbours to help them complete a difficult task. Umuganda was a communal act of assistance and a sign of solidarity. In everyday use, the word *umuganda* refers to a pole used in the construction of a house. The pole typically supports the roof, thereby strengthening the house. Modern-day Umuganda can be described as community work. On the last Saturday of each month, communities come together to do a variety of public works. Today, close to 80 per cent of Rwandans take part in monthly community work.[17]

Resilience as a basis for securing redress for human rights violations

Armed conflicts in Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan have been characterised by gross violations of human rights, including killings, mutilation and destruction of property, various forms of sexual violence, displacement, and loss of livelihoods. Women and children tend to suffer the greatest proportion of violations of civil and political rights as well as violations of economic, social and cultural rights. During conflict, violence against women increases dramatically and their ability to seek recourse to defend their rights is severely curtailed.

Whereas it is an accepted norm under international law that persons who suffer human rights violations are entitled to redress,[18] for most women survivors in the Great Lakes region of Africa, redress for conflict-related gender-based human rights violations remains elusive. The failure to provide redress to those who have suffered gross human rights violations during conflict may hamper efforts to secure peace and reconciliation in the long term.

Redress entails acknowledging the harm suffered by the individual whose rights have been violated and taking specific measures to restore the individual to the situation they were in before the violation of their rights occurred. Aspects of redress include acknowledgement, restoration and prevention of the recurrence of the violation by addressing the root causes of the harm.

During the meeting, women survivors shared different strategies for advocating for redress in their respective contexts. In Uganda, the Women's Advocacy Network presented a petition calling upon government to establish a gender-sensitive reparations programme in Uganda and other measures that will mitigate the challenges faced by survivors of sexual and gender-based violations in that country.

In Kenya, Grace Agenda has monitored and participated in the police-vetting exercise to ensure that the police not only desist from committing human rights abuses against women, but also conduct thorough and victim-sensitive investigations when sexual crimes are reported. Grace Agenda is also conducting advocacy for the allocation of part of a restoration fund announced by President Kenyatta in 2015 to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

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16   Iacoviello B (2014) Psychosocial facets of resilience: Implications for preventing post trauma psychopathology, treating trauma survivors, and enhancing community resilience. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology* 5: 23970

17   For more information, see http://www.rwandapedia.rw/explore/umuganda, as well as Otake Y (2016) Unpublished conference presentation – The ways of a grassroots community to heal trauma: A story of an elderly woman and her neighbours. Presented to 2016 ICCP Conference, Durban, South Africa.

18   Article 2.3 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights, UN General Assembly, Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law, G.A. Res. 60/147, U.N. Doc. A/RES/60/147 (Mar. 21, 2006).

In South Sudan, women's groups such as the Taskforce on the Engagement of Women have been mobilising and advocating for the inclusion of women in peace negotiations as well as the implementation of the different justice measures that are provided for in peace agreements signed in recent years.

Most of the women survivors at the meeting recognised redress for the violations as both a product of and a key contributor to their resilience. Redress is perceived as important for healing, reclaiming agency and dignity and acknowledging their rights as individuals.

Sousa et al. explain that in cases of extreme traumatic stress due to political violence, the opportunity for individuals to assign blame and accountability may be helpful in making meaning of, and recovering from, the suffering of political violence (Summerfield, 1999).[19] Thus, processes of accountability through communal activities like tribunals and truth commissions take on particular importance in terms of sustaining resilience after political violence (Farwell & Cole, 2001; Robben, 2005).[20]

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19   Sousa CA, Haj-Yahia MM, Feldman G & Lee J (2013) Individual and Collective Dimensions of Resilience Within Political Violence. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse* 14(3): 235–254

20   Sousa CA, Haj-Yahia MM, Feldman G & Lee J (2013) Individual and Collective Dimensions of Resilience Within Political Violence. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse* 14(3): 235–254

CONCLUSION

The experiences shared at the meeting by women survivors and activists from Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan demonstrate that there are linkages between jointly pursuing redress and resilience. At the meeting, women survivors in these three countries clearly articulated how they had built resilience using different sources, including community peer-support structures, collective organising, local knowledge and spirituality. This has, in turn, empowered them to mobilise and collectively demand redress. Resilience is often the driving force behind advocacy for reparations and other forms of redress. Resilience facilitates the transition that people undergo from being passive victims to becoming rights advocates and activists. Resilience has also motivated women survivors to lobby for the integration of a gender perspective in different transitional justice mechanisms successfully.

Participants highlighted the need for local and international peacebuilding and development interventions to take into account the rich, but often hidden, indigenous structures that contribute so significantly to individual and community resilience. Conducting further research into these social structures to understand fully how they operate is an important starting point. Building on relationships, structures and processes that work to strengthen communities, even if they have been weakened or have changed during conflict, may contribute to the sustainability of local, national and regional peacebuilding architectures.

ADDENDUM 1

Case studies: Resilience as a foundation for advocacy

Kenya: Grace Agenda

In Kenya, Grace Agenda (GA) was formed in the aftermath of the 2007/2008 post-election violence (PEV) to support women who suffered sexual violence during the conflict. GA, some of whose members are survivors themselves, has successfully lobbied against the stigmatisation of survivors of rape and their children. It has also actively engaged in different accountability and reform processes to ensure that the voices and perspectives of survivors are taken into account. With the help of an internal forensic expert, GA has documented over 100 cases of PEV-related sexual violence. At present, GA is advocating for a gender-sensitive reparations programme that will include measures that meaningfully repair the harm suffered by survivors of sexual violence. It is also involved in the police-vetting exercise to ensure that the abuses committed against women by the police during PEV do not recur. Memorialisation efforts are also part of GA's work – in 2014 and 2015, GA organised a public memorial service at which women shared their testimonies and jointly appealed for the government to address their needs.

Uganda: Women's Advocacy Network and Watye Ki Gen

In Uganda, the Women's Advocacy Network (WAN)[21] of the Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) was formed by over 500 war-affected women collectively to address the challenges they face in the community and to advocate for justice, acknowledgement and accountability for sexual and gender-based violations inflicted upon them during conflicts in northern Uganda. It was formed with the aim of empowering women survivors to participate in post-conflict policy debates and to engage grassroots communities in gendered discussions on reintegration and reconciliation. Through regular peer-support meetings, experiential sharing, capacity building, forging of alliances and dialogue, WAN members have been empowered to claim their rights. By training women and equipping them to develop small businesses, they are empowered to provide for themselves and their families while also being able to make small contributions to the operations of the WAN.

In 2014, following a petition filed by the WAN, the Parliament of Uganda unanimously adopted a resolution calling for the establishment of a gender-sensitive reparations programme. The work of the WAN has increased awareness of the plight of women survivors and the need for redress for conflict-related sexual and gender-based violations in northern Uganda, as well as internationally. By petitioning Parliament for a gender-responsive reparations programme, the WAN has demonstrated leadership in the quest for redress, reconciliation and community acceptance of formerly abducted young mothers and their children.

The JRP's field observations since 2006 have explored the unique challenges facing women in northern Uganda and the need for the inclusion of their voices in the development of transitional justice and post-conflict recovery programmes. A group of war-affected women who were engaged in a storytelling project at the JRP proposed the establishment of an advocacy group to serve as a platform through which female leaders would be empowered to engage in advocacy for justice and peace. The WAN was created with the goal of bridging the existing gaps in gender justice.

South Sudan: Taskforce for the Engagement of Women

Following decades of work in Sudan, the US-based Institute for Inclusive Security launched an initiative to create and support a Taskforce for the Engagement of Women[22] in January 2013. The Taskforce is a group of 20 peacebuilders – mostly women – from Sudan and South Sudan.

The Taskforce believes that women, despite their significant contributions in fighting war and building peace in South Sudan, are not yet considered vital decision-makers whose participation in political and security processes is essential for stability. Not only are women more than half of the population, thus offering vital information and input, but also interlocutors. They know what is happening in communities, seeing early signs and root causes of conflict. Women in South Sudan, and the region more broadly, are part of networks that can bridge divides and work with those on the other side of war, making them natural allies in the pursuit of sustainable peace. They can help to build trust, share information with communities, contribute to technical discussions, prevent the escalation of violence, and more. Leveraging women's intellectual capacities and social connections is essential. In order for these national and bilateral processes to result in lasting peace, women must be present.

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21   See http://justiceandreconciliation.com/initiatives/womens-advocacy-network/
22   See   https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/publication/taskforce-for-the-engagement-of-women-in-sudan-and-south-sudan-statement-and-recommendations/

The Taskforce is composed of leading civil society activists and government officials with varied backgrounds. The Taskforce views its role as a conduit between women in civil society and senior officials in national and bilateral peace processes. It seeks to ensure that key decision makers are attuned to women's priorities and that communities feel less alienated from formal processes.

The need for such a group emerged in January 2013, when members of the Institute's long-running bilateral coalition of women leaders gathered and released a joint statement advocating for their increased participation in the bilateral peace process. The statement noted the sheer lack of women's voices in the process and the negative consequences of their absence on long-term stability in both countries. Members recommended the creation of a Taskforce, which assumed three objectives:
- Building the capacity of a strategically selected group of 20 leaders from both countries as negotiators, advocates, experts, and community liaisons;
- Leveraging and strengthening relationships with key decision-makers poised to influence bilateral and national peace processes; and
- Creating the space for, facilitating linkages between, and building trust among women leaders from various sectors in Sudan and South Sudan.

The original focus of the Taskforce was on increasing women's involvement in the implementation of the Cooperation Agreements through cross-border engagement between and among women from Sudan and South Sudan pertaining to security arrangements, border Issues and the status of nationals of the other state. However, as a result of the renewed outbreak of conflict in South Sudan in December 2013 and the stalled implementation of those agreements, the Taskforce shifted to influencing national processes. Their focus includes:
- Ensuring that women are included in South Sudan's peace process;
- Ensuring gender-sensitisation training and the inclusion of women in the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism responsible for monitoring the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement in South Sudan; and
- Ensuring that women are included in Sudan's National Dialogue process.

Riding the radio waves: Sawa Shabab

The Sawa Shabab (Together Youth) series is produced locally by Free Voice South Sudan in collaboration with USIP to promote peace and stability by empowering youth to be confident, open-minded and participatory citizens in a diverse society. The drama series follows the daily lives of different young South Sudanese as they face unique challenges while learning how to become peacebuilders in their communities. Sawa Shabab consists of 20 episodes in English and Arabic and five episodes in the Nuer and Dinka languages, and is aired on Radio Miraya, the Catholic Radio Network and other local stations across the country.

ADDENDUM 2

Delegate list

Uganda
1. Amony Evelyn, Women's Advocacy Network
2. Ajok Pauline, Women's Advocacy Network
3. Anena Lilly Grace, Women's Advocacy Network
4. Acan Grace, Women's Advocacy Network
5. Apiyo Nancy, Women's Advocacy Network
6. Angela Laker, Watyekigen
7. Janet Arach, Watyekigen
8. Cecilia Engole, Teso Women's Peace Activists

South Sudan
9. Mary Tombe, Coordinator: Taskforce on the Engagement of Women
10. Hon Philister Baya Lawiri, Chairperson of the South Sudan Civil Service Commission
11. Suzan Tingwa, Coordinator, Free Voice Radio (Sawa Shabab)
12. Dorcas Francis Loly, Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)
13. Nydia Wilson Lupai, Community Development Coordinator, Episcopal Church of South Sudan
14. Rose Acindel, Chair: Women's Union, Warrap State

Kenya
15. Jaqueline Namuye Mutere, Founder, Grace Agenda
16. Abigael Brenda Mutivah, Founder, Association of Professional Women with Disabilities
17. Pastor Gertrude Akello Abilla, Regional Chair, Peacenet Kenya
18. Nancy Wanjiru Chege, Member, Grace Agenda
19. Joanna Adhiambo Owiti, Forensic Investigator, Grace Agenda
20. Evidah Elizabeth Atieno

Hosts
21. Friederike Bubenzer, Senior Project Leader, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (South Africa)
22. Sarah Kihika Kasande, Programme Associate, International Centre for Transitional Justice (Uganda)
23. Eleanor du Plooy, Project Leader, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (South Africa)

ADDENDUM 3

Programme: Regional women's consultation: Resilience, advocacy and reconciliation
Esella Country Hotel, Kampala, 29–31 March 2016

TUESDAY 29 MARCH 2016

09:00	Registration
09:30	Welcome from the organisers: Friederike Bubenzer, Sarah Kihika Kasande
10:00	Introductions by narrating our stories: Eleanor du Plooy
TEA	Can be taken during the silent reflection process
12:00	Understanding resilience and why it matters: Friederike Bubenzer

13:00	**LUNCH**
14:00	Resilience mapping: Friederike Bubenzer
15:30	TEA
16:00	Securing redress for human rights violations: Sarah Kihika Kasande

WEDNESDAY 30 MARCH 2016

09:00	Experiential sharing of advocacy efforts and strategies
10:15	Presentation and sharing of advocacy strategies
11:15	TEA
11:35	Building effective advocacy strategies
12:30	LUNCH
1:30	Evaluating access and barriers to political participation at community, national and international level, and how these barriers have been overcome to date
3:30	Reflection: Bringing resilience into advocacy work?
4:30	TEA

THURSDAY 31 MARCH 2016

09:00 – 12:00	Moving forwards