

**Role of Rwandan Women in Peace-making with a view to
Community Development: A Theological Perspective**

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Abstract

The story of the role of women in peace-making with a view to a Community development perspective is as old as the existence of the first human God created. The Bible shows that since the beginning of creation, a woman was given to man as a helper (Gen. 1:20-22). They both have responsibility to work, to bring change in the community and to make it a safe place to live. However, around the world women are among the most vulnerable when it comes to oppression, marginalization, injustice and all kinds of violence.

Rwanda is a country in the process of recovering from the genocide of 1994 which destroyed the country, cost many lives and left other people in unstable conditions physically, psychologically and spiritually. As a result, all Rwandans are victims of violence inflicted by this war and many Rwandans are still living with painful memories, trauma, poverty, HIV/AIDS, fear and continuing violence. There is a need to rebuild peace and bring justice and reconciliation. Women, despite being the most vulnerable, have many assets which could assist in the process of peacemaking. For this reason they should be included in the process of peace-making with the purpose of finding adequate ways to avoid the repetition of the genocide and reshape the country into a safe environment for all – Rwandans, foreigners and all vulnerable groups.

In this study, we will explore the concepts of peace, development and violence. These definitions will help us to understand that these three, influence the role of women in development. This means that, for women to be effective in development, they need a safe place to live, freedom to be involved according to their abilities in order to become positive life changers. It is proposed that Rwandan women will take up this challenge and continue to play a positive role in Rwandan community. They will speak out until their voices are heard and violence in the country is uprooted and until all Rwandans come back together again as a nation.

Based on this study, recommendations will be given that may assist women to be more effective in their attempts to bring peace and develop the community as well as be effectively responsive to the needs of other vulnerable groups in Rwanda.

Opsomming

Die verhaal van die rol van vrouens in vrede-maak met die oog op 'n Gemeenskaps-ontwikkeling perspektief is so oud soos die bestaan van die eerste mens wat God geskep het. Die Bybel dui aan dat sedert die begin van die skepping, 'n vrou aan die man gegee is as 'n helper (Gen. 1:20-22) . Hulle het albei die verantwoordelikheid om te werk, verandering in die gemeenskap te bring en dit 'n veilige plek te maak om te woon. Oor die wêreld heen is vrouens egter onder van die mees kwesbares wanneer dit kom by onderdrukking, marginalisering, onreg en allerhande vorme van geweld.

Rwanda is 'n land wat in die proses is om te herstel na die volksmoord van 1994 wat die land vernietig het, baie lewens gekos het en ander mense in onstabiele toestande, fisies, sielkundig en geestelik, gelos het. As gevolg hiervan, is alle Rwandese slagoffers van geweld wat deur die oorlog toegedien is en baie Rwandese leef nogsteeds met pynlike herinneringe, trauma, armoede, MIV/VIGS, vrees en voortgesette geweld. Daar is 'n behoefte om vrede te herbou en geregtigheid en versoening te bring. Vrouens, ten spyte daarvan hulle dat die mees kwesbares is, het baie bates wat sou kon help in die proses van vredemaak. Om hierdie rede moet hulle ingesluit word in die proses van vrede maak met die doel om voldoende maniere te vind om die herhaling van die volksmoord te voorkom en die land in 'n veilige omgewing te hervorm vir almal – Rwandese, buitelanders en alle kwesbare groepe.

In hierdie studie sal ons die konsepte van vrede, ontwikkeling en geweld verken. Hierdie definisies sal ons help om te verstaan dat hierdie drie konsepte die rol van vrouens in ontwikkeling beïnvloed. Dit beteken dat, vir vroue om effektief in ontwikkeling te wees, het hulle nodig om op 'n veilige plek te woon, vryheid te hê om volgens hulle vermoëns betrokke te wees om positiewe lewensveranderaars te word. Daar word voorgestel dat Rwandese vrouens hierdie uitdaging sal opneem en voortgaan om 'n positiewe rol te speel in die Rwandese gemeenskap. Hulle sal praat totdat hulle stem word gehoor en geweld in die land ontwortel is en totdat alle Rwandese weer bymekaar kom as 'n nasie .

Op grond van hierdie studie sal aanbevelings gegee word wat vrouens kan help om meer effektief te wees in hul pogings om vrede te bring en die gemeenskap te ontwikkel, sowel as om doeltreffend te reageer op die behoeftes van ander kwesbare groepe in Rwanda.

Acknowledgement

This study has been a wonderful opportunity for me to learn how our families, churches and communities influence who we are around the world. The Rwandan genocide in 1994 has left its imprint on women's lives and thus it is a part of this thesis.

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Acronyms

RPF: Rwandan Patriotic Front

MDR: Democratic Republican Movement

MRND: National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development

NURC: National Unity and Reconciliation commission

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

ICTR: International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund

SA: South Africa

USA: United States of America

FUD: United Democratic Focus

NPEP: The National Poverty Eradication Plan

IRIN: Integrated Regional Information Networks

OUA: Organization of African Unity

NPR: National Public Radio

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

It is a sad fact that today the majority of the people in the world is living in poverty. From books, newspapers and television one is informed about the anger, pain, trauma, fear and suffering that lives in the hearts of many people. Children and women are often the most vulnerable members of society. Peace seems to be absent in many parts of the world, and it seems as if day after day things are getting worse. A lack of peace is often due to a range of natural or human-made disasters such as war, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, crimes and violence in neighborhoods and homes. Relationships are characterized by tension and instead of making peace and searching for the well-being of humanity, many people become self-centered; while others are striving for power and honor. Hence in doing so, they often exploit and oppress other human beings and destroy the world as well.

Many African countries are characterized by ongoing civil war and people are killed, mutilated, left homeless or injured and women and children suffer the most. According to the United States Department of State Bureau of Political Military Affairs issued July 9, 2001, it is confirmed that "Africa continues to have the greatest number of armed conflicts among other continents. In the midst of 2001, open hostilities affected Angola, Burundi, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda..." In rural areas, people are more exposed to poverty than those living in the cities and HIV/AIDS and war are huge realities in many rural communities. Today Congo remains the most dangerous country in the world for women. The rape of women, men and children has become a weapon of war of epidemic measures (<http://www.blackstarnews.com/ March 2013>).

In Rwanda HIV/AIDS is a challenge for the church, for the community, and for families. The population of Rwanda is almost 11,689,696 million (July 2012); adults (15-50) those living with

HIV are 170.000; women are 88.000 and children are 22.000; 20 000 are born from rape and 67% of that rape contracted HIV; 75.000 are orphans of genocide and over half stopped attending school. (<http://www.survivors-fund.org.uk>home>resources>Rwandan> History 2011). It manifests in the deaths of parents; as families and whole communities are exposed to crime, violence and oppression. Consequently, child, widow and grandparent-headed households are increasing. Health needs are also closely related to the poor sanitation, malnutrition and inadequate housing conditions (Dixon 2010: 81).

There is also high unemployment and under-employment resulting in very low income, further perpetuating a vicious cycle of poverty. Mothers are raped, killed, and abused in different ways. Life is hard not just for non-Christians but also for people in the church. The roots of this deplorable state of affairs include hunger for power, corruption, poverty and unemployment. Poverty is a painful reality as it oppresses and divides. It causes the poor to lose their self-worth and dignity. Poverty must be fought with endurance and hope but the prime need for the world is peace. According to the Rusesabageni foundation, “one third of the Rwandan population suffers from malnutrition, life expectancy is 44 years and wealth and power are all concentrated in the cities, leaving 92% of the poor in under- represented rural area” ([http://www.sfbayview.com./](http://www.sfbayview.com/) 2010. rwandas.victoire).

In some African countries children are involved in the military where they are killed. “In 2000, 13 million children were displaced as a result of warring conflicts. In Sierra Leone more than a million children were displaced, 250000 serving in armed group” (<http://ssrn.com>: 2007). In Rwanda, boys are in domestic work within the country; they are abused and sometimes work with no wage payments. Older females facilitate the trafficking of young girls and supply girls to other women for prostitution (by United States Department of State: 2011). They are then exposed to sexual abuse, lack of education, love, home, and are often involved with drugs; yet most people will agree that every child needs a home and a place of love, peace and security.

Many of these sad realities are also true of Rwanda. A Rwandan woman who was exposed to this on a daily basis (cf. paragraph 1.2 below), who lived through the trauma of genocide and

civil war, who was displaced and lost family members and a child in that conflict, would hope to address some of these and related issues.

1.2 Motivation

A Rwandan woman experienced the civil war in 1994, and was deeply affected when her first born child was killed on her back. Her father-in-law and his young son were also killed. Her younger brother disappeared in 1994. She saw dead bodies, she witnessed the killings and inflicting of injuries. She was threatened by death three times, and many of her family members have been imprisoned for the wrong reasons. She is a victim of the war, therefore she must take part in this process of restoring peace.

Today, I believe that being Rwandan means taking responsibility of what happened in civil war of 1994, be part of the process of restoration of peace and of transformation in Rwandan community. As Christians, we are called to be salt and light to the world (Matt. 5:13-16) by promoting peace and development of the less fortunate. It is my hope that by combining biblical reflections, practical experience and suggestions this study may provide opportunities for others in Rwanda to do the same.

1.3 Rwanda

Rwanda is a small country in Central Africa. Covering only 26 338 sq km. It is overpopulated at 11,689,696 million (<http://www.indexmundi.com/Rwanda>), July 2012 census. Kinyarwanda and English are the national languages, while French and Swahili are also widely spoken. In Rwanda, 90% of the population is involved in (mostly subsistence) agriculture. Rwanda is a country of great natural beauty, the terrain is mostly grassy highlands and hills – Rwanda is also known as a country of a “Thousand Hills.” It has a temperate climate with two rainy seasons (March to May and October to December) and mild temperatures in the mountains with frost. The Nile River has its source in Rwanda and in the Virunga National Park the last remaining Mountain Gorillas are found in the wild. However, the contemporary history of this country has been blighted by a terrible outburst of violence (<http://www.rdb.rw/about-rwanda/geography.html>).

In Rwandan culture, marriage is one of the primary bonds or identity-constituting elements. The Rwandan woman does not have an ethnic identity and, ironically given the ethnic strife which the country has been known for, as such she is free to marry a Hutu or a Tutsi. However, children belong to the ethnic group of their father. Bearing many children is the pride and the strength of the family, especially for the father, and they are seen as the glory of the mother. In Rwandan history, the people of Rwanda were divided into three groups: Hutus, Twa and Tutsis with the one king over them all. Traditionally Hutus, Tutsis and Batwa (a minority ethnic group) have long lived in harmony and gave their daughters in marriage to each other. They have a strong sense of community where one person lives because of others, as expressed in the saying: "*Inkingi imwe ntigera inzu*" (one pillar does not build a house). Work was often done collectively, "*umuganda*" ("it is a work donated that is performed by someone or a group of people for the benefit of the public or its institutions in lieu of tax or to support those who cannot afford to pay workmen" (Guallebaud 2002:10). In the same way, people volunteered to build each other's house or prepare a field for someone before planting, etc.

Guillebaud (2002:361) writes "the struggles started in 1896 after the death of King Kigeri IV Rwabugiri which was followed by a power struggle between his nominated successor, his son, Rutarindwa and Kanjogera. The battle between the King and queen mother near Shyogwe (1897) resulted in the winning of the queen and ruled the country in the name of her son, king Musinga." Since that reign of Kanjogera, Rwandan peace has been a struggle and the blood was shed in 1959 when the Revolution began in Rwanda. The Republic of Rwanda was declared in October 1961. Kayibanga Gregoire was the first Rwandan president. Guillebaud (2002: 365) attests that "in a coup-d'etat Major-General Juvenal Habyarimana became president of Rwanda on 5th July 1973. Almost all Rwandans became members of his single party (MRND: *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement*)." For the twenty years that he was in power, there was stability and people were living in harmony and the economy improved although his regime was oppressive. The Rwandan proverbs were used to describe the situation. For instance, *Imana yirirwa ahandi igataha i Rwanda* (meaning, God visits other nations but his home is in Rwanda). Guillebaud (2002:345) writes: "His wife gathered power in what was called akazu (refers to the coterie surrounding his wife) and took control in 1984. In October 1990,

when the RPF invaded Rwanda, Habyarimana allowed an anti-Tutsi campaign to unite Hutu.” These conflicts led the country into genocide in 1994. The killings started immediately after the Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi were both killed when their plane was shot down at Kigali on 6th April 1994. RPF captured Kigali on 19th July 1994 and the new government was settled with the Hutu president Pasteur Bizimungu in that same month. April 2000, President Bizimungu resigned and Paul Kagame was elected President up to day (Guillebaud 2002:368)

1.4 THE MAPS OF RWANDA: OLD AND NEW



Map of Rwanda before 1994 ([www.cia.gov / library/publications/](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/))

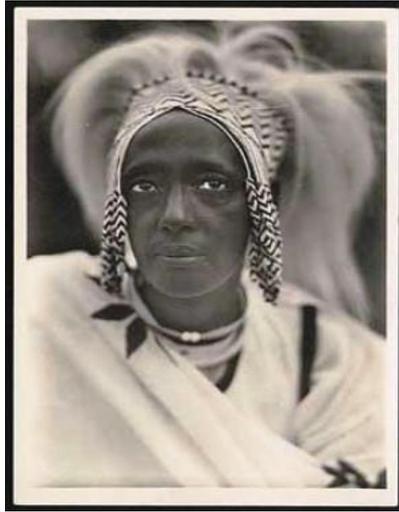


Map of Rwanda after 1994 ([www.cia.gov / library/publications/](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/))

These Rwandan maps show the change of names for some places in Rwanda after the civil war of 1994. This change is one of many other examples which had created confusions, alienations and delay in transformation in Rwandans' lives regarding peace and development, conflict and its resolutions.

The photos below represent the most active people in Rwandan conflicts which progressively led to the civil war of 1994.

1.5 The photos



Kanjogera Nyiramibambwe (www.freewebs.com/irakozeirakoze/app.../ 24 Apr2011).



Queen Kanjogera and her son king Yuhi Musinga
(www.kigalitoday.com/spip.php/article11592).

1.6 The civil war of 1994

On 6 April 1994, the former Rwandan president Habyalimana Juvenal was shot and killed in an airplane with his friend President Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi and others. They were on their way home from Dar-es-Salaam to sign peace agreements between the two opposing ethnic groups, Hutu and Tutsi – within their respective countries. This event served as a catalyst for an ensuing bloodbath. The fragile peace turned into violence that resulted in the death of many innocent people. Many Rwandan families became homeless, and others fled the country. Kayumba (2010: 2) says, “The war and genocide had very devastating consequences for Rwandan Society. The genocide not only led to the suffering and death of a very large number of people (the number of the dead alone exceeds a million); it also resulted in the destruction of the country.”

Women and children were the majority of the vulnerable victims of the conflict. The civil war of 1994 destroyed Rwanda, leaving many orphans and widows. Many Rwandans now live with trauma, shame, guilt and are now living as refugees all over the world. Others are prisoners (men and women), or disabled due to the war. On the other hand HIV/AIDS is ravaging the country. Guillebaud (2002: 207-217) explains “Violence began on 1st October 1980 by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in north, Ruhengeri where the killing of the Hutus started. This attack created panic in the Rwandan government and on 4th June, RPF attacked the Byumba and there was serious fighting. In August 1993, Arusha peace accords were signed and on 6 April 1994 Habyalimana was killed and the massacre and genocide began. On 19th July 1994 RPF captured Kigali and was sworn in as an interim government.”

According to the Direction of Development and Outreach at Women for Women International Report by Judith Register on 24 June 2011, 250.000 women were raped during the civil war and deliberately infected with HIV and 20.000 children were born from those rapes. Many women live with severe trauma, others are desperate wives of prisoners, widows, or are heading households living in extreme poverty. This situation is very alarming in the provinces where many people were killed and their murders are in prisons. This has resulted in support systems and family bonds being broken.

“Political prisoners are ill-treated daily. There are hundreds of political prisoners following the civil war, but nobody knows how many exactly, because they die every day through the terrible imprisonment system since RPF has taken power in Rwanda. People can only speculate the amount. Also, they do not keep records of their prisoners. When prisoners disappear, no one knows or ask question about them” (<http://www.therisingcontinent.wordpress.com>).

Eventually almost 1 million Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed. I believe that this number does not include the thousands of people who fled to and died in the DRC between 1995-1997, because most writers about genocide focus on the case of the Tutsis. The revelation of the whole truth in Rwanda still has a long way to go and this makes the restoration of peace a long journey as well. Many people agree that biased reporting occurs even by ICTR (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda). (Notes: ICTR was formed on 8th November 1994 at Arusha authorized by United Nations Security Council Resolution 955. ICTR had completed 46, 17 pending appeals and 12 acquitted=75. ICTR is criticized for the length of its proceedings, the small number of accused in the docks, and the mistreatment of witnesses by sexual assault, many feel that they have chosen to prosecute Hutus only in order to protect or cover-up Tutsi killings and accuse the ICTR of being an international institution which results instead of justice and reconciliation, in injustice and alienation in Rwanda (<http://www.enote.com> 9 April 2013).

1.7 The church's value

Most of my readings are from the reports of the people who work in Rwanda or have done research on Rwanda especially after the war, on justice, development and peacemaking. I have also read the books of pioneer women who struggle and work hard to make the voice of the women of the Third World heard, to empower them and encourage them to tell their stories in order to find healing as well as theological books from different authors, men and women. I will use the following books on community development: 'People First' by Stan Burkey (1993), 'God of the Poor' by M. Bennet, (1998) and 'When I Needed a Neighbor Where Were You? By Hennie Lotter (2005).

Theology plays a role of integrating of the secular economic, political, socio-cultural aspects displayed in the area of Development. Many women in the Rwandan context are members of churches, the body of Christ and our hope comes when we listen, live and share the word of God. Through this word we gain the power to change people's lives through the work of the Holy Spirit who gives them a new life with new desires to help others as well. The argument is that "if the Bible teaches us that God is love (1 John 4: 8), why does He allow people to kill each other without mercy?" If Rwandans are children of the universe, don't we have the right to be here among other people of the earth? Do we really have to be like them? What about our differences? Where is our humanity? Don't we have the right to share equally in the resources God has provided for our country?

In Rwanda, women and children are the poorest and the most dehumanized of the country and they seek to live fully as human beings. Only empowered women living among the poor communities can analyze and identify with the problems of the community if they are willing to facilitate, restore peace and resolve their own problems. Community Development as a process of change provides holistic economic growth through the participation of people and the government authorities in order to improve their lives: economically, socially, politically and culturally. This change starts from within the community and the outsiders join in to empower, support and facilitate the process.

Alexander and Rosner (2000: 682) define peace as "a state where God's authority and power over his created order are seen to dominate his relations with His world, including both the material and human spheres. This peace results from people subjecting themselves to God." This biblical peace is different from peace as a modern concept, which is just the absence of physical violence. It is about God's vision of shalom. Violence as enemy of development and opposite of God's intended order. Therefore, we all need peace which will bring us hope and strength to carry on with our lives, developing relationships with God and with one another, to build the community where we live and bring true justice for all Rwandans. Humans cannot succeed in bringing transformation in Community Development if we deal with physical needs and ignore spiritual needs. God must be the center of this process.

The real change starts in human hearts through repentance and reconciliation. This change cares about oneself and the well beings of the weak: women and children, the needy and the environment to restore the beauty of God; and because women are marginalized, oppressed and hurt in our societies, they should be eager to restore relationships, practice hospitality and peace.

1.8 The research statement

In Rwanda, as in many developing countries, many families suffer the effects of corruption, injustice, violence, oppression and poverty, poor health and HIV/AIDS. For many years following the Rwandan civil war, people have failed to maintain peace in their homes and in their neighborhoods, which often escalates to bigger conflicts in societies. This instability has a significant positive or negative influence on Community Development in the country. With regards to this issue the following questions will be addressed from a theological perspective:

Women, specifically, have a role to play in community development in order to establish lasting peace in homes, neighborhoods and communities: What specific role they can play in peacemaking especially when they are supported and empowered by the church and society? Therefore in this study, we will address these areas.

1. To search the relationship between gender, community development, peace and violence.
2. To discuss a theological vision of peace
3. To discuss the Rwandan conflict and post-conflict situation with reference to women
4. To propose the peace making potential of women in Rwanda with a view to community development.

1.9 Research design and method

This research takes the form of a literature study involving books, newspaper articles, internet resources and census reports. Comparisons will also be between women's movements in Rwanda and other fields including the views of different Feminist Theologians.

The thesis itself is structured according to Osmer's (2008: 4) view of practical theology, which follows the logic of four questions: What is going on? Why is this going on? What ought to be going on? How might we respond? These different questions of Osmer relate to the four tasks of practical theology.

Osmer identifies the empirical task which asks the question 'what is going on?' In this study the focus here will be on the contemporary situation regarding peace and violence in different loci in Rwandan society: at home (domestic violence), in neighborhoods and in communities (violent crime). Following his interpretive task of practical theology, the research then focuses on different political, religious and socio-cultural reasons behind the presence or absence of peace and violence in post-war Rwanda ('why is this going on?'). For the normative task ('what ought to be going on?'), the focus falls on the meaning of human dignity in biblical terms and of the word *shalom*, to understand what in biblical terms peace in Rwanda would entail and what implications this may have for the contemporary discourse on development.

In a pragmatic way ('how might we respond?'); I will determine the strategies of resistance to breaking peace/perpetrating violence and strategies of growth which will increase the capabilities of women and influence peace in Rwanda.

1.10. Limits of study

My study will focus on Rwanda, as this is the context from where I come and I am most familiar with. My experiences as a Rwandan woman are both a strength and limitation as the story of women and conflict in Rwanda is closely woven to mine. I, therefore, do at times bring in a first person voice.

1.11 Definition of key concepts

Peace means the absence of physical violence, no war, no bloodshed, and freedom from turmoil. According to Rosner (2000)'s view, biblically peace means more: *shalom* is the peace which comes only from God. Our relationship with God takes priority over those with other human beings. God gave his peace to the Israelites but it depended on their sacrifices. Christians' peace today comes from the cross of Jesus Christ through his work and Jesus made

possible peaceful relationships for his followers. God delights to make his children instruments of peace and reconciliation in the midst of conflict for transformation

Community development: There are many different views on what exactly constitutes community development, but many of them originated from the United Nations' definitions in 1948. According to the Ontario Health Coalition (1979: 101), "Community Development is a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation and fullest reliance upon the community and initiative." The sources, the understanding, abilities and the willingness to participate vary from one community to another; this process can be quick or very slow. Community development is the change in a community from a bad situation to a better one: It requires a change in the behavior of individuals, relationship between groups in the community; awareness, and motivation which involves the community as a whole and which must be followed by other support activities from within and outside the community.

Violence is an act of humans which destroys the physical and spiritual lives of humanity and which violates the laws of the government and the law of God as well.

1.12 The significance of this study

This study may be of significance to the church as it may, on theological grounds, help churches to recognize their own responsibilities toward community development in Rwanda. It may also cause churches and NGOs to be aware of the realities faced by women at grassroots level in Rwandan society and may motivate them to recognize and utilize the potential of women within community development, specifically with regard to fostering peace and non-violence as a possible prerequisite for community development. In so doing, it may assist in the restoration of people's worth, dignity and self-respect. It may also motivate the government to enter into partnership with such churches or NGOs involved in peacemaking, thereby increasing the chances of success of their efforts to address many of the developments and related challenges faced by post-civil war Rwanda, such as insufficient nutrition, housing, employment and inadequate health care and education.

1.13 Preliminary division of chapters:

Chapter 1 of this study introduces and provides an outline of the issues pertaining to this study. Chapters two and three will focus on Osmer's so-called "empirical and interpretative" tasks of practical theology.

Chapter two will discuss the concepts of community development and violence/peace from various perspectives. Therefore, what constitutes community development as well as what is generally understood as constituting peace or violence/non-violence will be highlighted from a non-theological perspective and the relationship between them will be discussed. These concepts will be discussed in the light of women's experiences.

Chapter 3 focuses on biblical views of peace and human dignity and how this may, in a theologically responsible way, play a role in promoting peace and influence community development.

Chapter 4 will provide the background of the Rwandan genocide in 1994, and its results. It will look at the current Rwandan situation regarding development and peace (or the absence thereof) and the current role, if any, of Rwandan women in it as well as their challenges inside and outside the country.

My last chapter will cover the recommendations which will give attention to women. The fact that women are more vulnerable than men in violent community, gives women the responsibility to build a safe environment for all, fight against injustice and all sorts of abuses and to protect other less advantaged groups. Chapter 5 will discuss the role Rwandan women played in the conflicts of 1994. The purpose of this chapter is to know how women were affected by the Rwandan conflicts of 1994 and offer suggestions for building and keeping peace by women in Rwanda with a view to increasing, the success and effect of community development.

The chapter will emphasize the role of women in peace making, development and the advantages of empowering women to become more effective. These recommendations may inspire women on how to gain enough power to change the community, how women may work

in partnership with the church and the rest of the community to overcome the challenges of poverty, violence injustice, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, unemployment, domestic abuses, etc.

CHAPTER 2

Violence/Peace and the role of women in relation to women's experiences

2.1. Introduction

I begin with the quotation of Seleti (2004:146) that, "in times of conflict, women suffer far more than men, and are victims of rape, abduction, HIV and other gross violations of human rights." As an introduction to this chapter we will deal with peace/ violence and community development with reference to women, the relationship between the former two aspects and how they influence community development. It is important to note that the issues which affect people in the community involves everyone in one way or another in terms of making positive resolutions.

A definition of community development will be provided followed by a discussion on the relationship between gender, poverty and conflict. This will be followed by a discussion regarding definitions of peace and violence in which I will discuss 'why some people can sing peace while others are dying of terror'. As we further develop the chapter, the contexts of Rwandan women and the proverbs of Rwanda are woven into this discussion. The aim of this chapter is to introduce the impact of violence and an absence of peace on societies and communities with special reference to women.

2.2 Towards a definition of Community Development

A statement from the Community Development Foundation defines Community Development as, "a structured intervention that gives a community greater control over the conditions of their lives. It is a skilled process which requires commitment of people to this process. Community Development had to look both ways: how the Community Development is working

at grass roots level and how the responsive key institutions are to the needs of local communities” (Cary 1970: 56).

August (2010:2) writes that: “Community Development was defined as a movement designed to promote better living for the whole community with the active participation, and if possible on the initiative, of the community.” Dadids and Maphunye (2005:107) emphasize the issue of change and write that: “Community development focused on the method whereby desired change could be brought about in communities. Community development was used as a development process. This meant that communities could take the initiative to formulate objectives involving change in their living conditions.”

Perhaps the most famous of the definitions is that of The United Nations Organizations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (1963) when they describe Community Development as, “a process by which people themselves are united with those of the governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities to integrate those communities into the life of the nations, and enable them to contribute fully to national progress” (August 1999: 20).

According to the definitions, the aim of Community Development is to build a safe environment for people, give those skills and the capacity to freely control the conditions of their lives; to build confidence in the people, a sustainable growth and development to create jobs. Community Development is a process in collective participation. But what is the status of women specifically in the development sector?

2.3. The relationship between gender, poverty and conflict

Haddad (2001:6) notes that in the past “women were seen as tradition bound and thus the most ignorant and backward members of society, a stumbling block to modernity and ultimately to development. Being developed means to reach a level of productivity and welfare in order to be able to assist the backward countries of the Third World.” A modernization approach to development as illustrated here does not care about harmony and peace; it cares about growth of income, and the increase of production and economic growth despite those

who are starving in the country, and the increase of political power of a country (cf Francois Perroux *in* Samuel and Sugden 1987:149). According to Kemi Ogunsanya's observation of the *Challenges and Achievement of African Women*, this approach of development as purely economic leaves women deeply affected by conflicts leading to the increase in poverty resulting in diminished educational opportunities. They are exposed to various oppressions such as rape, domestic violence, exclusion from decision making and discrimination. Women heading households struggle because of limited income and resources (Seleti 2005: 144).

On many occasions women are denied the support and the chance to participate in the rebuilding of what has been destroyed. August (2010: 83) attests that: "Women are exposed to submit to patriarchal authority which denies them access to positions of authority. Thus, the system and its positions has oppressed women socially, politically, economically and even in the church (Mwaura, 1999:56)." In a community where men dominate women, there is always discrimination of the less advantaged, which includes groups such as the elderly and disabled, children, women, the minority, or other group of people. Kafwa and Musamas (2001: 245) write that:"The lack of permission and authority of men denies women the ability to fully contribute to the economy of the country, although they have the will and commitment." Community Development is only possible when people come together and share all the resources of the community, when women, men and children are actively involved in the issues which affect their lives. In stable communities, where women and some other groups like the elderly people and children, remain voiceless and are denied the opportunity to participate in development, we cannot say that the community is 'developed.' August (2010:82) reinforces this view and he writes "the fact is that violence against women hinders progress, but working in partnership through "facilitated dialogues" can foster new, respectful relationships, informed by a deepened understanding of the role of prejudice and stereotyping in discriminatory behavior."

The Ministry of Education in South Africa (2005:146) notes the relationship between gender poverty and conflict: "In times of conflicts women suffer more than men. They are victims of rape, abduction, HIV/AIDS and other gross violations of human rights. In most cases, men are

the perpetrators of war and violent conflict, yet they are usually the first to sit at the negotiation table, while women are seldom allowed to sit at the peace table.”

Community Development is about empowering: providing skills and knowledge to increase people’s abilities to participate with confidence in the resolution of their problems. It is about sharing equitably the resources. It helps individuals in the community to grow and to take the initiative to face the reality of their struggles and to know the priorities of their needs. In contrast, in violent communities, women and other voiceless groups are excluded from dialogues around peace-building. Consequently, there is a constant fear and lack of adequate contribution in development (cf. Guillebaud 2002: 209).

2.4 Towards a definition of Peace

There are different meanings of peace according to different people. Peace is the absence of physical violence, of worries and of struggles in our everyday life. Peace is the period in the life of people or society when some people eat, drink and enjoy themselves without fear. Anderson (2004: 103) writes “Peace is a condition in which individuals, families, group communities, and nations experience low level of violence and engage in mutually harmonious relationships.” Peace can also mean self-satisfaction for some as they get what they want despite-the way they get it. That is why I argue that some people can sing peace while others are dying of terror. In this section I will describe peace as the absence of various social ills in our community. I will then describe evidence in traditionally subscribed terms.

2.4.1 Peace as the absence of abuse in marriage and family life

Peace is the absence of conflicts in homes between parents and children, husbands and wives, between siblings, and between families and neighbours.

Polygamy seems ironically natural in the eyes of many societies around the world. However, a woman who belongs to more than one man is judged as a prostitute and is sometimes severely punished. Another common practice throughout the world is non-sororal polygyny where a widower marries the sister of his deceased wife. Polygamy and polygyny have always caused conflicts between wives and between siblings. According to Satoshi Kanazawa (2008) “when

multiple men are officially married to one woman, a husband has very little reason to believe that a given child is his. How will the child survive to become an adult and continue the society? Only in the cases of a fraternal polyandry, where the co-husbands are brothers, the society can survive." It is therefore rare to see polygamous families living in peace. Powlison (1997:32) affirms that where people are gathered, there can be conflicts and where conflicts are, there is no peace. He writes: "Conflicts concern all of us: you, me and the people with whom we live or work together. Anger problems are only one part in the largest problem of interpersonal conflicts. Anger actions and emotions are often the center of conflicts but an extended family of reactions each plays its part."

Wamue (1996: 15) confirms that "in the Kenyan community and many others around the world women were and are still viewed as possessions of males. They are believed to be immature and unstable." According to Rwandan culture, in rural areas, women do the housework and casual labor outside the house which is often not acknowledged as crucial for the survival of the entire family. Where a dowry has been paid, the children belong to their father. Women produce them, nurture them, but have no participation in decision making concerning their children's future. Man is the decision maker. A Rwandan proverb says "Urugo ruvuze umugore ruvuza umuhoro", which literally means "when the woman raises her voice in the house, the conflict rises." Some women suffer domestic violence and yet remain in marriage for the sake of children. Storkey (1985: 160) concurs with this view and states the following with regard to broader society that "many women are not at peace in our societies. There is a widespread injustice to women in our society. Some issues crop up in family life, education, the Law, the church and marriage. Women are not respected equally to men. They are frequently used and abused. Many women in fact experience not only frustration and discrimination, but also real oppression at the hands of some men".

Many believers misinterpret the scripture, and use the teachings to justify evildoing. A women is to submit to her husband in everything (Eph. 5:24). This gives violent men power to abuse their wives. For instance, sex takes place when the husband wants and how he wants it and in some families, some women are sold for sex by their own husband. This behavior is taught as

being supported by the scriptures such as 1 Peter 3:3-4 which admonishes women to obey their husband in silence.

2.4.2 Peace as the absence of poverty

Poverty causes disappointments and impatience and makes the vulnerable, such as women, more vulnerable. At times, poor people may know their rights, but cannot exercise them. It is hard for the poor to communicate, because no one is willing to listen to their problems and to help. In Kenya, “gender development policies tended to consider men as the “norm” and ignore women’s own needs, aspirations and potentialities in terms of commitment and sacrifices in uplifting and maintaining the need of the society and house hold in particular” (Musamas 2010: 241). These poor people are also parents who live in fear, because they are concerned about the future of their children. It is hard for them to face tomorrow and some young women are at risk due to poverty. According to a social scientist, “young women are increasingly engaging in high-risk sexual activity with older men in exchange for gifts, money and promises of future provisions. This increases their chances of contracting HIV” (Seleti 2004:156).

Mothers spend more time with their children than fathers do in general, and the tougher life becomes for these women, the stronger this relationship is between the mother and her children. Some mothers lack support and fail to provide enough for their children’s needs. In some African countries, such as Kenya, women sleep with the fishermen and get stock to sell so they could make a living. This exchange of fish for sex is called “jaboya” (<http://www.irinnews.org/printreport/88040/Kenya>). Others send their beautiful young daughters out in the morning without money and ask them to come back home with sugar and bread. In Rwanda, poor mothers send their young children out to do domestic work for a very low wage or just for food. Some sell their bodies in prostitution to provide food for the rest of the family. Poor men sell their wives and get money to cover their expenses in the house. The result is that when things get better, it is difficult for the man to trust his wife again and for some women and girls prostitution becomes their hobby. Other women get pregnant, and raise unwanted children; or they abort the pregnancies.

HIV does not only kill people, it causes poverty. “In rural areas, women are hit hardest by poverty. Many are infected with HIV by husbands returning from work in the mines, where they patronize sex workers or even create second families. Women must labor with this burden” (<http://www.npr.org>>[News.World](#) : Africa Portraits of Poverty). Eight million children have lost their mother to AIDS in Africa. They are taken in by extended families or live alone without any adult. Their life is not stable and some people take advantage of their struggles in order to abuse them. Poverty and unemployment have many consequences for them. Some of the children drop out of school and go to the cities where they join criminals, others become poorly paid prostitutes and are more exposed to HIV contamination. Some boys join the army to survive poverty and even for children who try to persevere at school, only a few of them can finish school successfully (Seleti 2004: 156-157). Children are the future fathers and mothers of a nation, so every child needs assistance until he/she becomes mature and able to make a good decision and look after him/herself. The behavior of both parents will definitely influence the behavior of their children, as well as the rest of the community. It is also true what people say: parents do not determine the destiny of their children; but it is the responsibility of any parent to be the best parent and best friend we can be to our children.

2.4.3 Peace as the absence of cultural discrimination.

Peace is the absence of the vulnerability of women in their participation in Community Development and the absence of increase of vulnerability in communities. It is the absence of men’s control over valued resources and abuse of leadership positions. “Women’s discrimination, devaluation and oppression are the major hindrances to their effective contribution to the informal sector” (Musamas 2010: 245). Mbuy Beya in her Essay “*Stand Up and Walk, Daughter of My People*” affirms that “in some African countries the birth of a girl-child is still considered to be bad luck and women often remain powerless when witnessing the victory of evil over good” (Phiri and Nadar 2006: 208).

International Human Rights affirms the right to free education for men and women without discrimination. However, in many African cultures, girls are discriminated at school or are given the last chance to go to school. When a family has two children who need to go to school and

when the family is struggling financially; the boy is given priority because these parents believe that education is for boys, not girls. In some families, girls are to remain at the home, and are not to engage in public life. Girls would learn from their mothers how to cook and to care for children. Ogunsanya in Seleti (2004: 155) affirms that “in the traditional African family, women have little access to resources, education, employment, income, land or property. As a result, the social fabric is fragmented and traditional gender roles are changing.” The Batwa people in Rwanda are even more left behind in education. The relation to this attitude towards girls and minority groups has many consequences for the Rwandan economic development as women and girls are limited because of a lack of skills and training.

Names play an important role in Rwandan life and every name has a special meaning. Names are very important in everyone’s history and coincidentally they go along with our characters. In a Rwandan context, every person’s name is connected to the past or the future of that person or even reflects his/her family’s situation. There is always a story behind our names. There is a saying “*izina ni ryo muntu*” (the name describes the real character of individual) – naming a child is like a prophecy, a declaration or a decree that the father makes over the child’s life. The first name must be chosen carefully and only by a male (father, grandfather or uncle). The name is in many cases the choice of the mother or the godmother/father when the family is Christian.

Girls in Rwandan culture have less value than boys for some parents who believe that when a girl is grown up, she will leave her mother’s house, get married and bear children for another family. Children always belong to the father and never to the mother. Therefore, a girl is the property of the father when she is young and later the property of her husband. If parents do not have a boy child, the family is in danger: as there is no strength, no heirs and no life. Ilan Tal (1995: 44) affirms that “various traditions testify that parents were often disappointed when a girl baby was born to them.”

Sometimes fathers give girls names that express sadness, regret, shame, disappointment and as a result the child will carry it for the rest of her life. Some girls will feel humiliated and could be ill-treated by other people, and even sometimes by their own relatives. It is not easy in this

situation for any girl to build relationships. In some cases the girls grow up with anger and have many unanswered questions which could enslave them for life. These are some Rwandan names: *Mperekejabandi* (I follow or imitate other parents); *Ndamiriki* (I have nothing to save), *Mpariyabaseka* (I give opportunity to the laughers). These girls could not be at peace once they understand the meaning of their name and why they were fully not accepted in their environment and were called every day by the same name. They grow up unhappy and isolated as an unwanted children, a mistake to her parents and a curse to the family; bound by their name and without freedom in relationships. These girls struggle to participate fully in the development process because nothing makes sense to them.

2.4.4. Peace as the absence of frustration and stress.

It is frustrating when an individual is involved in a group and never gets freedom to do what is right; instead he or she is always told what to do and how it must be done, just like a child. His/her human rights are violated and he/she loses his/her dignity. With regards to Rwanda, “the government exercises intense control over the non-governmental sector by both overt and covert methods. Civil society operates under very tight restrictions. Civil society organizations speak publically and influence decision-making only when their views are in line with those of RPF and the government” (Kayumba 2010: 7). This lack of freedom creates insecurity, frustration and stress is often manifested within the home. Women and children are the most vulnerable in such cases.

2.4.5 Peace as the absence of social injustice.

Females in male dominated professions are few and have low wages while a male working in a female dominated profession is quickly promoted and earns a good salary. Forbes (American 2012) calls those obstacles the glass ceiling that prevents women from reaching the high levels of the workplace though they try hard; they are not yet succeeding fully. Seleti (2004:160) writes within an African context that “rural women and migrant workers are particularly hard hit during times of economic downturn when they are much more vulnerable to unemployment and are often forced to carry an even larger of unpaid work burden” (Women and the economy 2000). This injustice in society causes grief in the life of many people and generally, the strong

and powerful oppress the weak: men exercise their power over women, the employers over their workers, and the wealthy over the poor and so on. Children grow up violent, angry, and uncertain and use of risky short cuts to get things on their own through crime, murder, rape, and drug- dealing. Haugen in Seleti (2004:72) describes injustice as the abuse of power. He writes: "injustice is used when the power is misused to take from others what God has given them, namely, their life, dignity, liberty or the fruits of their love and labor."

The girl child was regarded as "second class" in many African cultures, including in the Rwandan case. The best things were given first to boys and the leftovers to girls (education, inheritance, gifts, and food). When goods are not enough to share, the girls and women make sacrifices for men and boys. The mother is always blamed for any misbehavior of her child. This is still happening in families that observe local culture, although the government tries to promote and protect girls' rights. Musamas (2010: 235) points out that in Kenya, "women constitute 52% of the population but the lower percentage of girls in schools points to discrimination against their education and job accessibility. Women are treated as second rate in many societies of the world."

In Rwanda, even before the war in 1994, men gave their wives or daughters to other men to have sex because of some rituals, (for instance "*kunywana*") and traditional medicines or sold their wives for sex and got money to start small businesses while others would get promotions or swap jobs, etc (<http://www.gakondo.com/Rwanda-kunywana>). This had terrible consequences, because when a woman is forced into sexual activities by her husband just to help in an economic crisis at home, the result is that some of these marriages end in divorce or HIV infection of one of the partners. Today there is a new form of sexual abuse against Hutu men in Rwanda, as it was reported that now some single women control men sexually. They threaten them with laying a murder or a rape charge against them. Rwandan Hutu men, who fear the challenges of prison, fall into that trap, cheat on their wives and become slaves of these single women. This new sexual abuse has made many families poor and involves them in domestic violence. In Rwandan language it is known as "*kwinjira*" (I will comment on this practice in chapter 4.5).

2.4.6 Peace as the absence of lies

African women have been told lies about gender equality, religion and culture. They live with these lies and they have accepted them as part of their lives. Parents transmit them to their children and these lies end up hurting when the truth comes out. The victims feel rejected, oppressed, marginalized and often feel that they can't participate meaningfully in the development of the community. The lies destroy, mislead and divide the community. Women often try to cover their sufferings, minimize or excuse them and the pain grows inside their body and heart. The Rwandan proverb confirms this "*amarira y'umugabo atemba ajya mu nda*" ('the man's tears run into his tummy'). Jayakumar in Myers (1999: 110) writes that "the poor have been taught to believe that they are supposed to be slaves or that it is part of the scheme of things that they should do to work of untouchables or bounded laborers. They don't believe they are intended to be creative and productive stewards."

Some women endure stress, pain and humiliation, but deep inside they long for peace. Others try to push harder, demand their liberation, speak out, and seek comfort in church. They work hard to bring absolute change, but without peace their efforts will never bring success. In Rwanda they say that a woman is not a woman before she has been beaten by her partner (see <http://www.theraveproject.com/.rwanda.htm/1999>). This is happening in other forms elsewhere in the world. Lies are a tool of domination and oppression that limits the growth of women's capabilities and causes them to remain dependent on men.

2.4.7 Peace as the absence of persecution and torture

In the Declaration on Rwanda on 8 September 2010 by Gerald Gahima, General Kayumba Nyamwasa, Colonel Patrick Karegeya and Dr Theogene Rudasingwa it is proclaimed that "in Rwanda victims of human rights abuses, including arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, torture, and malicious prosecutions have no opportunity to receive redress" (Kayumba 2010:9).

In Roman times similar convictions were present. The Latin adage "si vis pacem para bellum" is translated as, "If you wish for peace, prepare for war" or "si vis pacem fac bellum" translated "if you want peace, make war." The liberation of the land from military domination can in extreme

cases only take place with battle. In the case of Rwanda, inside as well as outside the country, families were crying for the lives of their sons and daughters sent to war, a very harsh discipline was applied to them once they failed to apply a 'SONGA MBERE' (in Swahili language it means "go forward") because of fear or fatigue. Habeeb (2007: 21-22) affirms that "in Africa at any given time, there are more than 100,000 child soldiers actively participating in civil conflict. Children who try to flee the misery of the life of a child soldier, risk execution; even if they survive the war, they are not welcomed back by their families and communities, who view them as dangerous and uncontrollable."

Countries with ongoing wars become poor as a result and the people live in fear. Habeeb (2007: 49) writes, "failed states are characterized by economic stagnation, and poverty, corruption, and the inequitable exploitation of resources, high crime, and a poor or nonexistent health and educational systems." During the Rwandan genocide women and their children were the immediate targets of genocide. Many died and the survivors were forced to work beyond their strength (in some places like Bugesera, there were no men in the communities to bury the dead people; women had to carry them to the cemetery, dig the grave and bury their dead; this was a very shocking experience). Every day small children and women had to carry hot pots of food on their heads, traveling miles to the prison to feed their husbands and fathers, mothers or sisters who were in jail. Sometimes women were beaten for no reason by the guards at the prison (I have been in this situation for three years); other women were victims of rape and sexual abuse. There is no way women can fight men with guns and the worst always happens to women who are not under men's protection. Habeeb (2007: 43) notes a similar situation in Sierra Leone, when a woman was captured by Revolution United Front (RUF) troops in Freetown. The Soldiers raped her repeatedly, and then hacked off her right arm.

Sande (2004: 24) makes a good comment that "those people who use the attack methods to end conflicts are those more interested in winning a conflict than preserving a relationship in order to assert their rights, to control others or to take advantage of the situation. They put much pressure on opponents as it is necessary to eliminate their opposition..." This method is common among the less privileged groups and women. The weak people are always oppressed

by the strong individuals who want to increase their power. A Rwandan proverb attests that “*insina ngufi icibwaho urukoma*” (the weak persons are always victims of injustice and abuse).

2.5 Violence

Hydman and Giles (2004:32) notes that “violence exists whenever the potential development of individual is held back by the condition of a relationship, and in particular by the uneven distribution of power and resources.” A Rwandan proverb says “*Amazi iyo abaye make aharirwa impfizi* (when resources are not enough to be shared, they are given to the powerful). He has power that is his strength he already has support and because he wants more, he will get it in his way.

2.5.1 Domestic violence

Most violent abuse of women starts at home. In the case of Rwanda, women are abused especially by their partners. Elsewhere in Africa, The World Health Organization (2004) reports that, “in Windhoek, Namibia 60% of women have suffered physical abuse in an intimate relationship. The situation through the sub-Saharan Africa, 59% of Zambian, 49% of Kenyan, 44% of Ethiopian, and 47% of Tanzanian women also reported abuse in their marriage” (Hendriks 2012: 93).

UNFPA (1990) notes that between 2350.000-500.000 women were reported rape victims in the war of 1994. The Human Rights Watch of 1996 reported that 1/3 of Rwandan women are victims of domestic violence by their male partners ([thhp://www.theraveproject.com/](http://www.theraveproject.com/) Rwanda). This domestic violence happens everywhere else in the world. Those struggles cause serious conflicts (within oneself, with God, with children and others): and many result in violence that destroys people’s lives, relationships and the community.

Anne-Claire Mulder (2010: 3) states that “domestic violence is conflict between partners in relationships, and violence toward children or the elderly. It ranges from physical, sexual, and emotional or psychological abuse in the form of beatings, intimidation, insults, humiliation, rape... Often these issues are surrounded by a wall of silence and it is difficult to know what is happening in others’ houses, so to give precise numbers of victims is near to impossible.”

Women in this situation are aware of what is happening to them and their children and they often try to stop it or to end their abusive relationships. “In some religions, some women believe that their suffering brings them closer to God; others are alienated by the culture and think they deserve to suffer, so they cannot speak out against their abusers and sometimes die in silence” (Mulder 2010: 11). These attitudes make some women to forget their value, their likeness to God and they build a negative image of themselves. Therefore, a change of self-understanding is a requirement.

Domestic violence has become one of the main ground for divorce in many countries. Henderson (2008:152) defines marital violence as “a godless of pattern of abusive behavior among spouses involving physical, psychological, and/or emotional means to exert and obtain power and control over the spouse for the achievement of selfish ends.” Physical attack is often accompanied by sexual violence and rape. Abused women are more tempted to commit suicide to escape the shame, anger and rejection. Others try to find refuge in alcohol and drugs. The pain of abused women causes them to be unable to care for their children. They feel helpless, inadequate and have very low esteem.

2.5.2. Cooperative violence

(Sen 1999: 192) confirms that “this is the conflict between the partially disparate interests within family living. This conflict affects both partners and children and it is resolved through implicitly agreed patterns of behavior”. Sen explains that the causes of cooperative violence occur when the work of women in the house is ignored, when the woman is denied education, the freedom to work outside the house and earn independent income, when she is deprived the right to participate in family’s join benefits, then sharing at home and leading joint lives become a problem and the conflict raises (cf. Sen 1999: 194).

2.5.3. Structural violence

Violence can be physical, emotional, verbal or intermarital, an extramarital (within and without marriage relationships) or systemic. Systematic violence or structural violence refers to unjust social, political or cultural systems. “Long before man uses physical violence against a woman,

she may experience 'structural violence' in marriage in which her husband or a constraining patriarchal community holds power over her. Structural violence refers to oppression so life-threatening that outbreaks or physical resistance seem justified" (Hyndman and Giles 2004:30).

2.5.4. Sexual violence

"African women together with their sisters around the world, are under the threat of various forms of sexual violence which includes sexual abuse, sexual harassment at work, sexual abuse by church personnel" (Racoczy 2004: 285). In Somalia a 13-year girl begged for mercy moments before a mob buried her up to her shoulders and stoned her to death. UNCEF (Amnesty International and the United Nations Children's Fund) said the girl was raped while travelling to Mogadishu, the Somalian capital. Her family reported the crime to militia who control Kismayu. None of the men she accused was arrested. In Liberia after many years of war, Susan Mckey in the Observer (dated Sunday 2 August 2009) reports that children become mothers before even enjoying their youth. They are raped repeatedly and beaten constantly by soldiers. The boys were forced to have sex with their own mothers; and teachers demand sex for grades. Many children are given a gun and forced to become soldier from a young age. Numerous children are raised by single mothers and sometimes the fathers are not known because there are many rapists for one girl. Phiri in her Essay "*Dealing with the trauma of sexual abuse*" affirms that rape is a traumatic experience. Women all over the world live in constant fear of being raped by both strangers and people they know" (Phiri 2000: 85-110).

2.5.5. Violence as a tool to end up social conflicts.

Rummel (1976:86) writes that, "when one is impatient or unhappy with the balance of social powers, he resolves the matter through murder. The negotiation between political factions of national negotiation leadership may end in a coup d'état or assassination. It is applied against one in the form of suicide, assault, murder in relationships, assassination in politics, abortion in families, involuntary disappearances from society, torture, arrests..." In the case of Rwanda, violence against a few people (Habyalimana and his group, plus some Tutsi who were in the country and were not trusted by the Tutsi in exile) was followed by a massacre of many

innocent Rwandans and foreigners as well as the destruction of the country. The idea of resolving conflicts with violence is however not a good choice.

Any leader who seeks peace by way of war is a selfish leader and greedy, driven by impatience to get what he wants regardless of the needs of the majority. Ghandi's words are a good example of how to end conflict without violence. He said; "an eye for an eye makes a whole world blind." Non-violence has been used by that great Indian leader to show the world how to get out of conflicts in a peaceful way.

2.5.6. Violence as a mean to seize power.

Lemarchand (1970: 143) affirms that "for a king to consolidate his power, he had to kill people who could oppose him." In Rwanda, it was this situation in 1896 (Coup d'état of Rucunshu), in 1961 when Mwami Kigeli Ndahindurwa lost the election (Referendum) and in 1990 when the Tutsis returned to Rwanda from the countries of exile after 30 years; that resulted in massacre because they couldn't share power.

2.5.7 Violence as Vendetta

The Rwandan tragedy is a real puzzle for many people all over the world and for the young generation of Rwandan. Even the majority of elders among the Hutus and some Tutsis don't understand the reality of the Rwandan problems, because of their lack of interest in politics. The International community seems less informed about the situation in Rwanda as well and the causes of all this suffering among its people. Charles Onana (2000) in his books "*The hidden truth on Rwanda* and *Le Scandale du genocide Rwandais;*" Secret d'état, Luc Marchal (2005) and a group of international experts; and many others reveal how, when and by whom the genocide was really planned. The book shows interests pursued by countries such as the US and England with many pictures. Onana reveals how a young Kagame came personally for a consultation with Gicanda (his aunt and queen, the wife of Mwami Rudahigwa).

Guillebaud (2002: 223) affirms that "there had been a mass killing of Hutu men who had been called for a meeting in the Byumba stadium". She writes in the Human Rights Watch book *Leave none to tell the story*, that "in some places RPF forces killed civilians at meetings organized soon

after their arrival in the community, a practice which gave rise to the bitter joke that *kwitaba Imana* meaning to die, had come to mean the same as *kwitaba inama*, to attend a meeting” (Guillebaud 2002: 708). This happened after the war.

Jose Pablo Baraybar (4 October 2010) is a Peruvian expert investigator who handed his report to the UN after his long study about tragedy in Grand Lac Region (Rwanda, Burundi, DRC Congo, Uganda, and Darfur-Sudan) writes, “it is not new to many in United Nations circles in general and in the UN International Crimes Tribunal of Rwanda (ICTR) in particular that actually Tutsi genocide planning was part of the military strategy of the RPF. Was Kagame inspired by what had taken place in the neighboring Burundi six months earlier when a Hutu President M. Ndadaye was assassinated and others high rank military in Burundi in October 1993? More than two hundred thousand people died as a result of uprising in the country, and around half million Burundi people fled into Rwanda.”

Adam (2004: 108) provides the story of what the “First World”, the Western democracies, most prominently the United States- have done mainly against countries and peoples in the South and in the former socialist world. It is a history of aggression, indiscriminate bombing, war crimes, and massacres since the 1970s, the story of Western complicity in genocide in the South and East, and worse, it is about genocide committed by these democracies themselves. This book accounts for serious crimes that others have avoided, omitted or denied.

Some people wonder why the UN (United Nations) is still voiceless about the killing in Cambodia. Who was behind the bloodshed of Vietnam? Why do Afghanistan people cry day and night? When the Somalia and Congo DRC will be in peace? Who is behind all those infernal and chaotic movements and why? Some cases seem distant from Western, liberal-democratic involvement, but once one comes closer and sees, you find a clandestine account falling on one or two super powers pushing a national group or individual who is power hungry. This was the case with Rwanda. The Tutsis were refugees for more than 30 years from Rwanda and they were impatient to get power back into their hands. Britain helped them and as the result, today English has become the official language. The US supported the Tutsis and in return, America has a military base in Kigali South (Bugesera region) which gives America easy access into Congo

territory for their business. They can access a well equipped military base for long term future use and security reasons (thhp: <http://www.uv.es/-pla/zaire/mercenar.txt>.)

2.6 Conclusion

Instability and violence within the community result in discrimination against women, their devaluation, rape, domestic violence and oppression which are crucial hindrances to their effective contribution to Community Development. Seleti (2004: 147) states that: "Due to the violence, men deny women freedom and support for small business and the employment opportunities are limited to men. Economic empowerment and resource allocations for women must create the opportunities to enable the less advantaged groups to be involved in the process of development." Peace and the absence of violence are necessary for Community Development. Peace is a powerful influence for Community Development and there cannot be sustainable development in the community when violence and oppression increase over the disadvantaged and when women and children are excluded from participating in a positive constructive way. Justice is one way to make peace and none can demand justice while ignoring equality in the area of social life. Peace and stability are necessary for the reconstruction of every community.

Violence is a hindrance to peace, and without peace the development of the community is not sustainable. Violence uses power, oppression, selfishness, injustice and dehumanization to rule. Development of the community depends on the peace and the safety of each individual living in that community. With peace people can work together, with peace sharing, helping, communicating, learning, listening and participating are done in harmony. Justice is done and everyone is eager to use his/her talents to develop his community. Women in Rwanda want to see violence eliminated and people united in love for one another. They want a country where they share in development, and are allowed to participate in determining priorities of their lives and decisions regarding the development of the country. Women feel uncomfortable when they totally depend on others while they are able to do things on their own. They do not want to be called burdens or be abused. They want freedom and laws which act in favor of women and less advantaged groups and they enjoy being treated with respect as human beings.

In chapter 3, we will explore peace (in biblical terms, i.e. shalom, a holistic view of peace). We will discuss the following aspects: what do peace and development mean in biblical terms? How does peace challenge people today in different spheres of their lives and for what action? What role do women and the church play in promoting peace and influence community development?

CHAPTER 3

Theological view of Peace

3.1 Introduction

The fostering of peace and the dignity of human beings is the first step towards promoting the well being of the community. Development in different ways should be a logical result of human dignity and that peace (holistically understood) includes many of the elements conducive to or characteristic of Human Dignity and what development means and hopes to attain. A developed community becomes a safe place for everyone and together they support, protect and help one other and they live in harmony despite their differences. Without peace and human dignity, development is quite unachievable.

The account of creation reveals that women and men are both created in the image of God (Gen. 1: 27). They have equal value in God's sight and they carry God's glory. All people in spite of their color, their origin, culture and religion and gender, have in common the same value before God our Maker. We do not earn our dignity, we are born with it. Therefore, human beings deserve equal respect. Unfortunately, in different countries, some cultures and religion give women and girls little attention and sometimes completely ignore them. Ruether (2002: 41) brought out a critical way that women's dignity in Africa is under threat. She writes, "women and men created by a loving God were to be respected as such and not oppressed, abused and manipulated by those who have power and institutionalized self-interest on their side. The dignity of women had been particularly under threat and women were vulnerable economically, socially and legally." This chapter focuses on a discussion with regards to peace as a theological vision with focus on human dignity and the church in promoting peace.

3.2 The Biblical ideal of Shalom

Peace, as “Shalom” is not simply human happiness. It is the peace promised by Jesus in Jn. 14:27, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled and do not be afraid.” Jesus desires that this peace remains within his believers. It is likewise a gift of the Spirit of Jesus dwelling within that makes His peace supernatural and substantial. Jesus has come through his reliance on God, in His obedience to his Father’s will. From Jesus we inherit the capacity to enjoy God in the same manner. Many writers have commented on the word “peace” as Shalom and they all come to the conclusion that such peace originates not with humans but with God (Waltner 1984:146).

Rosney (2000: 682) defines the concept of peace as “the one in which the authority and the power of God over His created order are seen to dominate His relationship with His world including both the material and the human spheres. In the Old Testament, peace results from a person subjecting himself or herself appropriately to God.” If peace comes from God and violence was perceived in the Old Testament as a result of disobedience to God, then the relationship between God and people is essential to have peace. According to Sande (2004: 12), “peace is always described according to the threefold model: peace with God, peace with others and peace within. This ideal of Shalom which is understood as wholeness, is based on the model of God: He is three in one, He unifies all differences and incompatible dualisms into one (he unifies human soul and body to make humans).” A person always lives in relation with a group of other people, he/her personhood is interconnected with others we cannot be at peace if others don’t have peace.

White (1973:146) elaborates the meaning of Shalom in its historical development. Noting the early tribal setting he writes: “Shalom had much to do with family relationships, with the solemnity of the family tribe members, leaving home or returning, with family solidarity and the physical well being of each member. In the late covenant community, however the central issue was the upholding of the torah. The key concepts are righteousness/ uprightness and justice. Violations were dealt with severely.” In the New Testament, peaceful relationship between God and His creation depends on the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ; that which the Old Testament

system could not do (Jn. 5:1-2). When Jesus came into the world, he brought life indeed: he healed sick people, cleansed them and he forgave their sins. He saw sick people in need of love and value as much as the healthy people. He taught with compassion. When Jesus will return to this world, His redemptive work will be complete; his followers' peace will be perfect. The sorrow, pain, wars and death will be wiped away and no one will take away their joy (John 16: 22).

In Erland (1982: 145), As LeRoy Friesen, Professor of Peace Studies at Associated Seminaries America says, "the word Shalom is too big for anything in the English language. Wholeness might be the best one-to-one synonym, but even that is terribly inadequate. The word has to do with totality of things and the relationship of all things within that totality, the harmony of all things and human and God (from a lecture on a biblical meaning of Shalom 2/21/1982)." Peacemaking and wellbeing, community building and the restoration of human dignity, flow from the same source which is God. He is the source of peace, health and salvation. Peace is a condition in which individuals, families, groups, communities or nations experience low levels of violence and engage in mutually harmonious relationships. Janssen (2004: 102-103) attests, "most Western definitions of Peace tend to emphasize the absence of violence; Eastern definitions tend to be positive in the sense that peace means the presence of certain characteristics rather than the absence of negative characteristics. A truly global understanding of peace should include both the absence of factors such as violence and the presence of factors such as balance, harmony, and unbrokenness." The following prayer said by many Christians over the centuries, in a way sums up the holistic biblical understanding of peace as explained here. The prayer of St. Francis of Assisi has been a great encouragement to people who seek peace for others and for themselves. The easy way to receive peace is to give it to others. Making peace is not an easy route and the choice to walk in it demands courage. It requires sacrifices, patience, humility and faith in God. St. Francis realized that God is the Master of peace and he prayed:

"Lord makes me an instrument of your peace:

Where there is hatred... let me sow love.

Where there is injury... pardon.

Where there is discord...unity.

Where there is doubt...faith.

Where there is despair...trust.

Where there is sadness...joy.

Where there is darkness...light.

Oh Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek:

To be consoled...as to console.

To be understood...as to understand.

To be loved...as to love.

For: It is in giving...that we receive.

It is by pardoning...that we are pardoned.

It is in dying...that we are born to eternal life” (<http://www.seaswaran.org/the-prayer-of-st-f/>).

“Peace achieved at the price of justice is wholeness. When peace is pursued without justice, the effort usually leads to appeasement, while the pursuit of justice without peace leads to a crusade mentality” (Ilesanmi 2003: 215).

3.3 A Biblical view of human and dignity

Msabah (2012:31) defines human dignity as “what characterizes someone as human being, and it does not come as result of one’s personality, achievement or nationality.” Human dignity defines the values of human beings. Therefore, it should be the mirror which guarantees human rights, respect and freedom to all people in the world. According to Hill (2000: 193), there are two different views when it comes to women and dignity and this division affects the

way women are treated. People, who view women as inferior to men, devalue women and treat them with little or no respect. Others view women as equal to men and women will be treated accordingly.

The commandments 6-8 are about human dignity (Deut. 19-21; 22: 1-23: 14; 23: 15-24: 7).

“You shall not murder.”

“You shall not commit adultery.”

“You shall not steal.”

Human dignity is addressed on three fronts. The following are the definitions of dignity presented by Hill (2000) which will be critically discussed.

The dignity of existence:“This section deals mostly with cases in which life may be taken without violating the sixth commandment. (Thus apparently), the Bible does not consider killing in the context of war as violation of the commandment” (Hill 2000:193). Retributive justice does not bring lasting peace. Instead for instance, God used Israelites to punish the Nations in the Old Testament) and he commands us today to forgive our enemies (Matt. 18: 21-23). In this case, the one who kills commits a murder because God is the master of life; and He is the life giver. Therefore, He is the only one who can take it away. Other reasons for killing are not justifiable.

The dignity of homogeneity in a corporate group. “One way to understand the diverse laws is to see them in the light of things that belong together and things that do not..., this is how adultery is viewed as well: one person should not be intruding in the marriage of another; the integrity of the family is sacred “(Hill (2000: 139).

In the case of Rwanda, the dignity of women had been violated by rapists during the war and after by the men who forced the wives of prisoners into sexual relationships; not because they liked them but for other reasons: to torture the Hutu men, for a cleansing ritual on the side of Tutsi men for revenge and at times just for men’s pleasure. From the report of Survivors Found (2011), these women suffered trauma and some of them had children (20 000) from those

forced relationships; children who will never know their father, and if they know them, the fathers will never accept them and finally, many others (67%) are affected by HIV.

The dignity of personhood. “Often people who have been robbed express the feeling that they have been violated and their privacy invaded, and they feel vulnerable. Deuteronomy implies that such a phenomenon is not limited to circumstances when tangible things are stolen, but it is also characteristic when intangibles are involved. Stealing someone’s freedom or self-respect by ill treatment is just as serious as threatening as stealing one’s possessions” (Hill 2000:139). Hill says here that any wrong doing against human beings (male or female) which harms them physically or spiritually is not acceptable and violates human peace.

Mulder (2010: 7) concurs with Hill’s argument. He writes that “generally, the concept of human dignity is intimately connected to the theological idea that human beings are made in the image of God. This underpins the idea that a human being is valuable in and for him or herself. To think of or to esteem oneself as a successful creation of the Creator, as a person holding the high rank of representing God, adds to the empowering effect of the word dignitary.”

Contrary to Mulder and others who believe that all human beings are made in God’s image, in Herzel (1991: 6-8), Meer demonstrates how the Christian fathers were quite explicit, that women were not made in the image of God; only men were. Diadora of Tarsus wrote in his commentary on Genesis that the woman was not made in the image of God, she was not man’s equal but was placed under his domination. According to Augustine, “women were merely man’s helpmate, a function which pertains to her alone. She is not the image of God but as far as man is concerned, he is by himself on image of God.” While Thomas Aquinas declared the female soul to be inferior to the male soul and saw women as “misbegotten males,” created to assist with procreation. Pope Gregory 1 writes that “woman is slow in understanding and her unstable and naïve mind renders her by way of natural weakness to the necessity of a strong hand in her husband. Her use is two folds: animal sex and motherhood” (<http://www.stepfordwives.org/titus.html>).

It is clear that religion continues to play a dominant role in relationships among people. Every day becomes a challenge when every human being is called and encouraged to learn and play

safely for the restoration of our dignity. Women theologians understand the damages caused by these interpretations of the scriptures by the church fathers. These women try to reinterpret the scripture in order to include in sacred texts the missing persons (women) and make clear the role of women in the Bible. They speak against the scripture that oppresses women and which is written in favor of men and emphasis that in both Testaments the important thing for all human beings is a peaceful relationship, with God first and then with other fellow humans both male and female equally (Waltner (1984: 147)

The Bible affirms that God is the author of creation. He is the Creator and He has an order and purpose for His creation. Many scholars agree on the idea of full equality of persons as clearly taught in Gen. 1:26-28. The picture of Genesis chapter 1 is that of male and female sharing in power, authority and dignity as God's representatives on earth. Man and woman are both to bear God's character, to reflect His beauty and His glory. He created them in His likeness. He gave them many things, which are shared by both man and women: a sense of creativity, conscience, love, joint dominion, unity of male and female...He blessed them equally, (Gen. 1:22). Man and woman were both in the mind of God before they were created (1:26). The term man refers to both male and female.

Sue Bohlin in Grady (2000: 59) demonstrates some of the lies the church tells women such as "God created women as inferior beings destined to serve their husband." This is not true because the Bible affirms that "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (Gen. 1:27). The plan of God for husband and wife was for mutual honor and submission, intimacy and unity; without oppression.

In Rwanda specifically in its culture, women must obediently submit to their husband, in all situations. This however, causes many husbands to abuse their wives and to exercise power and authority over them. The Rwandan proverb says that "*umugore w'ingare agirwa n'umugongo w'umuhoro* (simply to say that a woman who does not obey fully her husband must be severely disciplined or punished). God wants a man to be protective and not abusive, loving and not aggressive and God is not pleased when a woman is mistreated.

Another lie is that “women cannot be fulfilled or be spiritually effective without a husband or children.” In Rwanda for instance, there are many widows and single girls who want to get married, but remain single because of the shortage of husbands. Some men died in the genocide, many others are in prison and others are still in exile. The consequence is that some turn to prostitution, and homosexual relationships because they are denied their human rights and well-being affecting their functioning in society.

Storkey (1985:153) speaks against these lies that: “Genesis 1 reveals that Adam both male and female are given joint dominion over the earth. This was God’s purpose for man and woman before the fall.” He also explains that “the plan of God is giving men and women a joint dominion and authority, for mutual honor and submission, for unity and intimacy; Satan has a plan to block it and bring separation, enmity and hurt between the sexes” (Storkey 1985: 154).

Grudem (1999) agrees with Alei on the basis of quoting Gen. 1: 27: “So, God created man in his image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” The same connection between creation in the image of God and creation as male and female is made in Gen. 5: 1-2, “when God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them man when they were created.” Grudem (1999:199) writes “although the creation of male and female is not the only way we are an image of God, it is a significant enough aspect of our creation in the image of God that the scripture mentions it in the very first verse in which it describes God’s initial creation of man.”

In Grudem (1991: 99), Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr. confirms that “man and woman are equal in the sense that they bear God’s image equally. They are equal as God’s image bearers. They are spiritually equal, which is quite sufficient a basis for mutual respect between the sexes”.

Indeed, women deserve the same respect as men, because they are divine, with the same roots as men. The Bible says that God formed Adam (mankind, both male and female) out of the dust of the ground, breathing his life into them. God didn’t make the female less valuable; he just gave her a different role. God decided to make the woman a helper for Adam, a suitable one (Gen. 2:18, 20), with the same nature and his equal. Therefore, women must be treated with respect and dignity.

From a development perspective Swanepoel (1997: 3) notes that “dignity is promoted by giving people recognition, by recognizing them as capable of making their own decisions and accepting responsibility for their decisions. Dignity of humanity improves when people become self-reliant and self-sufficient in their communities; when they become capable of organizing themselves, creating and maintaining benevolent and farsighted leadership; when they can progress in realizing their priorities and working to fulfill their physical needs”. In other words, dignity grows as people fulfill their potential. We all have the capability to do things, and when we are in a safe environment and are given chances to participate positively in our communities or when we are motivated and encouraged to do well, we contribute in the development of our community.

In general in many churches, women are more religious than men. Wamue (1996:11) Musimbi Kanyoro writes: “80% of the church members in Africa is made up of women.” Nevertheless women often experience religious suppression. For instance, some male preachers do not allow women to preach in their church. Women are sometimes undermined, silenced and oppressed. Men and women have equal rights before God, must be respected and treated with dignity and have human rights. Wamue (1996:69) testifies that “women are denied the performance of certain duties and roles contrary to church claims that all members can perform at par on qualifying.”

3.4 The picture of a peacemaker

God is the first peacemaker and he helps us to be peacemakers: The love of God who didn't spare His only son Jesus but gave Him away to die in order to save the sinners of the world, simply because God loves sinners; testifies that God is for us, not against us. Through Christ and in Him the whole of creation is destined to be in perfect peace one day in heaven. God expects His followers to be peacemakers and to live at peace with one another.

The people we invite into our lives will have an impact on our life, economy and values. Christians are all called to be peacemakers, and because their God is a peacemaker, He enables them to become peacemakers through repentance, forgiveness and the righteous worship of God. To promote peace women have roles to play.

A peacemaker woman observes and takes seriously relationships around her. A peacemaker decides well which relationship leads uphill and not downhill. She seeks peace of mind, respect, growth and quality. She is a godly woman and has good relationships with people around her. She is a bold woman, a role model and a teacher to the people of her community. Rokoczy (2004: 257) attests that: “women in all cultures are socialized into form of love which is the antidote male pride. Self-giving and service are assumed to be natural to them. Thus women give and give of themselves, seeing themselves as the servants of all.” Peacemaking women are forgiving and always act in favor of others, especially those who cannot do things for themselves. They are mothers, though they may not have their own children. Peacemakers keep the morals of the community and pass them onto others. They listen to others’ stories, and without judgment try to give answers. However, peacemaker women should teach others to take ownership of their own lives and develop in them long lasting values. They pray for their family and encourage others to do the same.

It is very difficult to be a peacemaker in a violent community. We take the example of Jesus when they brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. He was confronted with angry men who wanted to murder the woman. Two people had sinned but the man was not there. This wasn’t just. When Jesus brought out the phrase “if any one of you is without sin tell him to be the first to throw a stone” (John 8:1-11), they left one by one because they realized that they were all sinners. A peacemaker person does not point fingers at others with the purpose of being admired or exalted. However he/she gently rebukes the wrongdoer and shows him/her the right direction, though the peacemaker cannot decide for the wrongdoer.

In the Bible we read the story of Abigail (1 Samuel 25): because of the foolishness of her husband Nabal she was put in a dangerous situation where an angry powerful King (David) was looking for revenge by wiping out the household of Nabal. Abigail listened and lost no time. She acknowledged the anointing of David as a king and brought him gifts, humbled herself and apologized to David; she reminded him that though he was a king, murder is wrong. David was pleased with Abigail’s judgment and for keeping him from bloodshed. He accepted her gifts and guaranteed her peace. A peacemaking woman does not take sides in resolving conflict; she has

good judgment, takes risks, and acts at the right time without fear but driven by love for the people who needs security and justice (1 Sam. 25:25-27). Sande (2004: 15) describes peacemakers as “people who breathe grace.” They draw continually on the power and the goodness of Jesus and then they bring His love, mercy, forgiveness strength and wisdom to the conflict of daily life. God in His grace uses them to dissipate anger, improve understanding, promote justice and encourage repentance and reconciliation.” People who resolve conflicts in a successful and constructive way are those who draw on God’s grace and walk in a godly way. Without a relationship with God none can be at peace (shalom).

When we don’t have peace, it is a perfect time for peacemakers to glorify God, to serve our fellow humans and to learn and become better peacemakers. The story of Abigail as told above is a good example of seeking people when we do not have peace. Peacemaking is not an easy task: it is complicated and sometimes painful. A peacemaker looks for opportunities to improve somebody else’s life. The route of peace is sometimes impossible, because of other people the peacemaker deals with. Making peace is a process, not something which can be achieved easily. Patience and perseverance are necessary in the process to peace. A peacemaking woman is not self-centered. She puts the interests of other people first.

Some people reject the idea of imitating Jesus when we are confronted by violence or conflict; the idea of “turning the cheek to your aggressors,” for them is seen as being weak. The role of Jesus is therefore sometimes presented as a disputed one. In Kanyoro (1992: 184) Mary Daily highly criticizes the way Jesus is presented as a model of emulation for believers, including women. She thinks this idea of Jesus as a role model can cause women to become more oppressed and abused, humiliated and to suffer. She proposes that for women to succeed they should learn not to look at any model, least of all at Jesus in his role as victim. Women need to cultivate confidence in themselves, such that their actions spring from themselves rather than being motivated by imitation of any role model.

Jesus however never discriminated against women in His ministry and never misled women. In fact Oduyoye (2000:55) argues for Christ as role model within the African context: “suffering is not only personal or within family and community, it is also social and global. Africa and its

people women and men experience the effect of unjust economic order, the greedy and corruption of many African leaders, the continuing ravages of war.... African women find in Christ the one who brings and lives the good news." Rakoczy (2004: 117) adds that: "Therese Souga of the Cameroon emphasizes that we need a Christology that takes into account the situation of women in the African world. It is from their experience that African women speaks of the image of Christ which give them hope and courage."

Taboos and traditions have established other ways to oppress women; for example in many African cultures, women must be silent when they are in meetings with men, the spoken ideas of women count only if there is no man's idea to oppose women. Women should not sit with men in Mosques during prayer meetings. This limitation of women by men has reduced the maturity of women, their self-confidence, self-reliance, and has increased their dependency on men. Women become like servants who must serve their masters faithfully because men must provide for women. The men sit around the peace table and discuss women problems. They negotiate peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building or reconciliation. Women have the capability to resolve their problems. Hence they should not be excluded from these negotiations and their participation may be more important than just their presence. Rakoczy (2004: 279) urges, "both reflection on the scripture and social analysis are necessary so that women can recognize their human dignity and their responsibility for society and all creation (cf. Njorogo 2000: 153)."

3.5 The church has a role to play in promoting peace

Human beings cannot succeed in bringing transformation to Community Development if we deal with physical needs and ignore spiritual needs. August (2010: 48) believes that a church should be a catalyst for community development in both dimensions, theological and contextual. Although the real change starts in human hearts, theology plays a role of integrating secular economics, political, socio-cultural aspects together with religious, ethical and ideological opinions displayed in the area of Development. Combining biblical reflections and practical experiences will provide opportunities for others to live and respond in obedience to the Great Commandment. August (2010: 47) affirms that "involvement of the church by serving

the poor is not an option in terms of Christian doctrine, it is a biblical injunction". Christian women and others share stories and experiences and reassure each other that there is still hope and space for their dreams. Wamue (1996:75) writes "full inclusion of women in the areas of leadership and decision making at all levels would help change the prevailing image of female as the weaker sex, hence enable them to press for fair representation in vital areas in church."

The Bible affirms that the church has been commissioned to address healing to humankind in their immediate community context. The church as the body of Christ is a big family of professional workers, politicians, trained lay members and ordinary members. Therefore; the church may create adequate work conditions in partnership with others outside the church and teach members how to effectively fulfill their mission of healing. This healing work of the church should be a breaking down of all secular barriers, all cultural hindrances and the ongoing oppression of women.

The Bible teaches us many ways that a woman can live in a good relationship with God; as a helper to her husband, as mother to her children and as a peacemaker in the community: making her home a better place, a safe place, a place of encouragement, comfort, refuge and understanding. Women are more vulnerable in time of conflicts than men and for that reason they should also be involved in decision making for peace. Peace is the concern of every human being. Rom.12: 18 says, "if it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." The peacemaking woman shows others care, love, and teach them to realize how important they are before God, in their family and in their community.

The church and the community are looking for women who listen and treat others justly with compassion, who look after children, support their husbands and look after themselves; and who grasp every opportunity to change people's lives. Peacemakers resist any kind of abuse, motivate others and they do not seek to replace men but give men the opportunity to partner with women in bringing peace. Peacemaking is about God in His son Jesus Christ and about human beings renewed in His image. In Banks, Paul said that:"all are called to instruct one another, to speak God's word ... so that all may learn and all be encouraged to teach and

admonish one another in all wisdom, for it is through speaking the truth in love, that they are too grow up in every day into Him who is the head, even Christ (Banks 1980: 141)."

The church in Rwanda had failed to stand for the truth and discipline the members of their church. Some churches focused on politics more than on spirituality and they kept silence in the face of assassination which led up to genocide, or injustice (Guillebaud 2002:330). They betrayed the Word of God, for they obeyed men rather than God. In the Rwandan churches, like many others in the world, women are more involved in church than men but as the tradition is, in some religion women had no power concerning decision making: women sit, listen and obey the instructions. They may have good suggestions but there is no guarantee that their voice will be heard. Nasimuyu Wasike (1989: 131) affirms that "in African culture women are seen as bringing forth life, loving and caring for their children. But life of women should be extended to church as well because the gospel recognizes women as responsible persons in their own rights and called them as disciples." The church should be a place of healing, compassion and justice where harmony is nurtured. This harmony starts first with God, flows to the rest of the community and finally goes to nature. We cannot live in harmony with the true God without Christ, reading and studying of his words, prayers and meditation and worshipping God at home and in church. Therefore, Wamue (1996: 76) suggests that "since women form the majority in the churches, they need to support and encourage the few of them who may be capable of certain ministries. There is need for women to view each other as sisters rather than competitors."

Good education, good connections with other women and men of Africa and from other continents, a good relationships with God and other people may facilitate the achievement of women's goal to be peacemakers. Women's experiences and their stories are life changing. What happened to the women in Rwanda did happen to many other women in different places at different times for example, in Somalia, Liberia, South Africa, Jewish women... These women worked hard to overcome their challenges and to alleviate their oppression as well as their discrimination in building the economy of their communities. Both government and the church must be fully involved with women and the church to make sure that the laws which protect

their rights are observed, and they must intervene to ensure that the justice towards women is done.

3.6. Conclusion

In order to encourage and support women on their route to peace making, the church must address the problems which oppress women and assist them to find solutions. Partnership is a powerful strategy in community development. The number of women in church leadership is growing and the restoration of women's dignity is in process. The church can address the community to make them aware of what is happening and help to avoid conflicts by addressing the message of peace. In other words, the church informs believers, motivates them, empowers them and sends them into the lives of believers to play a role of mentor, supporter and soul caretaker for its members. In this context, men and women should be treated equally in order to promote peace. Peace as an absence of violence is necessary for women to play a constructive role in Community Development. This peace originates from nowhere else other than God (Rosner 2000: 683). To have peace as individuals, we must make peace with God through Jesus Christ and give peace to the people around us. God has made man and woman unique creatures, made perfectly in his image and he gave us special abilities, skills and talents to serve him in the world. "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2: 8-10).

Women should be empowered, encouraged and given opportunities to serve their fellow human beings (inclusive language) and be rewarded for their participation. God wants us to use our abilities for the good of others and his glory. We should see the world through the eyes of God, because God loves the world and we should protect our country and its citizens. Rwandans should stop the violence and make peace through genuine reconciliation, forgiveness, justice and unity without any discrimination.

Women should also learn from their experiences and move forward in the right direction, by seeking healing and justice, learning about their rights, forgiveness and by avoiding the repeat of the same mistakes. Women should stand and protect themselves and their daughters against the violation of their dignity. August (2010:44) defines the church as a people called from

diverse sorts of bondage to freedom for the purpose of redemption to form a universal order of *shalom* community. The church should therefore follow the example of Christ who united all people from all nations in him and who gave himself undivided and without discrimination for the life of the people he came to redeem. The church should also assist in meeting the basic needs women and men require for a meaningful life in their community and address the issues that lead and promote human dignity. A leader who does not have God in his heart cannot keep the peace in his country because he doesn't have peace, and he cannot guarantee a better life to his people because he doesn't have one.

In chapter four, we will discuss the situation in Rwanda aftermath of conflicts. Is the Rwandan society a peaceful one or a violent one? What do people think about the causes of conflicts and factors inhibiting the role of women in development?

CHAPTER 4

The situation in Rwanda regarding peace, women and development

4.1 Introduction

Many scholars are captivated by the extreme issue of poverty in Third World countries, which is often due to ongoing war in African countries, violence and natural disasters. They are concerned with the strategies for alleviation of the sufferings of the more vulnerable. The majority of women are the poorest and the most dehumanized of the world and in times of violence, women are far more vulnerable than men. Haddad (2001: 5) writes “the poor and marginalized are severely discriminated against in macro-social and economic policies, resulting in a group continuing to bear the brunt poverty.” They lack formal education and other important requirements necessary for the establishment of sustainable progress. Despite these realities, poor women seek to live fully as truly human.

In the Rwandan aftermath of 1994, statistics indicated that 75% of the Rwandan population is female. Women were at the centre of suffering during the war and it has created enormous problems: such as children dropping out of school at an early age, and teen pregnancy as well as the problems of orphans and widows who survived the conflict (Guillebaud 2002:265). Further research and analysis with regard to the role of women in peace-making with a view to community development has revealed that Rwandan women do not have peace because the whole country does not have peace.

Much like other countries after a painful time of war, Rwanda is struggling to bring peace and unity and rebuild the country that was physically damaged by the war. Women and children are more vulnerable than other groups, and yet as previously argued women have an important role to play in making peace and in development of the county. In some communities we sometimes experience situations where culture plays a crucial role in decision making, especially in matters regarding women. Their rights as human beings are forgotten and

decisions are made in favor of men. For instance, we do not discuss in public things concerning domestic issues, in this case it is difficult to bring true justice to a vulnerable woman. As a result, the culture of total obedience to authorities and elderly was applied by some people in power to promote violence. However, the roots of what caused the genocide of 1994 are situated in history of Rwanda.

This chapter outlines the roots of the Rwandan conflict and the effects of the conflict. The place of women as both perpetrators and victims of the genocide is also discussed. The stability of post-conflict Rwanda is, therefore, discussed with reference to the development challenges faced by Rwanda in the aftermath of genocide with a special reference to women and other marginalized groups.

4.2 The history of Rwanda

Rwanda as a nation was born from a very small locality of Gasabo, under the ruling of Kings known as Bami. First the Hutu Bami (the first king was Gihanga), then The Tutsis. Gasabo became the capital of the first kingdom of Tutsis before the extension and annexing of kingdoms. This was before the arrival of the colonial masters (<http://www.inancciftci.com/index.php>). The different Tutsi dynasties came to power and killed all twelve Hutu kings through blood shedding. Smith (1975: 11 (as translated by Olivier Nyirubugara) affirms, “for a knower of Rwanda’s past the rats and dogs represent the Hutu kings and their descendents who were exterminated and emasculated by Tutsi kings. The latter conquered their kingdoms and imposed their royal drum ornamented with the Hutu kings’ genitals.” All power was in the hands of Tutsis. Vansina (2006: 67) notices 15 mummified genitals on Kalinga (the royal emblem drum) and 14 mummified genitals on Kimumugizi (the queen’s emblem drum).

Rwandans are divided into three different ethnic groups with different characteristics: Hutu, Tutsi and Batwa (Genetics and the history of Sub-Saharan: 1987: pp, 151-194).

In 1933 the Belgians had issued identity cards on which everyone had to state their tribe. The Tutsi were keen to study to gain a good education to prepare for the time they would rule in

independency. Even the poorest Tutsi felt superior to a Hutu (Guillebaud 2002: 138). Perhaps the enmity between Hutus and Tutsis started here. Then all Tutsis (Abanyiginya, Abega, Abenegitori, etc) united so that other ethnic groups (Hutus and Batwas) would struggle to oppose them. Although, the Abanyiginya line were only allowed to give kings, and Abega line allowed to give queens because their girls were considered more beautiful than other Tutsi girls from other lines).

The Rwandan nation is very young. It only became an independent state on 1 July 1962 under its Hutu President Kayibanda Gregoire (Guillebaud 2002:150). When it comes to the History of Rwanda we cannot avoid speaking about its origin and how progressively it became an independency, its division and the significant names, the origin of Twa, Hutu and Tutsi and the leadership. This history creates a strong bond between Rwandans, albeit a much disputed one, as one analyses the causes of the conflict.

4.3 What resulted in the violence of Rwanda in 1994?

The problems of Rwandans are rooted in their history. When the Tutsis came to Rwanda as a pastoral people with many cows, the Rwanda we know today was a composition of over 12 kingdoms with organized administrations; they gradually killed all Hutu kings deliberately and secretly, and made sure that there was no succession or any other hierarchy surviving. They took over power and authority and finally made one centralized kingdom of Rwanda. Mamdani (2001: 62-70) states that “Tutsis were believed to have military power, while Hutus possessed supernatural power. In this capacity, the Mwami’s council advisors (Abiru) were exclusively Hutu and held significant sway. Hutus as a majority were a force and source of power to protect the king, because of their attitude and the capacity of keeping secrets in terms of dynasty and king successions.” This made Hutus a passive enemy of other Tutsi clans which didn’t have a chance to know why only Banyiginya clan gave Kings and the Abega clan gave only queens.

According to Kagame (1951: 98-101), the royal lists were compiled and memorized by a group of Abiru- abacurabwenge (forgers of intelligence). It has been said that the lists were recited during the coronation ceremonies. The list itself when it is given in reverse order, beginning with the reigning king and queen mother, and ending with Muntu (Man, Mankind), the first king

of men, son of Kigwa, son of Nkuba Shyerezo, the king of heaven; this proves that Tutsis are from above and consequently superior to Hutus and Twas. This myth was to blind them and to keep them silent to politico-socio-economical injustice.

Lemarchand (1970: 269) explains “the struggles between clan functions over the power between the Abega clan (the producer of the queen) and the Banyiginya (the producer of the King, Mwami) continue today as Lemarchand characterized it as “the presidential Mwamiship.” He adds that “the violence of the reign of Rwabugiri (1867-1893) reflects this everyday functioning of power and constant court rivalries in Rwanda.” Women are very much involved in these conflicts as they rule alongside with their husbands or sons.

Ruzibiza (2005:223-233) wrote on the Tutsis belief of being superior, “some Tutsis considered themselves to be more Tutsis than others and the Super Tutsi are those who cannot eat omelet without breaking the eggs.” As translated by Olivier Nyirubugara, Ruzibiza also added, “ for those who keep wondering how genocide happened, we should say that it was made possible by this ideology consisting in breaking eggs, that, is the Tutsi inside the country, so that other Tutsi outside can eat omelet, that is, seize power” (pp.63-34).

In Ilesanmi (2003: 220), Rene Lemarchand asserts, “the politics of exclusion (which he means exclusion of the specific ethnic communities from effective political participation) lies at the heart of the Hutu and Tutsi problem. Whenever a member of one group holds power, the other ethnic group does not feel safe and vice-versa. The oppression lends credence to a feeling of mutual insecurity.” Genocide was the blow up of lengthy unresolved conflicts and unless the causes of conflicts are uprooted, there is no stability and women will continue to be victims instead of contributing positively in the development of their country.

As Guillebaud (2002: 206) explains, “Habyarimana had been in power for nearly 20 years and His wife deeply despised the Hutus of the south who had accepted the king voluntarily, regarding them as slave material. His wife and her cronies, known in the country as the kazu (or little house) wanted to enrich themselves and those of them who appeared to be a threat to them were arrested, often tortured and sometimes killed. It was the kazu that was ruling the

country.” Some Rwandans, like Habyarimana and King Rwabugiri, failed to rule the country and its leaders and their wives took over and lead the country into conflicts.

”The wounded animal becomes meat.” Hutus are also victims. For more than 400 years, Tutsis manipulated Rwandan Hutus, exercising absolute power, lies, terror and murder to silence any individual who would try to oppose the decree of the King. He was lauded as a god and everything belonged to him. People lived in perpetual fear and had to submit, because to whom the king said “die”; died.” He has absolute power, power of life and death. All women belonged to the king. He could choose any female he liked even if she was married. People’s lives were always in danger. Guillebaud (2002:243 affirms that “this ingrained culture of obedience to those in authority in the country, left some Rwandans without choice, they killed when they were told too or there no one was killed because the authorities refused to allow their people to kill.”

The war in Rwanda started as the leaders of RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) attacked the country on 1st October 1990 from Uganda and for four years they were fighting and at the same time were negotiating for peace. The international community was very excited when the Rwandan government and RPF’s team made an agreement at Arusha on power sharing, almost 50-50 in every area (Guillebaud 2004: 213). RPF stood as the voice of the Tutsi people (minority 14%); while the Hutu majorities were 85%. After the signing of peace accords in August 1993, there was a period of calm in the country and people gradually began to return home.

In general the Rwandan people were relieved by the outcome of the negotiations, because there was already enough bloodshed. Many people in the north of Rwanda were running all over the country and others were living in fear, everyone was waiting and praying for the end of the fights. “From February to 17July 1993, Agathe Uwiringiyimana called all the Hutus dominated Parties: MDR (Republic Democratic Movement) and MRND (National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development), the president’s ruling party for a swearing in of the Board Based Transition Government to take place on 5 March 1994. RPF did not appear at the ceremony, they were postponing the establishment of the new regime” (<http://www.gov.rw/The-Arusha-Peace-Agreement/>). The Arusha peace agreement was never

implemented because the president's plane was shot down. (Notes: Agathe Uwiringiyimana is so far the only female prime minister in Rwanda).

Guillebaud (2002:244) writes, "land-hunger in the countryside, and envy in the towns also played its part. Streets-children and unemployed saw the killings as opportunity to steal, rape and get drunk with impurity." In Rwandan society, women are responsible for child care. However, successful children make their fathers proud because everyone praises him while the mother is blamed for every child's misbehavior. The children of single mothers, though they may be brilliant, are sometimes unnoticed and forgotten, which causes them to develop behaviors that make them the objects of rejection. In rural areas, some women suffer from having many children and they work hard to raise them alone. Traditionally, they were denied the decision to have fewer children; as this was the man's decision in Rwandan society as a result, poverty and unemployment dragged many young people into conflicts.

Some churches failed to preach the message of peace to their members, which was a doorway for many Christians to genocide. (Guillebaud 2002:285) attests, "at the time of genocide, many church leaders were living sinful lives, the teaching in the churches was shallow, and Christians were not disciplined. While many church leaders were not actively involved in killing, they did nothing to prevent it or even to condemn it."

In the beginning of the attacks of Rwandans, some people were confused about what was happening. Who was causing instability? Some accused the Hutus others put blame on Tutsis. Ordinary people didn't know what to believe. Rwandan genocide was not only the problem of Tutsis and Hutus only, people from outside were involved as well. The involvement of those from outside made the Rwandan conflicts more complicated. "The Rwandan genocide and the 6 million Congolese and Hutus killed are the culminating point of a lengthy UK attempts to expand their influence to the African Great Lakes Region. The UK supported Kagame's guerrilla war by providing military support and money. The UK refused to intervene in Rwanda during the genocide, in order to allow Kagame to take power by military means which triggered the genocide" (www.uk-africa.blogspot.com/2013/08/kagame). Though it is difficult to say for sure what happened especially for the people who were not involved in politics, Kagame appears

and has made threats of violence. He said in one of his speeches that those who oppose to the government will be wounded and grounded to dust" (Kayumba 2010: 5).

According to the Canadian Prof Michel Chossudovsky (2003) in his book on Global research entitled *The Globalization of Poverty and New World Order*, he writes "the civil war in Rwanda and ethnic massacres were an integral part of US foreign policy, carefully staged in accordance with precise strategic and economic objectives. Washington's hidden agenda consisted of establishing an American sphere of influence in region historically dominated by France and Belgium. America had mining interests in Eastern and Southern Zaire including strategic reserves of cobalt-of crucial importance for US Defense Industry (www.davidicke.com/Rwanda)." The Rwandan war left traumas, diseases, deaths, many abandoned children, broken homes, isolation and rejection, crime, etc. The poor people live with little hope. They are oppressed and abused by those who have. Women and children are more vulnerable.

4.4 The aftermath of genocide

In 1994 thousands of Rwandans ran away to Congo-DRC, Burundi, Uganda, and Tanzania; and even further away. It was a barbaric situation: dead bodies across the country, much blood, and loud noises. Rwandans were afraid, confused and everyone's life was in danger, we just ran. My husband's home is in Butare near Burundi's border (two hours- walk) but we ran in another direction and after two weeks, we reached Congo-DRC's border. It was crazy and horrific. Since then on, life has never been easy for Rwandans. We experienced death, poverty, hunger, sicknesses, injustice, abuse, and so on. Many children lost their parents, who either died of HIV/AIDS (160.000) or were killed in the violence. Over 800.000 children have lost at least one parent or were abandoned by their mothers who left for the cities for jobs and never returned. Their fathers are sometimes known and sometimes not. 101.000 children are heading up to 42.000 households. Rwanda has one of the greatest populations of child-headed households in the world. www.authorstream.com/presentation/April2010

In June 1996, some Rwandan families decided or were forced to return back home from the Congo DRC, because life was very hard for refugees and because the government wanted people to return: they must rebuild the country and pay for damages because genocide has

become understood worldwide as the Hutus' fault. In exile, people were dying of hunger or killed by soldiers or diseases. For someone who decides to run away for a second time, it meant that he/she is facing serious problems because being a refugee is the worst thing anyone can ever imagine.

Hyndman (1998: 39) writes, "life in a refugee camp can be squalid, dangerous and stultifying. They live with painful memories and in despair of ever recovering. Many are traumatized, learning a new language, and new livelihood is challenging." The struggles of men are always different from women's. (Hyndman 1998:40) attests, "some refugee females are vulnerable to molestation and rape from male police, local men, and even other refugees. Many girls disappear into domestic sequestration or prostitution. Men and boys risk to be recruited into criminal gangs and paramilitary forces and in big cities, boys live in streets" Foreigners often experience intimidation and name calling (for instance in South Africa, they are called kwilikwili), abuses, frustration, discrimination, etc. Msabah (2012:63) attests, "in the hosting country, women often experience unemployment because they are women and the worst, refugees. This gender based discrimination comes with a strong sense of humiliation, embarrassment which leads to one's loss of dignity. As result, most refugee women end up doing undignified jobs and some of them engage in prostitution for survival."

Even in ones' own community, some people can feel as if they are foreigners. In case of Rwanda, Smith (1975:11) confirms this situation in Mbacire umugani mbabambuze umugano...as translated by Olivier Nyirubugara: "Let me tell you the story, let me awaken you with story so that even the one who will come from the land of stories can find an adult and a vigorous story tied on the Hutus' pollard. There was, let be no more! The dogs and rats are dead, only the drums and cows prevailed." The rats and dogs represented the Hutu kings and their descendents who were exterminated and emasculated by Tutsi kings. The latter conquered their kingdoms and composed their royal drum-ornaments with the Hutu kings genitals. The cows were the center of economic life. The Tutsi were later called cockroaches. Though the Rwandan government is trying to abolish the name calling, it is difficult to live

comfortably or to be accepted by your neighbors where there are some people who treat you as inhuman.

Restoration of peace in Rwanda remains challenging. Some Rwandans are still holding on to dividing old thoughts, especially the ones that exclude the Hutu majority from political participation. As a result the security of its population is not assured. Kayumba and others (2010:7) confirm, “the Hutu community is marginalized from a meaningful share of the power. The Hutu who serve in the government are only surrogates of the RFP who lack legitimacy in their community. They are kept in the office, often for a very brief period, for the sole purpose of giving the government an appearance of embracing political pluralism.”

In all processes of change, the Hutus are left behind. They are not allowed to participate in everything other citizens have the right to do, especially concerning the consequences of what happened to everyone in the war of 1994. Many Hutus, for example, lost their loved-ones as it happened to other tribes as well but they cannot remember them in what they call “national icyunamo” (7days of remembering of the victims of genocide). During that week, the Rwandans grieve for the Tutsis who died in genocide and the Hutu victims are completely forgotten. This same mistake is made in the tribunals where the Hutu that died are not mentioned. How can the broken Hutus be effective in development? The change that ignores unity of the people living in the same community, change that takes sides while resolving conflicts, should be revised before it is supported.

The saddest aspect of this aftermath is that the vulnerable remain vulnerable. The majority of Rwandan women and children today face social injustice, poverty, unemployment, oppression and abuses (physically, sexually and emotionally). Oppression, poverty and power are the forces of injustice against women. They are held back by the societal, cultural, religious and patriarchal boundaries and that affects women negatively in their ordinary life and therefore, women cannot live in peace or contribute effectively in development. They live with a broken heart; they carry the heaviness of the consequences of the past. However, women acknowledge that their sufferings must not hold them captive forever, and try to find solutions themselves. Hirshman in Parpart (2003: 43-44) states that “the poor women constitute the

majority of the poor, the unemployed, economically and socially disadvantaged in most societies. They suffer from additional burdens imposed by gender based hierarchies and subordination.”

In the aftermath of the genocide the government is accused of organizing a process of brain washing in different camps organized for the educated and the student Hutus who didn't go straight to prison after 1994. The government is now busy changing all national signs and names of old place. These name changes may also be another strategy of covering the past mistakes which led to genocide. The new leaders don't want people to dig deep and expose the roots of the problems of our country. They have already changed all national emblems (flag, national hymn, money, provinces and districts). Today, Rwanda has a new image. Kayumba (2010:1) states, “those who visit Rwanda are impressed by its economic growth, security situation and cleanliness, as well as the orderliness of its people and the efficiency with which its institution conduct business”. In reality they are completing what the government of Habyarimana was. The culture of living lies and power control exploded during Mwami Kigeri Rwabugiri reign. He made many mistakes and finally revealed the big secret which kept the Banyiginya clan in power. During his 42 years in power, he ruled the country through chaos.

Some people would argue that Kagame is no better. Ilesanmi (2003: 223) has compared the government of Charles Taylor of Liberia to Paul Kagame of Rwanda. He affirms, “Kagame is showing all the signs of a dictator rather than a statesman. He used Pasteur Bisimungu out of the country's leadership, a moderate Hutu when he was appointed president after the genocide when Kagame was appointed prime minister. The offence of Bizimungu, who is still languishing in jail, was suggesting that all recruitments to government and the army be on a 50-50 Hutu-Tutsi basis. Kagame is also opposed to holding elections, press freedom, and the trial of Tutsi soldiers whose atrocities against the Hutu in genocide and the counter - insurgency war in 1996 were no less significant than those committed against the Tutsi.” It is very difficult for people who hate each other to work together because as they meet each day their wounds become fresh again and instead of fixing the past, they make things worse for the future. The Rwandan proverb says “agahanga gato ukarinda uruguma (when someone feels physically

weak, he avoids fighting). Rwandans who cannot face Rwandan regime, run out of the country and remain in exile. Kajeguhakwa Valens (Tutsi) gave his wealth and energy to send young Tutsi outside Rwanda for military training, and has not been rewarded for what he has done. He /*-confesses his disappointment throughout his recent book *De La Paix a La Terre De Sang, Et Après: From the land of peace to the land of bloodshed, and after* (2006). He affirms that Rwanda was in peace before the war and since 1 October 1990, our land was full of blood. Kajeguhakwa hoped to regain his business and enjoy peace and freedom after the war. Today he is in exile. People do not trust each other, and it is hard to work together and to contribute fully to development. Some other people feel insecure and for every opportunity there is someone running out of the country leaving his family and his belongings behind. This way of life is a handicap to development. Rwanda is still suffering from the wounds of the past after the war of 1990-1994. The aftermath challenges for the government according to Kayumba and others (2010: 2) are:

“a) Restoration of Law and order; b) Organizing the provision of humanitarian assistance to the population; c) Re-establishing and strengthening institutions of government to drive the reconstruction of the country; d) Encouraging and facilitating the peaceful repatriation, e) Resettlement and re-integration of refugees; f) Laying a foundation for sound economic recovery and development; g) Identifying and implementing strategies to promote national unity and reconciliation as foundations for sustainable peace and stability.” The Rwandans should join their hands and rebuild their country together.

August (2010: 86) affirms that “partnership is an imperative for progress in church and community.” Partnership is a bridge between people across religions, cultures, and races. It is a way to allow other persons to use their capabilities, to protect one’s dignity, to embrace others as human beings and treat them equally, a way to allow other people in community development to encourage each other to take responsibility in building the society.” Fear is the enemy of partnership. It causes lack of trust and people focus on themselves instead of focusing on the community as a whole. There is always a group of people that wants to

dominate others. This creates a feeling of inadequacy, insecurity and they end up in conflicts. This is the situation in Rwanda.

4.5 The stability of post genocide Rwanda.

“Rwanda is portrayed as a united, strong, peaceful, stable and growing nation with the potential to become a model for Africa” (Kayumba 2010: 9). What does that mean in a country that remains divided along ethnic lines, where civil society is less free and effective, and without freedom for the media, unstable and prone to violent identity-based conflict? We still hear rumors of violence, abuse, the number of HIV/AIDS victims is increasing, and people are competitive in terms of accumulating wealth, instead of using the resources for the common good. Millions of Rwandans and foreigners lost their lives. The bond between Rwandans is broken, and while many Rwandans who fled the country in 1994 never returned even to this day, there are other Rwandans still fleeing the country (Kayumba 2010:10).

Through these struggles, Rwandan women have the responsibility to build their country, bring healing, identify and analyze the roots of Rwandan conflicts; find the right strategies to resist the violence, reject men’s oppression, protect peace in the country and help the new generations to become good citizens. To achieve these difficult tasks, women are called to bring change by seeking the face of God, peace and justice, and being hard working and compassionate towards underprivileged people. Guillebaud (2002:240) marks a major improvement in Christian’ life in the church but she writes”yet the traumas and loss still need to be faced and dealt with. I believe that it is only at the cross these deep psychic wounds can be healed. Yet the church, too, need healing.”

Musamas (2011: 232) affirms that women have an impact in development. She writes that “economic development and religious history of the world show that women have been important partners in the development process. However their contributions through limited resources in a male dominated environment have in most cases either gone unnoticed or ignored.” The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP:1987) reports that women are the world’s largest excluded and devalued group even though they make up one half of adult population. Often, women contribute much more than their share to society, within and

without the home." In Rwanda these days, only a few Hutus and Tutsis can sit together in their homes and share family life, and eat together in an attempt to break down the barriers and the walls between Rwandans. They want to avoid the tragically broken friendship of 1994. So if there is no trust and unity within the community between men and women, between different groups of people living that community, working together is not possible.

Rwandan women are ashamed of the past, but they are willing to go out, meet other groups of women and tell their stories. This inspires them and transforms their sufferings into hope. Change does not come overnight, it may be slow as it is in the case with Rwanda, but Rwandan women must never stop trying. They seek justice and respect for all humankind although they still do what they are told to do, with the full knowledge that it is destructive and discouraging. For instance, "56% of Rwandan women are in parliament; this means that Rwanda has a higher proportion of women in its parliament than any other country in the world. In 2003, Rwanda caught up with and surpassed previously top-ranked Sweden." Christopher Kayumba (in his PHD 2010) has analyzed how women have managed to attain such great success in a country that suffers from poverty. He says: "the lack of men created by genocide has led to more room for women." These women are forced to make wrong choices with the full knowledge that divisions do not bring progress, but rather, that the Hutus, Tutsis and Twas together can do better than one ethnic group; Rwandan women need justice and freedom to exercise their rights as humans. Women in power should take the responsibility to remember other women, encourage and help them to create a platform where they can use their abilities and help them to discover other talents which may be hidden because the more a woman is denied the opportunity to participate in the building of her community, the more she comes to the conclusion that she is not good enough to help and that there are better women than her to do the job. Community development without peace is impossible to achieve.

Kayumba and others (2012: 2) confirm, "the worst damage that genocide inflicted in the country was the further destruction of the already strained relations of mutual trust, tolerance of peaceful co-existence among the country's two major communities (Tutsi and Hutu).

Genocide ruptured the relationships between Hutu and Tutsi communities and left Rwandan society deeply and bitterly polarized and divided along lines of ethnicity.”

Earlier this year 2013, Mimi (not her real name), a Rwandan woman, came from Rwanda to bury her mother. Her mother had passed away after only three weeks here in Cape Town: one week she was at her son’s house and two weeks in hospital. Mimi was very happy and surprised to see many people coming to the funeral and others sending messages of condolence to her brother for the loss of their mother though many of his friends did not know the mother in her lifetime. Mimi explained that in Rwanda today, it is rare to see people sharing the same house, greeting each other if they are not related. Before genocide, people were more important than anything else in the Rwandan community. Sharing and caring for one another was our custom.

“The government says that the conflict has been resolved and there is no need for negotiation of settlement, the majority Hutu population inside Rwanda feels marginalized and excluded by the government. The Tutsi community itself is fearful and divided over the direction and future of the country. There is not yet genuine reconciliation. Some Rwandans remain in exile since 1994 because of the repressive environment that prevails in the country. Others continue to flee each year” (Kayumba.2010: 10).

Many women and men still suffer the damages of the war. Gourevitch in Guillebaud (2002: 240) writes that, “nobody in Rwanda escaped direct physical or psychic damage. The terror was designed to be total and enduring, a legacy to leave Rwandan spinning and disorientated in the slipstream of their memories for a very long time to come, and in that it was successful.”

In 2012, Graca Machel spoke about “Reconciliation” in a conference at the University of Western Cape and emphasized the importance of making peace instead of fighting. She described South Africa as “ill, hurting, and bleeding.” She said, “we are harming one another because we cannot control our anger.” She affirms that after 18 years of democracy South Africa does not yet understand its deep societal crisis. There is a lot of anger in the community from women and men still not yet healed of emotional and psychological damage inflicted on them. There is need of a new version of the truth and reconciliation commission so that perpetrators and victims of violence may look each other in the eyes and forgive one another; a

vision of how to build a healthy nation, how to heal the character of the sons and daughters of South Africa (from Cape Times, Wednesday 3 October 2012).

Machel brings out the idea of “togetherness.” Successful peace cannot be achieved in the community unless everyone is genuinely involved in that process. Truth is important when people are engaged in dialogue for peace building.

Many countries after a civil war choose reconciliation as a way to make peace but most fail. The reasons are many and some of the reasons are common in different countries:

-Reconciliation as a strategy imposed over people by government. For instance, when prisoners are forced to plead guilty and ask for forgiveness so that their punishment may be reduced. Because those who recommend this have power, prisoners have no other choice than to take the offer, especially in those countries where prisoners are badly treated. This strategy leaves hatred and pain in people’s lives. This is not genuine reconciliation.

In the case of Rwanda, reconciliation is done through intimidation, frustration and even terrorism. Local justice is intended to reconcile people but it creates more problems: because of pressure, terror over the Hutus, the tears of Tutsis in those meetings. The Hutus are charged with compensation beyond their abilities. They are poor. Many had spent years in prison and had no income, and no resources. They have families and yet must pay. Others are charged unjustly because someone somewhere must be found guilty! When my husband was in prison (August 1997-July 2000), some security forces used to tell Hutu women, “your husband killed people or took things belonging to others, you must testify against them during the local tribunal or you will join them because you were with them during the war. Someone must pay for what happened.” This is not less than intimidation.

Accordingly, Megwalu (2011: 1-23) writes, “Gacaca courts have been praised for their ironic efficiency and for widening participation but criticized for lack of due process, trained personnel and attention to atrocities committed by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF).” In this kind of justice based on tradition, everything was twisted and biased according to the emotions of the accuser, who was generally favored. The accused had only one option to satisfy his accuser. The

public from where the liberator or reconciler should rise was characterized by an atmosphere of fear of joining the perpetrator. Mending hearts and minds should be one of the pragmatic objectives of Gacaca for a real restoration of Rwandan social bonds, but the legacy left behind by Gacaca was justice throughout injustice, giving Tutsis the right to remember forever with all kinds of emotions and to the Hutu people the right to forget their family members forever in silence, not even to show any emotion.

The only way for the poor Hutu to pay for damages is to work for their plaintiff. This is similar to the same Ubugake (Feudal rights) the Hutu suffered before 1959 and the Hutu would never freely accept going back there. Unfortunately, they don't have many choices. To resolve this problem, the government should punish all wrongdoers and not to put a heavy load on one group considering that both Hutus and Tutsis are hurting. The government can also provide an easy way to compensate the plaintiffs through job creation, allowing the Hutus who came out of prison after their sentence to go back into public work and open businesses and continue to build houses for the widows, encouraging people to work together for mutual support as it was the case before 1990.

Rwandans have been taught many lies or half truths which make the country appear clean outside its borders in the eyes of foreign countries but inside, the Rwandans were killing each other. The lies destroy the country and lives of Rwandan citizens slowly (cf. chapter 4.2). According to Bakusi, Director of NURC (2010) (National Unity and Reconciliation Commission) in his report of December 2010 he agrees that "while Gacaca courts brought a kind of justice, reconciliation is long-term process, we still have a lot of people in jail and people are still struggling with social trust still to be built." 2010 NURC's study, entitled "Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer", 25% of the interviewed Rwandans was afraid that if there are no mechanisms put in place to prevent it, genocide might occur once again, mainly due to people wanting revenge." As long as Rwandans do not accept each other or eat together, we can affirm that there is no genuine reconciliation, no forgiveness, no genuine repentance and no peace.

With regards the situation in Rwanda, most objective observers agree that whereas the above initiatives to insure peaceful co-existence have been worthwhile, genuine reconciliation

remains elusive. In my view the situation in Rwanda concerning reconciliation has failed because through control of the military forces (the military forces are used to scare Rwandans and impose the president's ideas), President Kagame denies the people of Rwanda the opportunity to exercise their fundamental human rights, especially in political life. There are many peacemaking women in Rwanda but their voices are not heard. To stand for true justice and freedom in Rwanda today, you need to be courageous. This was the case of Ingabire Victoire, a leading opposition political lady. "Her political activities are centered around the idea of a state of real justice where individuals choose their associations based on their shared political aspirations rather than their ethnic or regional background. She has also been vocal in calling for more women empowerment in Rwanda. On 13 September 2012, this lady together with two other Rwanda political figures (Bernard Ntaganda and Deogratias Mushayidi, all currently imprisoned in Kigali), were nominated by 42 MEPs for the SAKHAROV PRIZE for freedom of Thoughts 2012 of European Parliament. The RPF continues to monopolize power in Rwanda, criminalizing, persecuting or co-opting any resistance (www.hrw.org/world-report-2011/Rwanda)."

Rwanda today needs ordinary people who rise up in the power of God to do extraordinary things; the heroes of faith. There is need for men and women who can restore harmony and freedom in the community: people who can bring democracy free from lies and corruption and that can restore compassion and true justice in the community through collaboration with other groups that promote peace. In order to develop a good response to genocide issues, it is not enough to just know the causes, but the impact of genocide in the Rwandan lives.

4. 6 Justice and reconciliation post 1994

The functioning of the judicial system is constrained by one important factor, namely the lack of judicial independence. The security forces are very involved in making judicial decisions to suit the interests of the government. Instead of protecting the citizens, they abuse their rights. Rwanda has sought to use justice for reconciliation. Ilasmi (2003: 221) writes that "the first step was the creation of a National Reconciliation Commission, headed by a female, Aloysie Inyumba with a mandate to highlight common problems and solutions and to promote a

common history for all Rwandans, without myths and bigotry in all its forms.” However, Gacaca (local justice) was supposed to deal with cases situated from 1990-1994, but they only focused on Tutsi accusations. During the trial, there were tears, terrors and fear and the truth was not told, hidden or half told. Ilesanmi (2003:222) writes that “unless both Hutus and Tutsis are convinced that ICTR and Gacaca are impartial in their dispensation of justice, no matter who the perpetrator and the victim are, genuine reconciliation and social development will be difficult to achieve in Rwanda.”

Kofi (2005:294) witnessed the death of Hutu people during 1990 killed by the Tutsis in the north of Rwanda, “on October 1, 1990, 6000 men from Museveni’s army led by Brigadier Fred Rwigyema, left their barracks, piled into army and civilian vehicles and headed for the Rwanda borders”. This RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) invasion led step by step to genocide. OAU (Organization of African Unity) described the armed return of the Tutsis as “a giant step on the road of genocide.” Many Hutus died since 1990, they died in genocide, in the Kibeho camp (1995) and they were killed in the mass in Congo/Zaire (1996-1997) and until now they are dying in Congo. The majority of these victims are women and children. Are these innocent people human beings? Is there anyone in the world who one day will hear their voice and acknowledge the truth instead of hunting and chasing them whenever they try to hide? It is important to note that the Hutus suffered alongside the Tutsis but they are completely silenced or ignored during justice to promote reconciliation, only the Tutsis needed people who pay for the damages and their opponents must be found guilty. (Kayumba 2010:8) writes that “there cannot be a genuine reconciliation in Rwanda until the grievances of the Hutu community over the issues of political participation, as well as the guarantees of the minorities, equal citizenship before the law, access to resources and accountability for human rights abuses are addressed.”

Several factors acted as a hindrance to the process of national reconciliation: “These factors include President Kagame’s pursuit of absolute power, the government’s political adoption of building all projects and programmes on lies, sending messages all over the world speaking lies instead of the truth and exclusion of the Hutu community from a meaningful share of power

and the failure of the selective and partisan nature of the processes of accountability for past human rights violations that Rwanda has undertaken” (Kayumba 2010:8).

Tertsakian (2010) chapter 1 shows that *Le Chateaux* is more than a book about Rwanda and life in prison. Prison is depicted as Castles or Chateaux! It reveals the life of ordinary human beings struggling to survive and overcoming ordeals which most of us cannot even imagine inside prisons.” This book testifies the bad conditions of prisoners in Rwanda. Sometimes those who get a chance to be released, they die shortly at home if they do not get proper treatments. The human rights of prisoners in Rwanda are violated daily. Victoire Ingabire Umuhoya is one of the victims who experienced life in Rwandan prison. She is an outstanding and courageous Rwandan lady, the main real opposition leader of the United Democratic Forces (FDU), party in Rwanda. Her supporters want to call her “Female Mandela”, but the Rwandan Government and ruling RPF party label her as “revisionist.” In her own words, “the journey is still long but don’t lose heart for the future holds better opportunities for each one of us. FDU INKINGI remains committed to pursue, with non violent means, the political struggles until all forms of injustice are uprooted and a genuine democratic system of government underpinned by the rule of law and the respect of human rights is reality in Rwanda.” This woman is one of many other women who live in prison. Her courage to speak out and to fight for change in Rwanda has become a crime and for eight years in prison she has been kept silent and badly treated that maybe she will come out with a changed mind.

Without peace development cannot be successful and if it does succeed, it will be just for a short period, because violence will destroy what is already built. Msabah (2012: 40) attests that Hutus/Tutsis problem in Central Africa (i.e. Rwanda and Burundi) has led to serious scenes of genocides and, to this day the crisis still has deadly repercussions. As a result both Rwandans and Burundians find themselves dispersed around the world. They should be home joining hands with their fellow citizens and build together their country but the ongoing conflicts in those countries are a barrier to development.

4.7 Developmental challenges in the aftermath of genocide

The Rwandan development has been affected by the same causes other parts of the world experience when affected by violence. Beverley Haddad and Debbie Bonnin (2001: 11) note that, “household poverty is developed gradually at a number of levels until all possessions are gone. Goods are lost and looting after the attacks, the cost of food increases, as the violence increases the breadwinners are increasingly becoming victims resulting in higher proportion of female-headed households in these affected areas.” In rural areas for example, women suffer from lack of property inheritance, lower wages, and greater domestic responsibility, lack of transport, poor health, illiteracy, and inadequate technology whilst the wars make the women’s situation worse. They live in insecurity and instability. These struggles are barriers to development. Rural people are hungry, voiceless and hopeless.

These challenges are discussed with reference also to the challenges faced by the large refugee community outside of Rwanda.

4.7.1 Human right abuses

The government of Rwanda affirms that they have peace and reconciliation, justice and freedom of expression but harassment of civil society activists, opposition figures and journalists as well as the disappearance of human rights defenders pose the next developmental challenge for the country. The Rwandan people are hard workers, always striving to develop themselves and develop their country but “the government uses intimidation, smear campaigns and insults to silence opponents, whether they were international NGOs, civil society, newspapers or political parties (Kayumba2010: 5).” The war had broken Rwandan bonds of humanity. No one cares about anyone else; people live in fear and distrust. Genuine justice and reconciliation that were there during the ordinary criminal justice system and Gacaca courts had failed. On the one hand, they favored only the Tutsi (their sufferings are remembered, their tears were seen, they were compensated and their crimes were covered up and left unpunished). On the other hand the Hutu had to pay for all crimes committed in 1994 (though the Tutsi started the war in 1990) and their pain and tears are

reduced to silence. Justice and reconciliation should bring healing and unity; unfortunately the Rwandan justice system is dividing the Rwandans in terms of the future of the country.

After 1994, it is not an exaggeration to state that almost every family has experienced loss of family members and material possessions as well as, psychological trauma and social problems. Tutsi as well as Hutu families on both sides need reconciliation. They both feel victimized, therefore need to be comforted, restored and encouraged in terms of development. Unfortunately, most of the associations support Tutsis only, and the Tutsis are the first choice for leadership positions in the associations even if they are not qualified for it. Dr Hagengimana Athanase (2001) writes that “the genocide affected almost every social class in Rwanda. This resulted in social and psychological problems which hinder national reconciliation and unity. The healing of wounds and justice for survivors (both Hutus and Tutsis) seems to be unavoidable requirement for reconciliation”

(<http://www.jcr.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/54/3/408>).

In Rwanda, for some individuals, fear is greater than faith. They fear the ongoing of the violence that are witnessing. They live in the country but are not part of it, and their participation is very limited. Kayumba (2010: 10) notes that civil society in Rwanda is less free and consequently less effective. He writes that “many refugees who fled the country in 1994 remain in exile because of the repressive environment that prevails in the country. Rwanda also remains very unstable and vulnerable to violent conflict. Its entrepreneurs continue to relocate to the neighboring countries, out of fear of resumption of armed conflict in coming years. Rwanda has a democratic deficit and a society that does not discuss or debate issues affecting its people will sooner or later seek to break out of enforced silence and to assert its rights.” To be effective, every individual needs a safe place to live and freedom to participate positively in his/her community development. Therefore, the government and organizations for human rights should work together to ensure the protection of all citizens, by increasing the justice system and giving legal assistance to those in need.

4.7.2. HIV/AIDS

Adam (2004: 74) in *Gendercide and Genocide* made this comment, “polygamy is not legally permitted in Rwanda but it became a way to solve the problem of the large number of widows and young women whose prospect of marriage has become greatly reduced. Rivalry over potential husbands has become common and an issue which sparks off heated debate. This is the consequences of so many men killed or imprisoned in Rwanda. The practice of sharing men among women that has become widespread in Rwanda is known as *kwinjira*.” This practice has many consequences among children: creation of conflicts and it leads to poverty. Also, it is sometimes accompanied with domestic violence and other gender related practices. HIV increases as well.

We may all find life difficult when we are faced with HIV, especially when the time comes to break this alarming news to our family. It is always difficult for the newly diagnosed sufferer of HIV/AIDS, for example, to announce his/her condition. The sufferers have different reactions as well: Some choose not to tell anyone about their health condition to avoid judgment, to cover their shame, because of fear of rejection, to protect their families and others try to commit suicide to end their misery rather than face a long slow period of suffering. Others keep quiet in order to spread it among their partners. The courageous victims will share their health condition with their family and friends and together they give care and help the sick in their needs. HIV is a matter of life and death. Dixon (2010: 129) writes, “HIV is worse than other sicknesses because anywhere in the world people with HIV experience rejection, judgment, hostility, fear, and prejudice.” There is however, a better way to handle the situation. The victim must not keep a secret about her/ his condition, as telling the family the truth may change the way the victim is treated in the family. They need to seek medical help and support, and care giving for their needs. Lies and secrets always destroy relationships and when the truth comes out, there is someone who will be hurt.

Regarding Rwanda, the health officers affirm that “it is a big challenge in their effort to combat the spread of AIDS. And the spread of AIDS and *kwinjira* are fuelled by poverty. With annual income of 180 \$US, Rwanda is ranked by the World Bank as the third world’s poorest country.

70% of all households fall below their poverty line. If a woman has money, she may attract the service of men; he does some work in the field and some more work in the bedroom” says Jerome Ndabaganyira of Care (www.kindhearted.coza/rwanda). HIV does not only destroy lives, but also relationships and the economy especially since HIV kills slowly and time for care giving is a handicap for the building economy. The Rwandans need to be taught constantly about HIV/AIDS and encouraged to seek medical help through churches and nearest clinics. In Phiri (2000:183), Chirongoma suggests that the church in Zimbabwe must be guided by the concept of Shalom and address human problem in a holistic manner because Shalom cannot be achieved if the well-being, health and wholeness which demands release from poverty and physical ailments such as HIV/AIDS, are lacking. This should also be applicable regarding women, poverty and HIV in Rwanda.

4.7.3 Agriculture methods

The new agricultural method of selected plants (monocropping) has caused hunger and poverty for many rural families. This method exhausts the land and leaves people hungry. Before 1994 agriculture was done with a mixture of different kinds of crops in one field, and they grew together. Some were harvested earlier than others and the people had food all the time. Now, the farmers are allowed to plant one selected plant (by the government). Some people have small pieces of land hence they produce little harvests and when they sell their crops, they get little money. Those who try to start small businesses are always in fear because taxes are high and sometimes armed people attack them and ask for money. Rwandans need a lot of support from the government and the protection of their rights. In rural areas, people are starving and the government should not ignore them when they plan the development projects. Kenya is making good progress regarding fighting against starvation in rural areas and other countries in the same situation should follow this example. Musamas (2011: 240) affirms, “in Kenya the government had demonstrated its commitment to reducing the high level of poverty, starvation and hunger through various initiatives. NPEP (The National Poverty Eradication Plan) seeks to strengthen the capability of the poor and vulnerable group.”

4.7.4. Marginalization of women and other groups

The Batwas living in Rwanda are a minority. Some people think that they are stupid and ignorant and cannot be educated. When the government tries to help them with education and housing, they abandon the schools and modern houses and do not return. They enjoy living in groups isolated from other people in huts made of grass. The rest of the Rwandan community neglect the Batwas and limit interaction as the Batwas and others meet when they are selling their pots or when they are invited to festivals for entertainment, as Batwas are very good singers and dancers. Hutus and Tutsis treat the Batwas as “others”, abashenzi (uncivilized), immoral and depraved. (www.truthlifedocumentary.inc). This group of people lives isolated and do not show interest in the cultural school. Although Batwa are an outcast group, some men would abuse Batwa women and girls sexually, because they believe that having sex with Batwa women will heal them from back sores. They do not lay a charge against these abusive men and the abuses continue like that. They think they are inferior and deserve what happens to them. To this day, people make jokes in Rwanda, when someone complains about back sore, they refer him to Batwakazi (Twa female) for healing.

Briggs (2009:205) makes the observation that: “more than 40% of Batwa households are landless, without legal access to the forest on which their traditional livelihood depends. Batwas eked out a marginal living from casual wage labor on other people’s farms, portering, pottery and entertainment. Batwas are viewed not with sympathy, rather as objects of ridicule.” This attitude against Twa people should stop. They are also human beings and deserve to be treated with dignity. The churches keep trying to reach out them, and the government wants Batwa to join other Rwandans and live together and though it provides free houses and free education for Batwa, it still without big success.

Rwanda belongs to all Rwandans. Although the Hutu in some communities are being discriminated against, sometimes rejected or silenced, their voice is constructive in politics, development, and justice. Though during conflicts, women and children are more vulnerable and face a lot of challenges, poverty, unemployment, oppression and abuse (physically, sexually and emotionally), women are not going to give up on speaking until their voices are heard.

However, women should be united across culture and religion to challenge the culture of patriarchy that affects women negatively in their everyday life. They ought to keep on demanding justice and their rights as humans until they are given the opportunity to build and maintain peace in the community and to help other vulnerable groups to be involved through participation and reciprocity. Their experiences and their stories are also life changing. They should use them to say no to violence and to transform their suffering into hope for a better life.

4.7.5. Rwandan community in exile

Dixon (2010: 85) affirms that the life of refugees is never easy. He writes, “refugees and displaced people’s camps, or war zones where large numbers of children are orphans or vulnerable and normal community support has broken down. It becomes impossible for some child-headed households to continue to supporting children in their own home. These children end up in streets, seduced, kidnapped, out of school, rape or worse.” In some countries, refugees are accepted fully as citizens although the local people have incorrect perception regarding their background which reduces their capabilities and limits their opportunities to be involved in development. In other countries, many foreigners are educated and well trained, but they remain jobless for years and for those who are lucky to have work, the wages are low or the job is just short term (Msabah 20012:47).

In exile, Rwandan refugees also face many problems and they unite together to deal with their own struggles for a better life. In general their daily challenge is to find income for food and survive. The Rwandan people are not well treated by the majority of local people. And refugees struggle to integrate as they sometimes face ridicule or opposition, poor communication, lacking legal documents and jobs. Some people for example do not want to hear the truth about Rwandan history, because others have already misled them and those who try to be fair and tell the truth will face the consequences. Building their community is not easy at all.

The consequences of living in a foreign land are many: trauma, misbehavior for some people (there is lack of morality: cultural values are changed which is affecting families with divorces, teenage pregnancies, alcoholism, drugs and domestic violence; Xenophobic attacks and its

consequences, abuses, etc.) To get official documents is difficult and without documents, life is very hard and it is not safe to travel from one place to another. You can't go to the clinic. You have no access to education and jobs. It brings fear and discouragement. It stops many from trying to improve their situation and causes them to remain in the past. They feel rejected, neglected and ashamed to be Rwandans. It happens that some refugees lose their jobs because their asylum papers have expired and it takes too long for them to be renewed. Others go to jail because they live in the country illegally (without documents). Today many refugees are dying because they cannot take care of their health. The lack of money to go to a private doctor when necessary and waiting long for government doctors put refugees' health in jeopardy (Msabah (2012:64-66).

Before the war, in Rwandan culture, the community used to be a safe place in which to live and to bring up children, a place where mutual help was everyone's responsibility. There was nothing between Hutus and Tutsis. They were at peace (Guillebaud 2002: 243). In exile, our community has changed; it has become an insecure place with endless problems, where everyone survives on his own with few resources to build a home. The days of suffering are greater than the days of joy and if no one comes to assist, we wait on God for his provision. We should take personal responsibility and face what we did in genocide as a nation, review our roots and together fix our past for a better future, instead of pointing fingers and hiding behind the statement, 'it was Satan to blame' (Guillebaud 2002:308).

Although refugees may struggle to survive in exile under various circumstances, their effort and commitment to change their lives can guide them to success. Imitating the life style of local people and their culture has put many refugees at risk. Toto Paredes in *Culture and Society* writes that "we should learn from these mistakes of the nineteenth century not to impose upon other people our idea of development. We should realize that social-cultural change in western countries should come from the country itself and it may not take the same root as western development. In any case, it is preferable that the kind and direction of change be determined by the active participation of people affected by it," (Sugden 1987:78). God helps the Rwandan

community in exile but they also have a major role to play by accepting His grace and obeying His command to love their neighbors and work to survive.

Health for some refugees is an unstable and a serious problem due to their economic struggle. For instance, the cost of food and rent increases, adjusting to lower income and having no access to formal health care, their diseases are sometimes not diagnosed and when they are, they are not treated. Under those conditions, it is difficult for anyone to be at peace or to contribute adequately to the development of the community. When the body is not healthy, the mind and the soul suffer as well. The churches play a major role in the life of refugees. They show solidarity to their refugee adherents in their daily struggles. Some churches support refugees in educational and social life, which gives them resources, strength and the courage to persevere while others discriminate against refugees. The church prays for the sick people, gives them counseling, teaches about sexuality and gives them financial support for HIV victims who need medication, adequate food and the support for others to get better. The church encourages its members to learn from the experience of others to avoid making the same mistakes.

4.8 Women as perpetrators and victims of genocide

The role of women as both perpetrators and victims within Rwanda's history (both pre and post genocide) has already been discussed in relation to other issues within this study. I will nevertheless, now turn a more focused lens towards this topic.

4.8.1 Women as perpetrators in Rwandan history

In this section, we will discuss on how women not only women politicians but also the nuns and young girls were involved in genocide. Some who were used and manipulated and others chose to be involved. Eye witnesses confirm that many women have been very active in genocide on both sides (Hutus and Tutsis). Some women were used by the Tutsi rebels to distribute firearms and weapons throughout the whole country, to feed them in their hidden camps, as spies and as sex workers. On both sides some women and girls were forced to become the wives of the soldiers or sometimes girls joined the soldiers freely to give them support and encouragement.

They were also forced into prostitution in order to corrupt the leaders of the opposition. Women also played another important role in networking people outside and within Rwanda. Other women were in the military as well as in combat positions. Women were less likely to be suspected and that helped them to fulfill their missions. They had all the equipment needed to help them to transmit messages to Tutsis inside the country without the awareness of the Rwandan Hutu government. Nuns and Priests were in a good position for hidden and confidential communication, they had a good education and adequate training, and they had their own transport and access to the media with up-to-date technology. (www.theguardian.com/Rwanda).

Even some women in the church were complicit in the genocide. Gerturde Mukangango (a nun) played a role in the massacre of 7.000 people seeking refuge at her convent in Southern Rwanda. She is sentenced to 15 years in jail (www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/Europe).

Pope John Paul II visited Rwanda in October 1990 a few days before the attack of RPF. Standing for only a few hours on Rwandan land, he declared that the Hutu government had extreme discrimination against the Tutsis (www.larouchepub.com/eiw/public/1995). This was a good opportunity and a strong reason for the Tutsis to attack as the Pope stands for the whole world. Due to the trauma, the Rwandan religious were also unstable like the rest of Rwandans. Therefore religious both male and female were involved either positively or negatively to obey orders or for self- interests.

In this section we will talk about Kanjogera (see chapter 1, 1.5) who is one of Rwandan powerful women who misused their power, which led the country into the killing of the masses. Guillebaud (2002: 350) testifies to Kanjogera's violence and writes that "Kanjogera also known as Nyirayuhi (the mother of Yuhi). Appointed by King Rwabugiri as regent for his son Rutalindwa, she conspired instead with her brother, Kabare, to kill Rutalindwa and place her son, Musinga, on the throne. She was co- regent with Kabare during her son's minority and always the power behind his throne. Madame Habyalimana was nicknamed Kanjogera after her."

Nyirishema (2008) tells the story of Kanjogera. She was one of many other wives of Mwami Rwabugiri in (1896-1931), and the mother of Mwami Yuhi Musinga. The history of Rwandan monarchy describes her as an evil woman, who could get anything she wanted regardless of the means she used to get it. She had great support from her brothers Kabare and Ruhinankiko. Rutarindwa, his brother and their sister were adopted by Rwabugiri after he married their mother. Rutarindwa became the favorite child and Rwabugiri appointed him as a successor. Kanjogera was jealous and she plotting against the mother of Rutarindwa. Kanjogera lied that Rutarindwa's mother was pregnant with a child of her servant. It was a taboo for the mother of the king to sleep with a man. Rwabugiri then summoned her to the Palace to be examined but the men sent to bring her were corrupted and killed her on their way to the palace to cover Kanjogera's lies. The truth then came out, that she was not pregnant but it was too late.

The second mistake of Rwabugiri was to nominate Kanjogera the queen mother as a co-ruler of Rutarindwa. She did not waste time and assassinated Mwami Rutarindwa in the coup d'état of Rucunshu, and enthroned her three year old son Yuhi Musinga. He was not favored by the majority of the Rwandan Royal Court. As a result, Kangogera was the real power in Rwanda. The war of Rucunshu left endless conflicts between Tutsis (Ega and Banyiginya) and between Hutu and Tutsi to this day (www.ncdc.gov.rw/humanities.history.pdf).

The centralized control of the King was balanced between a powerful queen mother and a group of dynastic ritualists, the Abiru. In tradition the queen mother could never come from the same clan as the king. She had many opportunities to get rid of the king. Yuhi was born from the Ega clan and as Lemarchand says above, he could not become Mwami (king). Kanjogera knew it but she ignored the custom and killed everyone who tried to oppose her. To this day every evil Rwandan woman is named a 'Kanjongera.' There are places named after her violence: An example in Butare-Nyakizu (Cyuna) is a rock where many Hutu babies were killed in her honor: "*urutare rw'impinja*" (rock of babies). She killed children, women, kings, men and servants; and in the process she destroyed the country and relationships. According to Guillebaud (2002: 41) "Kanjogera was a real old villain who must have the blood of hundreds on

her hands. The Rwandan story tells that the Abega (one of the Tutsis clan) like shedding blood and believe in getting strength through a sacrifice.”

A clear example is the testimony of Guillebaud (2002: 42) to an incident that happened at the royal court. She writes, “I remembered a man I used to know at Shyogwe who had inadvertently seen the queen mother (Kanjogera) and had had his eyes put out as a result. King Musinga had a reputation of careless disregard for the life of his subjects and many acts of cruelty are attributed to him. Apparently someone in Uganda asked a missionary if Jesus had been crucified by Rwandans, since impaling was a favorite form of execution of Musinga.” Many other Rwandan women are named after Kanjogera because of their characters. Therefore women should change their characters before changing the community.

My last chapter will cover the recommendations which give attention to women. The fact that women are more vulnerable than men in violent communities means that, women have a responsibility to build a safe environment for all, fight against injustice and all sorts of abuses and to protect other less advantaged groups. They will emphasize the role of women in peace making and development, the advantage to empower women to become more effective. If these recommendations are taken seriously by all women, they will gain enough power to change the community.

4. 8.2 Women as victims of the genocide

According Human Right Watch (1996) in the report on Sexual Violence during the Rwandan Genocide and its Aftermath, Rwandan women experienced the worse kind of atrocity and torture during the genocide of 1994. They were subjects of violence and humiliation. They witnessed the death of their loved ones and some women experienced rape by their executioners and many others were killed immediately after being raped (www.hrw.org/reports/1996/Rwanda.htm). Some victims of rape do not report this crime because they feel terrified, ashamed and they fear rejection. This makes it impossible to know the exact number of rape victims.

Many young girls mostly Tutsi were used at Kibeho (in southern Rwanda) in a boarding school run by nuns as an opportunity of infiltration of RPF military in Rwanda. In that school in 1981 to 1990, in Catholic churches young girls claimed that they had a divine vision of Mary “Our Lady of sorrows.” In 1992, two years before the genocide, an estimation of 500,000 pilgrims visit the site every year (www.tailieuthanhmau.net/kibeho). The Holy See has not yet declared those apparitions were divine. It is thought the local Diocese approved them in 2007. Even after the appointment of a medical and theological commission to investigate the holiness of the visions for official Papal decree and the approval of the Vatican church, the two commissions completed their investigations 20 years later and their conclusions showed that among 8 girl visionaries taken as samples for investigation from a total of 33 and 1 boy, only 3 showed the required criteria of credibility and confidence in what concerned the apparition of many. So what about the other 5 girls? What was their motive and mission? And who was behind them as mentor? “Moreover, chances are that some people tried to use these visionaries maliciously and made them their instruments” (www.kibeho-sanctuary.com/index/overview/). All taxis to the Kibeho apparitions were full of young pilgrims from Kampala (Uganda), others were from Bujumbura (Burundi). The divine message received from the Virgin Mary by the visionaries was related to the event of the return of Rwandans from exile led by RPF in 1990. These visions informed and prepared the Tutsis living inside the country. Kenneth Roth, is the executive director of Human Rights Watch (August 14, 2009) in “Hungry for Truth and Justice;” he brought out the atrocity of the killing of 234 priests and 4 bishops in Kabgayi by RPF’s army. There was no peace pact for any Hutu clergy who did not support the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). From other sources we read that Bishop Misago of Gikongoro diocese was accused of genocide, and found innocent. He was released but killed later in a mysterious way because he had too many secrets as president of the Kibeho (commission which investigated the visionaries. The final conclusion was that the majority of those 33 girls were manipulated and used to prepare genocide. Sadly, only few of them survived the killings. The role of the church is to limit its clergy from being involved in politics and encourage them to teach its members the message of hope and peace and by disciplining the trouble maker in church).

Although many women are left traumatized, they have the responsibility to rise above their struggles and rebuild their society through collective work, using every opportunity to live a full life as human beings because the option to change remains within them. It requires courage for a mother to raise an unwanted child (the child of bad memories as a result of rape), many mothers give the child away or abandon the baby. Others kill their babies after giving birth and few accept the baby and cause deep divisions in families or raise the child as normal but no one talks about what happened (www.hrw.org/reports/1996/Rwanda.htm).

Women are the major producers in agriculture. They were badly affected by the conflicts of 1994, HIV/AIDS and the burdens of their families. In Rwanda, it is women's responsibility to feed the family, nurture their children, look after elderly and sick people as well as sometimes being involved in public work. During the war, they were very scared to work in the fields. Enemies were hiding everywhere and there was sometimes shooting, killing, rape, and stealing. Under such conditions, women failed to produce food. They could not do their domestic duties and could not protect their children. Therefore some children and elderly people died of hunger.

A story is told of two old women who were over 80 years old in 1994. Their lives depended on their children and grandchildren's support. When the war started their supporters fled and the old women moved together into one house. One evening a neighbor who had decided to stay behind went to check on the old women, and they weren't in the house, because they had heard the gunshots, became afraid and hid in banana trees. They could not go far because their bodies were weak but they were scared to die anyway. The neighbor searched around and when she found them, she asked why they were hiding. They said they had run away from the soldiers and she asked them, if they would prefer dying of hunger or by a bullet? They answered her "both are deadly and rotten." She took them into her home, took care of them and they passed away later, far from their relatives but under the care of a compassionate neighbor.

Many children, the elderly and sick people died alone, abandoned and hungry. The killers thought that starving is a better way to torture their "enemies." Many women and children

were beaten, assaulted and left to die but, God saved many in that situation. Many Hutu and Tutsi women have played a major role in protecting the lives of survivors, although sometimes they failed because the killers refused to listen while the women who tried to protect others were begging for mercy. Mostly, the Hutu families who were hiding or assisting Tutsis were killed alongside Tutsis by Interahamwe (Hutu militias). We cannot blame these women for their failures because the war was a very traumatic experience only the hand of God protected the survivors. No human being can say that he is a hero if he denies being an instrument of the living God. "Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it fully" (Prov. 28: 5). It was very hard, a struggle, a terrible situation for everyone. The war put people of God to the test and the victory could come from God alone through prayers. However, women were more involved in care giving for the genocide survivors than men were.

Rwandan women are not a homogenous group. There are tribes, classes, urban and rural, with age lines of division among them. The strategies to empower women and to support them in peace building must take all these divisions into account.

Schumacher (1973: chapter 13) says, "the best aid to give is intellectual aid, a gift of useful knowledge. A gift of knowledge is infinitely preferable to a gift of material things". Learning indeed is gaining power and knowledge. Knowledge is the key for development. It introduces people to new strategies. I am convinced that when girls are educated, it can help them with knowledge that may move them with confidence to employ strategies to prevent the tragedy from reoccurring and the escalation of violence after it has broken out, and the efforts that are preceding post- genocide which are designed to prevent a repeat of the 1994 experience. After too many trials, life seems impossible and unfair in Rwanda, but Rwandan women know what they need, and have the abilities to restore themselves and heal the country. It is not easy for anyone to contribute actively when other people abuse you. Sexual violence is an obstacle in women's efforts towards justice and liberation. It prevents native women from speaking for themselves and upholding their dignity, when poor women are still regarded as ignorant instruments for others' use, when they are always told what to do, without a chance to share in determining priorities and decisions concerning their lives.

Among South Africans there is a saying: “who educates a woman educates the next generations.” That is true because “women are torchbearers”. Women have the ability to manage peace, wisdom, love and other gifts and talents, starting in their home, and to pass them on to the community. The challenge is how to make peace, and to control one’s anger without pushing someone away or hurting others. Sande (2004: 20) affirms that “when we remember God’s mercy and draw on His strength, we invariably see things more clearly and respond to conflict wisely.” Women need support and security from God and from their surrounding community to accomplish their mission in the community.

Rwandan women are builders of the community as they try to organize themselves and work for their community’s development. Most women in Rwanda are responsible for feeding their family. However, forgiveness and acceptance of “other” (the person from different tribes) is not practiced. There is a denial of “others” as humans worthy of love and care. There is also inequality sharing the support given to NGOs from outsiders. Rwandan women must be fair in their efforts in order to avoid becoming oppressors of their fellow women.

4.9. The current role of women in Rwandan development

“Today, Rwanda has benefited from tremendous economic growth, implementing major infrastructure development projects; however, civil society in Rwanda remains in an embryonic state, due to a variety of practical constraints. The overwhelming majority of Rwandans suffer from extreme poverty, and about two-thirds of the population lives on less than 1US dollar per day, (<http://www.icnl.org/research/index.html/December2012>).” The Rwandan government should therefore encourage and provide projects that involve those who suffer from poverty to produce what they can afford and use.

Women in Rwanda try to organize themselves into associations and that has a big implication in peace building in the local community. According to the Rwanda Cooperative Agency, there are 4500 registered cooperatives currently and country wide, there are more than 38000 associations (<http://www.newtimes.co.rwnews/indexphp%3...July2010-July2011>). Cooperatives are a successful way to bring economic development to rural areas. The main emphasis has been on food self-sufficiency. In women’s meetings, local women share their problems and

provide solutions together. However, the leading associations are exclusively characterized by absolute discrimination; none of them wants to hear or to see a person comforted other than a Tutsi. If there is one widow or orphan Tutsi who needs comfort, compassion, counseling or financial support, there may be four times the same burden in a Hutu family but the same cry is reduced into silence. It brings shame and frustration. The Hutu are not allowed to remember their lost. They don't deserve compassion, comfort, counseling or financial support. There are many associations in Rwanda:

IBUKA (=remember) is an umbrella of all men and women genocide survivors associations. All together, IBUKA is composed of 15 associations which do not allow membership from the Hutu or Twa side. These are some names of associations driven by IBUKA's segregation and discriminatory ideas: AGAHOZO=comforter), NSANGA (STEP UP), ABASA, HUMURA, INGERI (a student fund) and RAMA, ARCF RUHUKA (FOR TRAUMA AND COUNSELLING). These associations work to ensure that the memory of the genocide is preserved and that all the genocide survivors are socially included, financially secure and able to live with full dignity. They have a vision to be a leading national and international organization for issues of genocide prevention, preservation and the honoring of genocide memory, and preventing genocidal ideology (<http://www.survivors-found.Org.uk/> 2008-2011). They have good motives but they use them for wrong purposes. The problem is that Hutus and Twa are excluded. The Bible teaches us to look after aliens, widows and orphans (Exodus 22:21-24, Deut. 10:19, 1Tm. 5:3), doing so with love and compassion, otherwise we can fall into the same trap of the caregivers who become oppressors, abusers and discriminators. Many of these associations focus on widows and orphans who are the survivors of genocide (Tutsis). Who will take care of the Hutu survivors? "In Kenya, the government has demonstrated its commitment to reducing the high level of poverty, starvation and hunger through various initiatives. NPEP (The National Poverty Eradication Plan) seeks to strengthen the capability of the poor and vulnerable group" (Musamas 2011: 240). Other African countries should follow this example and empower people who are willing to improve their lives through various projects, especially in rural area.

The aim of a cooperative is to draw people into networks of working together and for them to become united by their practical economic interests. Under the influence of various interests and engagements discussed in the thousands of the cooperatives, the people begin to see issues of conflict between them in a new light. They forget what divides them and gradually learn to see each other as individual members of a family and recognize their own personal interests in upholding a common set of basic rights for all. The cooperatives, therefore, form a set of foundational blocks towards national development with peace and prosperity for all being the dividend.

Regarding community development in Rwanda, the women in rural area have few interests outside their work and family routines. The majority of these women are not affiliated though they are aware of the importance of the organizations and they would like to join. The most promising female organizations are those in church.

4.10 Conclusion

It is difficult to oppose a dictator who enjoys the backing and protection of Western countries as Rwandan leaders have for the last seventeen years. God is the Ruler of the universe (Col. 2: 10). We must take courage and pray for corrupt leaders, to be changed and removed from power. God loves peace and He wants people to live in peace. It is unfortunate that the current Rwandan leaders are self-centered and they do not want to share the natural resources in their hands and that increases injustice and poverty. Every resource, no matter how great or how insignificant, should be used and shared according to the benefits of all Rwandans without discrimination. To this day, there is no peace in Rwanda as people are still fleeing to the neighboring countries every year. Others remain in exile and many more are killed or disappearing in and outside the county. Many men and women are kept and forgotten in Rwandan prisons without access to justice. People live in fear without freedom and are divided over social and political issues. This division is even seen in the churches. In Rwanda, development is not easy to achieve because there is no freedom, no democracy, no peace, no unity, or love.

As Coretta Scott King (19 July 2012) states that “in fragile countries, women and girls can be prime targets of war or powerful builders of peace” (www.peacedirect.org/womens-day). To be effective in making peace and development, women need protection, justice and opportunities to participate in decision making. Without a safe environment, peace, unity, and adequate education for women, their contribution in development cannot be successful.

In chapter 5 I will identify the assets that women have for peacemaking and discuss how to equip women on their mission of peace making in Rwanda with regards to Community Development.

CHAPTER 5

Towards harnessing the peacemaking potential of Rwandan women with a view to community development

5.1 Introduction

Ms Katheline Burns, senior Social Affairs officer in Rwanda, sees “women as torchbearers of peace”. In African culture, a woman plays an important role in the family. In Rwandan culture a woman is called “Mutima w’urugo” (the heart of the family). In an annual report, “Cartas Internationals”, Therese Nduwamungu (2008) echoes the same idea when she affirms that in Rwanda women are called ‘Nyampinga’ which means “haven of peace”. Since women are free to marry one man and live in a family of a different ethnic group and are not considered as belonging to any ethnic group; they are considered the heart of the household and even capable of stopping conflicts between two men. Oduyoye (2001: 114) emphasizes that, “the dignity of humanity that women believe in, and which they believe is the will of God, has become a ground of hope in women’s theology. Hope makes women utilize their anger against unnecessary suffering. They turn anger into compassion as a route to transformation. In women’s theology projects, they hope for life even when there is no sign of it and the end is death.” Women may look very weak physically but God blessed them with a strong and a compassionate heart, with the ability to carry peace into their communities. Women deserve a chance to prove that they can contribute more into the well being of the community as God’s instruments of peace for the restoration of human dignity.

Women have the power to transform their home into a place of comfort, compassion, encouragement, love, but because human beings are not perfect and live in an imperfect world, women do not always accomplish their duties successfully. This chapter brings together what was discussed in previous chapters through practical recommendations about Rwandan women in community development and will conclude this study. In summary:

The first chapter is a reflection of what I have done in this study. It provides the main reason of this study, which is to investigate the situation in Rwanda regarding its state of community development and the need of it, the presence of violence even after the civil war of 1994 and the forms that it takes and the role of women in peacemaking.

The second chapter of this study focused on peace as the absence of violence, the different forms of violence, different views on community development and the role of women and the relationship between the three. The research revealed that in violent community women and children are more vulnerable than men. It also indicates that peace is a powerful positive influence to development while absence of peace and vulnerability of women are challenges to development not only in Rwanda but also in the rest of the world.

The third chapter discussed the theological view of peace. The important points that came in this chapter are those of the importance of human dignity and peace as *Shalom*. It reveals that we must see people, peace and development in the eyes of God. No one is less human in God's sight. Therefore, men, women and children, all need a safe place to live, to be treated with respect and dignity. The church has a mandate to promote peace which comes from God and to address the issues that affect the community, help the community to unite and find solutions to their problem and encourage its members to become peacemakers in the face of injustice¹. Chapter four dealt with the situation in Rwanda regarding conflict and development, the role of women and the factors that inhibit the role of women in it. This chapter revealed that the Rwandan conflicts are rooted in history and the genocide was the results of that ongoing conflict. Rwandan women were more vulnerable than men in the war of 1994 and they are still vulnerable. Women face many challenges that cause them not to be fully involved in development. Rwandan women were also involved in genocide either as victims or as perpetrators. Women are currently involved in peacemaking and they need the support of the church and the government to be more effect.

¹ August (2010: 99) suggests that, "the church and its people need to be equipped for its witnessing in word and deed." This chapter makes clear that in Christ Jesus is the proper place for those who seek peace and justice.

In order to find answers to the developmental challenges of Rwandan women, the final chapter will indicate that women are in a good position to be peacemakers. Therefore, women have a great role as well as an obligation to stand up for their community and fight for the dignity and well-being of all community members. Women can also fight for the abolition of injustice against the marginalized people, the abuse of power and inequality in sharing natural resources in the community.

This chapter is about the empowerment of women in order to increase their peace-making potential in community development. The chapter puts forward practical recommendations for how to address the current situation where not enough acknowledgment is given for the role of women in community development. These recommendations are discussed in light of previous chapters and literature, but also presents additionally supported insights into the role of women in peacemaking with regards to community development.

5.2 Women as free agents

Every human being needs others to live a successful life. The denial and rejection of others as well as the pride are hindrance to community development. Peace through reconciliation, solidarity and reciprocity are required for women to reconstruct a better community. Division in Rwanda is a serious challenge in which many women are involved either by their choice or forced by someone else. The consequences are always hard to bear.

Nyambura Njoroge (in Oduyoye and Kanyoro 1992: 185) reminds us that “for women to achieve their freedom, they will have to cultivate confidence in themselves rather than being motivated by any role models.” Akoto (in Phiri and Nadar: 2000: 100) adds that “for a long time African women have lacked faith and confidence in themselves. As a result they have imitated those they considered role models and have thereby inhibited their own freedom to be transformed into ‘healthy’ women.” Many women lack confidence and always wait for others to do their work, and when there is no one willing to help, and when they are in financial crisis, they cannot hire their facilitators or mentors (some people never give a free service). In this situation, it will be difficult for women to try again.

Nussbaum (2000:51) concurs with Akoto, Oduyoye and Kanyoro. She writes “when we tell people what is good for them, we show too little respect for people’s freedom as agents. People are best judges for themselves. If we prevent them from doing things according to their choice we treat them like kids.” Rwandan women need to think out of box, identify their problems and find their solutions. The issues of other countries are totally different from their problems; therefore the way to resolve them must be different. The people from outside must come as supporters and facilitators, not as “remote control.” Rwandan women have their rights and dignity; they must refuse to be “robot-like” concerning the development of their community.

Many of the factors constraining women from taking back their agency are rooted in cultural norms, as already stated. Jennie, E. Burnet (2011) and the Rwanda Initiative for Sustainable Development report that “Customary norms, cultural values oppressed women that they were denied access to the land and they have been forced into new roles in family and society because many men were busy in ubuhake ([www.risdrwanda.org>home>Projects/Activities>Research](http://www.risdrwanda.org/home/Projects/Activities/Research)).

Although it appears that there are many factors constraining Rwandan women, today Rwandan women are calling for peace, justice, protection and they demand their rights to be effective participants in development.

5.3 Women as agents of survivors.

In time of conflicts women suffer far more than men (cf. chapter 4.1). The majority of Rwandan women do not have adequate training and education to allow them to participate effectively in development. In rural areas women have more struggles such as poor health, transport, they are still using old methods in their production activities. They have too many domestic responsibilities and without the help of the husband and with polygamy, the lack of rights to inheritance and access to other resources. Although the women work very hard, they do not have full control over their products. Sometimes a woman becomes like an instrument for the use of others in the family and is blamed for all failures in the family. Her efforts are hardly acknowledged and rewarded.

Lotter (2005: 43) makes the same observation that "many poor people cannot visualize themselves as agents who can actively work and strive to change at least some of their circumstances. They have lost beliefs in their ability to influence events, they thus live with a consciousness of their own powerlessness and inability to influence or change anything." They need support and motivation, appreciation and encouragement. They must be assured that they are not on their own. They also need the protection of men. Judge Navanethem Pillay was born in South Africa. She was elected judge of the International tribunal in Rwanda and the president (1999-2003). She is remembered for establishing that rape is an act of sexual assault as acts of genocide and no longer a trophy of war (<http://www.law.harvard.edu/home/>). Pillay has become an inspiration to Rwandan women and she encourages them to stand for their rights and to address the issue of rape with confidence.

Reconstruction is the strong hope for a country after war. In many cases politicians fail. Reconstruction and rebuilding of a state can only be achieved through collective actions. The contribution of women is first to understand the reality of the situation, identifying the errors and analyzing the causes. Their experiences can be the departure point and then the focus can be on putting their energy together towards a solution. In Rwanda today, when they talk about the needy in the community they mostly refer to the survivors of genocide, meaning the Tutsi. They leave aside the Hutu community. However among them are orphans, widows, wives of prisoners, and here I must make clear that not all prisoners are guilty of the accusations. They were in jail just because of their identity, and had no rights or justice.

Rwandan women have come to organize themselves into movements and organizations and are vigorously fighting for their liberation. It is a struggle to deal with and to recover from the past because they are still fighting along ethnic lines. A word of praise and a compliment builds the woman up and every word of criticism breaks her down. The Hutu women are blamed for genocide and are silenced by always being reminded of their failure to protect their fellow women. Their organizations are devised into groups of separate Hutus and Tutsis. They seldom mix and the leadership will fall on Tutsi whether they are qualified or not. Women should come together as a team, both Tutsis and Hutus. Women have great responsibility to build up their

children especially their daughters, encouraging them to get an education that will give them freedom to get good jobs outside the house; warning their sons and daughters about abusive friends, and teaching them about HIV/AIDS. Therefore, education will teach women and their children that, life is not about winning the war, it is about caring for human beings and treating others with dignity.

Community empowerment is not to give people what they need. It is also helping them to be able to provide for their needs. Msabah (2012:148) states that “community empowerment is about equipping people with skills, the knowledge and/or the expertise that will enable them to provide for themselves what they need. The ultimate goal of community development should be self-sustenance or self-reliance.”

United State President Abraham Lincoln in Nussbaum (2000: 195) says that, “both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God, each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any man should dare to ask a just God assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men’s faces, but let us judge not that we be not judged.” He calls people to love and to support one another.

5.4 Women and the Role of the church

Some churches in Rwanda were more involved in politics than others. The ones involved failed to make justice available to its members. As a result, some Christians and church leaders were used by people in power to promote violence. In the history of genocide, many people were killed in church buildings where they ran to hide. The victims thought the killers would fear God and leave them alone. Unfortunately the churches became a tool of swift massacre. The genocide had proved that God does not dwell in a church building and the real dwelling of God is in the heart of a human being. Many churches became memorials of genocide, but today the churches are taking the lead in making peace: through healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Women play a big role in church. They look after orphans, restore relationships starting by members of their local church; and are more involved in charity work than men. Guillebaud (2002:246) states that “Marie, a Hutu lady, in genocide she has taken in three Tutsi survivors’

children. After the war Marie together with her friends are caring for other orphans who are themselves looking after younger siblings.”

Some Rwandans, regardless of ethnicity, are victims of the authoritarian character of the government rule in Rwanda. The core group that controls the Rwandan state does not represent or even act in the best interests of the entire Tutsi community. However, it is fair to say that the Rwandan government is dominated by the Tutsi minority who are the inner circle that wields real power in Rwanda. In situation like this, people need God’s grace for real change. They need the peace that can last, the peace Jesus brought us. The church has a responsibility to address those dividing issues, the needs of the community and motivate the faith of members and encourage them to find solutions through repentance, forgiveness and dialogue. Women comprise the biggest amount of church members, and they are more vulnerable than men in general. Therefore, the church should be women’s resource for development. Women should be more involved in church ministries and work hard in favor of children and families, and then the rest of the community. Women also need full support of the government, the church and the rest of the community to be more constructive in peacemaking and community development.

Sande (2004: 20) affirms that “when we remember God’s mercy and draw on His strength, we invariably see things more clearly and respond to conflict wisely.” Jacqueline Grant (1992:36) affirms that the church is in a good position to help women to become real peacemakers. She writes “if the liberation of women is not proclaimed in the church, to make the gospel real, the church and the proclamation cannot be about divine liberation. If the church does not share in the liberation struggle of Black women, its liberation struggle is not authentic. If the women are oppressed, the church cannot possibly be a visible manifestation that the gospel is reality” (from Kanyoro and Robins 1992: 36).

Jesus called his disciples to be peacemakers. The biblical idea of peace is to make whole that which has been chaotic, to restore harmony amidst discord. Such peacemaking starts by integrating of own personality into one’s family and community. Jesus warned the world as well about violence and conflicts but he commanded his followers to be instruments of peace. The

women of the Rwandan community are mostly churchgoers. They are the body of Christ and are commanded to follow the new commandment (Jn. 10:34 "love one another as I have loved you"). Haugen (1999:174) writes: "we are all qualified to seek justice. When it comes to seeking justice for the hurting in our world, God doesn't have a roster. He intends to use you and me." Women's participation in the process of peacemaking is an obligation, not just because they are more vulnerable than men, rather because they are new creations in Christ, and for this reason they are called to take care of other women and men in need. In other words, they should be facilitators and make a difference in other people's life.

5.5 Recommendations

These recommendations will emphasize the role of women in peace making and development as well as the advantages of empowering women to become more effective in that role. If these recommendations are taken seriously by all women, women will gain enough power to change the community.

5.5.1 Women as facilitators of peace and forgiveness

In Phiri (2000:190), Rakoczy states that "to be non-violent means to begin to disarm our hearts and to meet others as friends not enemy. We are all called to create communities of non-violence, to recreate the church in the image of Christ the peacemaker." Every woman in Rwanda had suffered as a result of what happened in 1994. However, the commitment to reconciliation is very difficult to make. They are still living with pain caused by violence. Reaching out to "others" (opposing tribes), brings fear because of a lack of trust and different reactions among the citizens. Helmick (2001:11) writes that "forgiveness is the only effective response to open the past, it opens up an effective future."

Forgiveness is a choice made by people who want to put the past behind them and go forward after conflicts. Forgiveness brings a feeling of healing and leads to freedom from bitterness, anger, revenge, resentment and rejection. In Phiri (2000: 204), Rakoczy affirms that "the real peacemaking begins from within since we must be at peace within ourselves in order to bring this gift to others." Peacemaking is a therapy for the wounds of the past. Helmick (2001: 13)

says that “forgiveness restores and transforms.” Unforgiveness is a bondage that keeps peace away. If we don’t forgive, we cannot prosper, for we always hold on to the past and we cannot move forward. Helmick (2001: 17) states that forgiveness is meant to bring us into relationship with one another, not to drive us apart through self-justification or modes of insincerity.” Only God can guarantee the capacity to forgive genuinely. In Rwanda people try to make peace but this peace is hindered by ongoing remembrance and discussions of the past. As St. Francis prayed, the Rwandan, whenever they remember, should focus on what they can give, not receive. The churches have a responsibility to encourage their members to discover what is missing in their relationships and the needs of the people around them.

Forgiveness is a process in the choices we make and it may take a while to be achieved. How do we forgive? Who deserves forgiveness? And where do we start? Here are suggestions of how we forgive others:

- “1. Focus on what you can give, not what you can receive
2. Order past offences out of your mind.
3. Repeat a scripture that may encourage you in your struggles
4. Give the situation to God and allow Him to guide you
5. Intercede for the person you want to forgive
6. Verbally do not bring it up again
7. Express God’s grace and mercy” (Author: Unknown).

Actually, forgiveness has a double role to play: it releases, sets free the person who forgives and it leaves the past behind. Forgiveness also opens a door for a new beginning and enables us to discover our capacities for peace building. Everyone played a role in what happened in Rwanda and whoever thinks, he/she is innocent, needs to forgive himself/ herself for what was not done to prevent what happened. Helmick (2001:200) suggests that “in the process of healing, all individuals of the broader community must be at the same pace along the journey and all

people must engage in truth, justice and mercy.” I will recommend that every Rwandan wherever he is, starts this process of forgiveness without looking on other people’s actions, to allow others to get involved. The political leaders should be separated from religious leaders in order to discipline without excuses those who transgress the government laws and to take seriously the Law of God though both must work together for a better community.

5.5.2 Women as mothers

In the words of Phiri and Nadar (2000: 212) “children are the future citizens, the state must protect their capabilities protect them physically against their abusers, child labor, illiteracy, hunger, etc. In African culture, children belong to the community and from their mother they receive the knowledge about the meaning of the community, how to take care of one another and a healthy tradition.”

As already commented, in African culture, children are regarded as the strength of the family, the glory of the mother and the power of the fathers, A barren woman was a joke, isolated and useless in the community. Rwandan women liked having many children and the husbands were very pleased since children belong to the father. In Rwanda today, many mothers lost their children and their husbands at the same time. They carry anger, shame, sadness, and guilt for failing to protect them though they had no ability to stop the war. They lack joy and the prestige of being called mothers. They feel devalued in their status of motherhood, they lost their protection, and they are unsafe. Life has never been the same for people after the war. Beside mothers, who’ve lost families there are many children without parents, love, care or protection. They are lonely and abandoned with bad memories especially those who witnessed the death of their relatives. Some don’t have a home and even their land was taken or divided, others do not even remember where they are coming from.

Ruether (2007: 135) states that “mothers have important insights to contribute. As they raise their children in an increasingly toxic and chemically saturated world, women can contribute in terms of environmental health.” Women by nature are the first caregivers. They are mothers of humankind. They expect the supernatural to happen every day. They are nurturers, they love and they have the right qualities to ensure security for the children. The mother helps her

children to prepare for their future and is able to motivate them to pursue their happiness and to implant it into the children's future. If every mother teaches her children well, it will change the way young Africans are now living: toying with their education, solving problems with violence, using drugs and involvement in crime, prostitution, running away from home and becoming rebellious.

In the case of Rwanda, although people try to bring children together in orphanages, there are many other children living in the streets who long for a home, a family, and a person they can call father and mother. Some beg for money for food and others earn money for food from sex. These children are exposed to other risks as well such as ignorance, lack of healthcare, drugs, poor communication, destitution, addiction. Before the war of 1994, many orphans and abandoned children were taken into families of relatives and were raised as their own children. Today after the family bond is cut off; the children who are taken in by families are sometimes used as slaves or become victims of sexual abuse.

In order to correct the mistakes of the past which cause conflicts that led to war, mothers must teach their children the origins of the conflicts among Rwandans, and the right ways of conduct as good citizens, encourage them to participate in consolidating the unity, peace and the progress of their country. The fathers must also support their wives in the process of educating their children. The storytelling should be the key here for some parents who didn't have access to education. Both parents should try hard and send their children to school. Good education is the good start towards development. Our parents used to tell us stories while sitting around the fire in the evenings before bedtime or under the moonlight. They told us about the origin of the Rwandan tribes, the famines that ravaged Rwanda for many years, the heroes of the countries, the dynasties of Rwanda, we never forget them, but they never took it seriously. The conflicts between Hutu and Tutsi were invisible among the ordinary people. We couldn't feel the tension between the relationships. Things were very good. For instance we grew up with the idea that during monarchy, the heir to the throne must be a child born holding in his tiny hands the seeds of millet –an indication from their God (Imana) that he was destined to rule. The identity of this infant, who was to become successor, was kept confidential by three Abiru

(members of the royal council) until the king's death (www.orwelltoday.com/rwandabookthousand). This lie had remained in some Rwandan people's mind and they believe that they are born for politics even if they are incompetent. Women have a role in retelling the truth about the history of their country.

There are also everyday facts common points that must be taught to young children in order to motivate them and encourage them to love and to protect the peace of Rwanda. Mothers in their daily lives, with the little time they may have, have the responsibility to teach their children the truth about Rwanda as their home. "Others," either Hutus or Tutsis are not foreigners, not absolute enemies; we share the some land and same origin, are human beings worthy of love, respect and dignity wherever we may be.

Now it is time every child learns and knows the truth about who he is and where he/she is coming from and why there are ongoing conflicts among Rwandans and how people can live in harmony. We cannot deny who we are, Hutus, Tutsis or Twa, and there is nothing to hide any more. They talk about our differences and the alarming history of genocide, but our children must know that besides our differences, we are made in the image of God. We should not follow the old thoughts of the past, but we must go back into our inner man where we found our identity and live a message of hope for all Rwandans.

When surrounded by conflicts, it is not easy for these women to be at peace. The wounds from the past have injured them and they live without hope. Some mothers developed an anti-child attitude and they have explanations for their feelings: they do not have enough space for them; they failed to protect theirs, there is no time for children, children cost a fortune and they cannot bring back what they lost, when they grow up they do evil thing. The anti-children mothers live in their world and want nothing to do with children, they don't care and they think that having children is a big mistake. This is a serious problem because if I agree with Phiri that "children are the future citizens," how will Rwanda be in the following years if we don't care for its future Rwandans? These mothers need counseling for their healing, comfort and support from government, church and friends. Some children also want to be independent and they hate parents. Most of these children are involved in prostitution, gangs and are often used in

dangerous errands for money. Mothers must pray for their children and ask God to change them. Mothers must also behave in a way that children can learn and grow spiritually.

This situation should be understood not as the end of the road, but a new beginning. These mothers and these children need love, protection and affection. From my own experience, being a woman and having children is a way that changes a mother's life positively. With children every mother feels loved. It gives one an opportunity to educate them and to contribute in rebuilding one's community by raising children to be good citizens and it is an opportunity to correct the mistake of the past. Caring for children keeps the mothers busy and away from negative thoughts. Children give mothers a reason to get up early in the morning and start working. They restore hope and life. They give comfort and children bring joy into the house and they build bridges between families. Therefore, if possible all women should have at least one child to care for, especially now many Rwandan orphans are longing for a home and for loving parents and to help other children whenever they have the opportunity. Once a woman has dreamed of being a mother, and your dream has been fulfilled even if all your children are no more, the natural love of a mother for her children will remain inside you. We just need support to heal the pain and grief of the past and to carry on with life. Therefore, I will urge every hurt woman to seek healing first before caring for other people. The church may intervene to restore the broken hearts of mothers, widows and orphans, support them in their needs and encourage them to speak out and address the issues of the survivors (Hutu and Tutsi). The church may also work together with other organizations and the government to change lives in the community because women are strongly represented in church

Many children, especially in rural areas, are afraid of childless women; they see them sometimes as monsters and murderers, but a home with children gives security to other children. It is hospitable because it is always open and there is always food. In Rwandan culture, there is always food in a house with young children because we always expect visitors who may come as well with children and they cannot leave the house without having something to eat, especially when they are not from the neighborhood. Children are blessings. They must be

loved and their rights must be protected and this is every mother's responsibility, through the help of the government and the rest of the society.

5. 5.3 Women and men in partnership

The successful people in business are those inspired and encouraged by the experiences of people who experienced the same struggle as theirs. Acceptance of one another, more growth and working together open doors for learning. Women and men need to work together to build their community,

August (2010: 74) defines partnership as "working together, sharing responsibilities, calling forth each other's gifts, caring for the life of the community. It does not mean excluding men in order to affirm women's gifts." He adds that "we need mutuality to build a new community where everybody belongs" (p74). The Rwandans must overcome the barriers of division, put the past behind and work together as one nation. The Rwandan community is looking for heroes among women and men, who can stand up for peace and truth, who have courage, knowledge of Rwandan story, who will protect the country and its citizens. People with positive objectives, who are willing to take risks and act differently, people who understand the Rwandan situation and want to care for those in need without fear, with special abilities to help people out of their trials: poverty, illness, insecurity, and to end conflict between Hutus and Tutsis. People who will bring unity, not division, who seek God's wisdom and obey the new commandment of Jesus Christ; the commandment to love one's neighbor. As Edet and Ekeya have suggested in August (2010:73) "humanity will keep image and likeness of God if both male and female work as a body through respect for each other." It is highly recommend for women to get adequate education if they want to work with men in public sectors. The works of women must be recognized and awarded and women should not have any limitations from any service when they are qualified for it. The church should offer women theological training and financial support for a successful academic work and help women to create opportunities to work with their community in return, and women should not be excluded from church leadership to facilitate dialogue in partnership.

5.5.4 The role of women in hospitality

“In our political, social and religious discourse it is this recognition- the thoroughly African reality of Ubuntu that most need to rediscover. For whatever view we hold, it is only when we truly believe each person’s humanity is to be revered, respected and cherished that the absolute condition of prerequisite for peace will have been achieved. It is only when we can look each other in the eyes and see each other as fundamentally holy that true peace will be possible (from Cape Times, Tuesday, 23 October 2001).”

In the Bible, when God had created everything, He made man (male and female) in His image and placed him in the Garden of Eden to enjoy everything God had placed in it. Life was good for Adam. God saw that everything was good but not very good until God had made a suitable helper for Adam (Gen. 1-2). Inter-relationships and communication were in the will of God since the foundation of the world. All creation is called to work together in collaboration to make useful all the gifts that God had placed in us and to support those who cannot help themselves. Human hospitality is rooted in their maker who provides and protects his creation. No one is useless in society; unfortunately many people do not get a chance to prove their abilities. We need to ask questions in order to know others better and accept our differences which separate us and yet which make us complete. How can we define hospitality?

In Africa, hospitality may never be separated from the themes of caring, providing, helping, sharing and mothering the needy. Oduyoye (2001: 93) explains that “hospitality as a way of preserving and prolonging life in Africa because we value life.” However, she affirms that “women experience several traditional practices of hospitality that are accompanied by risk of disease and violence, not to mention economic strains (p 46).” Rose Zoe Ombianga provides four definitions of hospitality: “1) welcoming/receiving, reception 2) charity/ almsgiving; 3) boarding and lodging; 4) protecting/ sanctuary, integration” and she added that “hospitality brings opportunity and risks (in Oduyoye (2001:93).”

August (2003: 64) speaks about hospitality in the following manner “hospitality embraces all that can be said of generosity, and underlines the need of concrete interaction. Hospitality

involves the risks of inviting others into our own environment, and being prepared for reciprocal hospitality.”

Amba Oduyoye (2001: 27) concurs with August in saying that “those who are blessed demonstrate their appreciation of their good fortune by being hospitable to others. This makes hospitality a religion - cultural trait of Africans. Giving, to ensure life and to preserve the life-force or save the face - of others is part of African culture. Sharing is built into communal existence; but it does not remain there. All strangers, living or passing through become the responsibility of the host community. This principal of hospitality is based on honoring reciprocity.”

African women must, therefore, not accommodate only their friends and relatives, they must also look after their neighbors: there are people in the street, next door, in our work place and in our church who are in need. The aliens living among us have sometimes come far from their home leaving behind their family, land, job and identity. They may be rich or poor but we carry the image of God that makes us common. In other words they need to be welcomed, protected and loved. Women as instruments of God in bringing a new life into this world should be the bridge to the unity between the community and people in need and encourage others to participate.

It should be a recommendation that hospitality goes hand in hand with justice and reciprocity of both the guest and the host with mutual respect. The church should support women’s movements dehumanization. Abuse of women leads to their embarrassment in society, to feelings of shame and confusion and guilt. They think of being failures in their marriage and sometimes they lose their self-respect.

In 1999, I was in Rwanda and Jane was my neighbor. She was a beautiful young woman and mother of two children. Her husband was in prison at that time. One night she heard someone knocking on the door. She refused to open as she was afraid and asked who was at the door, but the stranger remained silent and persisted in knocking and hitting the door. Jane panicked and shouted for help. The people who were security guards that night came running and they found the man standing at the door. He was determined to get into the house. It was a police

officer. He commanded the security guards to tell Jane to open the door and after he got inside, he asked them to leave and go back to work. He raped Jane in the presence of her children, beat her badly and accusing her of disrespect and of causing a scandal. According to the officer, the motive of his visit was fair because it is the right of an African man to satisfy his sexual need with whom he desires and as an officer with a gun, in a country at war, it was unforgivable for Jane to put him into such a humiliating situation.

Many other women experience similar situations, and they have suffered in silence. This kind of person should be expelled from the community if he cannot change his behavior. John Harsany in Nussbaum (2000:128) says “a person displaying ill will toward others does remain a member of this community, but not with his whole personality. That part of his personality that harbors this hostile anti-social feeling must be excluded from membership and has no claim for a hearing when it comes to defining our concept of social utility.”

The Benebikira (nuns) of Rwanda give a logical perspective of hospitality. In September 26/2010, they received Courage of Conscience Award from Peace Abbey. They stood on the truth and refused to separate themselves into ethnic groups and for their instance on sheltering those seeking refuge (www.engagingpeace.com/Rwanda). Women are the most exposed to visitors. They are the heart of the family and life is centered on them. They warm the house and make their homes a safe place for everyone. However, not all strangers are trustworthy. Women however should have a discerning heart that resists the parasites, says no to abusers and manipulators, and speaks out in freedom of speech and justice. Women must show the men their need for protection and the men in the house and in the community may also participate and show their full support of the women.

A hospitable woman shares human rights with the rest of the community. She mustn't act out of fear but out of love and compassion. Women have learned from the mistakes of the past and from the experiences of others women. Reading books, watching news, praying and standing for their rights for “peace and truth “may inspire women to overcome their struggles and come up with answers. Culture, tradition and religion have been used as tools of

oppression against women every day but women must always remember that learning is gaining power.

It is clear that in violent society, not everyone is good enough to have a seat with and to be accepted in our lives. Some people need to be loved at a distance. Some people need to be watched with close attention. Women are the starting point in the process of change and in the achievement of their dreams. They are also some men who love justice and who are willing to help women on their route of liberation. Those men must not be pushed away. They must be encouraged, motivated to take part as partners and leaders. However these men must never feed women with negative thoughts or attempt to take over the leadership.

In our homes, families and community, we need women who can open their arms to people in need and meet them with any available help. Hospitality requires patience, time to build relationships and sometimes that period is painful and slow. Women will have to make sacrifices, show trust, share life and make others part of their lives. Hospitality is successful when everyone involved responds to the invitation positively with honest communication and reciprocity. The church must educate its members about hospitality which must not be confused with parasitism that often creates problems in African marriages. Polygamy must be discouraged in church community and hospitality must be the duty of every human being.

5.6 Summative Conclusion

This study researched the role of Rwandan women in development and peacemaking in the aftermath of the civil war of 1994. It reveals that Rwandan women were more vulnerable than men during the civil war or the genocide of 1994 and that they are still facing suffering after 20 years post conflict. Therefore, Rwandan women should stop pointing fingers, take responsibility and join men and other members in the process of rebuilding their community and making peace for a better living.

Findings from the study reveal that Rwanda has known periods of ongoing conflict that has deeply affected Rwandan society and that women played the role of both victims and perpetrators in these conflicts (cf. Chapter 4). The authoritarian nature of society in Rwanda,

resulted in people following authoritarian rules without questions, which resulted in the sad fact that even some church members (including leaders) were actively involved in genocide. Furthermore, it is clear from the findings that in societies where men's dominance is strengthened, Rwandan women (like others from the rest of the world) are among the most vulnerable groups (cf. Chapter 2). Women have less privileges, power, control and wealth in many cultures, so these assets for development often still lie largely in men's hands. It is also evident that the majority of women experience domestic violence continually and this violence increases during times of conflict. This situation adds significantly to women's vulnerabilities, because their responsibilities increase at home while their quality of life remains instable. It is evident that many of the lasting effects of the war are gendered and that poverty (and therefore the need for development) is deeply related to conflict. Beverley Haddad and Debbie Bonnin (2001: 11) note the relationship between gender, poverty and conflict in the following manner: "household poverty is developed gradually at a number of levels until all possessions are gone. Goods are lost and looting after the attacks, the cost of food increases, as the violence increases the breadwinners are increasingly becoming victims resulting in higher proportion of female-headed households in these affected areas." It is time for women to stand together raise their voices, claim their rights and fight against women marginalization.

According to chapter 3, it is clear that "Shalom" comes from God. Because the authority in the world stands for God, it should be exercised with love and care for others in the community. It is important to recognize that women and men are both made in the image of God and that for this reason women should be treated with dignity, freedom and equality as human beings. Furthermore, the church also should promote peace and address all issues that destroy the community by encouraging and educating its members in order to restore the values of humanity and maintain peace and unity in the community. This will motivate its members to become peacemakers and will encourage them to focus on people first; their safety, well-being, giving them adequate support to facilitate their peacemaking efforts and opportunities to use their abilities to transform their community. This will only be possible if people, both male and female can agree to have open dialogue about the issues concerning their community. August (2010: 83) believes that, "listening, in a spirit of partnership and equality, is the most practical

response we can make and is the foundation for our mutual partnership to reform unjust structures.”

Although Rwandan women experienced domestic violence and abuses during the war and are still living in pain, today Rwandan women are calling for peace, justice, protection and demand their rights to be effective participants in their own development and that of the country (Chapter 5). However, Rwandan women can only transform their community if they unite to grow stronger through education, coming together in associations and being involved in public life and society (cf. chapter 5.6). If women want to see justice and fairness in the life of the community, they must stand up and fight for their rights and peace. Women in particular, as noted throughout Chapter 5, have many assets at their disposal in this request for peace and justice. However, as a recommendation, the government and the church work together with women as peacemakers and stand in solidarity with women and other marginalized groups. Refugees in exile should also be protected, and given a chance to settle and start over with their lives and the local government should facilitate coexistence between refugees and local people. Promoting peace and restoration of human dignity should be the priority of the church and women are the ideal peacemakers within this context.

There is hope for the restoration of Rwanda as a nation and the place to begin is with the most suffering people in Rwandan society. Despite their seemingly vulnerable role post conflict, the study has shown that women (within the context of home, church and society) have a key role to play as peacemakers who can lay the foundations for addressing the development challenges that face Rwandan society today.

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