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ROLE OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN CONFLICT AND PEACEBUILDING IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE ISLAMIC RELIGION

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree award in any other University.

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Supervisor's Approval

This project has been submitted with my approval as the University Supervisor

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DEDICATION

My deep appreciation goes to my supervisor, Professor Maria Nzomo who used her wealth of knowledge in International Studies and diplomacy in directing me through the writing of this thesis. I owe her a great debt of gratitude. I must confess that, if not for the strong words of encouragement and hope from my mum and dad, I would not have been able to complete and submit this research. Their continuous contacts and demand for updates on the progress of my writing, served as catalyst and impetus for me to be able to keep the flame burning to the point of completing this research project. I remain deeply grateful to them for this. A million thanks, Dad. I would also like to express unique and deep gratitude to my brothers, Clarence and Benjamin, for their encouragement and often acting as "shock absorbers" in the process of bearing the burden of my moods throughout the writing this dissertation. I am also very grateful to the University of Nairobi administration for providing me an enabling environment to be able to study.

ABSTRACT

Wars, armed violence and insecurity continue to blight Africa, contributing to human suffering and obstructing human development across much of the continent. Preventing and reducing violent conflict has become a key priority not only for African governments and peoples, but also for international organizations and the rest of the world. This research project examines not only the religious dimension of violent conflicts and insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa, but also, accounts for the role of faith-based actors involved in peacebuilding, probing their capabilities and effectiveness as well as the challenges that assail their roles as conflict managers in order to make recommendations on various ways in which key stakeholders and governments can incorporate faith based actors in key decisions for faster peaceful conflict resolution in the future. It aims to contribute to improvements in conflict prevention and reduction policies and programmes in Africa.

This study notes an increase in religious violence in Sub-Saharan Africa and identifies that religious organizations could be a powerful yet underutilized tool in the prevention and resolution of many African conflicts. It further notes that religious traditions, scriptures, rituals and symbols, since they have powerful narratives, may easily become the cornerstone of ethnic or nationalist projects that divide people. But they can equally create narratives of human dignity and reconciliation. It also presents a varied range of religious actors such as ordinary people, leaders, grassroots organizations, NGOs, transnational networks, and organized institutions who can be very instrumental in peacebuilding work though they cannot replace the other work needed to resolve other interlocking problems (e.g. inequality, marginalization, structural malfunctioning, state failure, global dependence dynamics, etc.) related to conflict and peace.

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CAR	-	Central African Republic
NCCK	-	National Council of Churches of Kenya
KAICIID	-	International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue
NGOs	-	non-governmental organizations
PBUH	-	Peace be Upon Him
MUJAO	-	Movement for Monotheism and Jihad
AQMI	-	Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
BRAVE	-	Building Resilience against Violent Extremism
RINGO	-	Religious international nongovernmental organizations
UN	-	United Nations
DRC	-	Democratic Republic of Congo
USIP	-	United States Institute of Peace
TRC	-	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
ECOSOC	-	Economic and Social Council
USA	-	United States of America
UNFPA	-	United Nations Population Fund
FBOs	-	Faith Based Organizations
IRCSL	-	Inter Religious Council of Sierra Leone
OAS	-	Organization of African States
CAN	-	Christian Association of Nigeria
DFID	-	Department for International Development
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development

RENAMO	-	Mozambican National Resistance
REMHI	-	Recovery of Historical Memory Project
AIDS	-	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome.
OIC	-	Organization of the Islamic Conference
SIT	-	School for International Training
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
US	-	United States

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter of the study will give the background to the study, state the statement of the problem study, set out the study's objective, provide a review of relevant literature, formulate the study's hypotheses, give the theoretical background and finally, the methodology that this study will use.

1.1 Background to the Study

Most of the conflicts that have arisen in the post-Westphalian world have been state-based, and although very few states in the world have been theocracies, it is difficult to ascribe a purely religious cause to a conflict. Nonetheless, there have been more and more disputes since 1946. In the case of an internal or transnational civil war, the religious aspect of conflict may be more prominent. Using a database, Toft reveals that religious civil wars account for almost two thirds of all civil wars, with a spike in recent decades.[1] Think-tanks such as the Pew Research Center also note, but do not have a general reason for a rise in religious conflicts. It should be noted, from a scientific point of view, that the key causes of such conflicts are not inherently religious. Juergensmeyer argues that political theology is not always at the center of the conflict, implying the kind of political agreement suggested by the dogma of a religion with the state.[2] Wars and conflicts have a wide variety of triggers, whether economic or identity-related, as with any social conduct, and the religious element of any conflict, among others, is only one dominant feature ever.

In Africa, conflicts are diverse and complex, and efforts at managing and resolving them are mixed. The continent has faced and continues to experience several conflicts and civil wars. Conflict in Africa has had many effects on development, human rights as well as peace and security in the continent. The horn of Africa, for example, has seen the highest number of conflicts, be it in Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and even Ethiopia and Eritrea.

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[1] Toft,M. 'Getting Religion? The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War', (International Security, Volume 31, Issue 4), pp. 97-131.
[2] Juergensmeyer,M., The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1993)

Somalia and South Sudan, for example, are mainly underdeveloped because of conflict. These two countries have also recorded a high number of human violation incidents due to the conflict. Conflict remains the biggest challenge for the African continent to date. As such, several conflict resolution mechanisms have been put in place, however much conflict persists. This has called for more inclusive and effective peacebuilding and conflict resolution strategies.

Many western social scientists projected for most of the 20th century that religion would cease to be a relevant factor in culture and politics. To thinkers such as Marx, John Stuart Mill, Weber, Freud, Comte, and Durkheim, many trace this body of thought known alternatively as the theory of modernization and secularization. Current data, however, suggests that religion in African culture remains a vital entity. As such, under certain religious and non-religious conditions, Religion and religious institutions can act as conflict perpetrators, as bystanders, and as peace-makers.

Religion has been implicated in direct physical violence, including, persecution rioting, and massacres. It has also been implicated in structural and cultural violence, helping to establish relationships of dominance and reinforcing myths that legitimize and motivate physical violence. A cursory glance at history reveals that in the name of faith, both religions have committed crimes. Christianity played a vital role in making the command of leaders clear and tolerable for the rank and file in Nazi Germany.[3] In several contemporary wars, theological myths help to dehumanize others, supporting massacres such as the Yazidis' Sinjar Massacre and their systematic enslavement by Daesh, and the violence of the Lord's Resistance Army in Central Africa.

Religion can also be involved in conflict through inaction and omission-by failing to bear witness or by failing to challenge norms that lead to negative peace. Finally, given the global rise of terrorism, in the name of religion, special attention must now be paid to religious extremism. Mosques and churches are used to recruit, store weapons, and gather fighters. Clothing and uniforms are adorned with religious symbols, rather than nationalistic and political insignia. Indeed, violent conflicts in Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Israel,

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[3] Bergen, D. L. "Catholics, Protestants, and Christian Antisemitism in Nazi Germany." Central European History, vol. 27, no. 3, 1994, pp. 329–348., doi:10.1017/S0008938900010256.

and Afghanistan indicate that this religious dimension can lead to violence in intra-state conflicts.

The issue of religion and peacebuilding has been neglected in international affairs studies and diplomacy. However, it is important to analyze the potential of religion in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.[4] The carriers of religious ideas, like religious leaders and faith-based organizations, can play a key role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Religious organizations can do this by providing early warnings of conflict, acting as good offices in a conflict situation and advocating for mediation and reconciliation. Religion could potentially present a decisive source as well as a unique resource for preventing war and addressing root causes of war within a society. Conflict resolution and peacebuilding should be an all-inclusive process that exceeds traditional diplomacy as such religion can be a key asset in building peace and resolving conflict. This is because religion has a large constituency to influence, which makes it a perfect avenue to foster peaceful coexistence.

Religion carries with it a strong combination of cultural norms and values that are deeply embedded in individual and social conception of peace. Religion, in its basic concept, advocates for issues of human life like advocating for freedom, praying for safety and security and informing the choice of right or wrong. This makes religion a potential tool for peacemaking and reconciliation. This is why religion could be an asset and an underutilized tool in conflict management within the African continent.[5]

According to Appleby, Religion can be a source of nonviolent post-conflict transformation. Religion can as well ensure that human rights are observed. Every religion believes in respect for human rights and dignity. Religion can also be instrumental in calling for integrity in government to ensure good governance. However, the most important role of religion can be that of bringing peace through reconciliation. Religion has the potential to ensure stability and unity in a divided society. Religion has the capacity to teach and cultivate attitudes of reconciliation, forgiveness and unity among its congregation and the society at large. The religion entity can reinforce and promote a common peace-making

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[4] Rogers., M. Pursuing Just Peace: An Overview and Case Studies for Faith-Based Peacebuilders. (Baltimore, MD: Catholic Relief Services,2008)
[5] Salehyan, I., et al, Social conflict in Africa: A new database. (International Interactions, 2012)

framework. In Africa and around the world, religion has always played a vital role; religion, for example, was directly involved in the transition of post-apartheid South Africa. Religion has played a part around the world in the non-violent transitions from totalitarianism to democracy in East Germany, Poland and the Philippines.[6]

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Although conflicts exist wherever there is human interaction, it becomes a grave problem when these conflicts become violent and intractable, resulting in interstate and intrastate conflicts or wars. During the past six decades, the African continent has seen some very severe civil wars.[7] Over time, the nature and causes of African conflicts have changed as political, economic, social and environmental circumstances evolve. While the formal network of African conflict management institutions may be robust in appearance, its ability is very limited and cooperation may be impeded by ties between African governments.

Collective action to address crises, aggression, political instability and the humanitarian effects of prolonged fighting are required to respond to these conflicts. Yet cultures, communities and states broken apart by war still need to be restored, addressing the long-term social and economic effects of the conflict. The capacity to settle these conflicts becomes especially limited if they are couched up in religious terms and they become intractable. As a strong source of identity, the presence of religion in a conflict raises the stakes of the outcome of the conflict significantly. In sub-Saharan Africa, religious extremism has apparently become common, although many civilians in Chad, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Kenya, Nigeria, and Somalia have been killed by various terrorist attacks. Jihadist groups have staged rebellions in Mali, Nigeria and Somalia and have managed to at least briefly occupy large parts of the territory of these nations. In the Central African Republic (CAR), a Muslim uprising ousted a Christian-dominated government; the

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[6] Appleby, R., Building Sustainable Peace: The roles of local and transnational actors. Conference on New Religious Pluralisms in World Politics. (Washington D.C: Georgetown University, 2008)

[7] Mwencha, E. Regional Conflicts: An analysis of past and present trends and the role of Regional Organisations. African Regional and Sub-Regional organizations: Assessing their Contributions to Economic Integration and Conflict Management. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, African

Programme; Washington DC: October, 2008. 18-27

ensuing unrest erupted into violent clashes between Muslim and Christian militias and left thousands of civilians dead.

A large-scale terrorist attack at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi in Kenya in 2013 increased inter-group tensions along the coast, especially in Mombasa, where Muslim and Christian clerics were killed or disappeared, causing riots to escalate. Islamic militias carried out several attacks in the Northeastern Province and along the coast in 2014, specifically targeting Christian groups. Conflicts have rapidly crystallized along identity lines in other situations globally especially in the Central African Republic(CAR), Iraq, South Sudan, and Ukraine, resulting in crimes against humanity approaching genocide and ethnic cleansing in some cases (notably, in terms of severity, CAR and Iraq). Bearing in mind the significant international official and non-official engagement in peacemaking in Africa, it is crucial to critically analyze the apparent role of religious actors; who were largely ignored, and how they could be utilized to effectively intervene in African conflicts.

It is thus obvious that an understanding of the relations between violence, religion and peacebuilding involves an understanding of the nature of conflict, both the origins of discord and the forces of resilience. Although the religion conflict relationship has been the focus of many scholars in recent times, in most cases where this relationship has been studied, it has not been well organized to capture its role on conflict matters. In order to get a better understanding of this relationship, this paper is going to systematically investigate the positive and negative roles that religious organizations currently play in Sub-Saharan Africa. Consequently, suggestions will be made about how to reduce the negative and strengthen the positive impact in order to promote a constructive conflict dynamic that can lead to positive peace.

1.3 Research question
   i)   What is the nexus between religion and conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa?

   ii) Who are the main faith-based actors involved in conflict management in Sub-Saharan Africa?

   iii) What is the impact of religious organizations' intervention initiatives in African conflicts?

1.4 Research objective

i) To examine the nexus between religion and conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa.

ii) To account for faith-based actors involved in conflict and peacebuilding in Sub-Saharan Africa.

iii) To assess the impact of conflict management initiatives employed by Religious Organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa.

1.6 Literature review

This section of the study will give a review of the literature on religion, conflict and conflict management.

1.6.1 Theoretical literature review

1.6.2 Modernization Theory

Although the theory of modernization does not focus on domestic conflicts, its projections are directly applicable to the degree of domestic religious conflict in the world. For most of the 20th century, this theory was influential in political science and under the title of secularization theory, for the same time effectively dominated sociology. It predicts that religion is decreasing in importance in modern times for a variety of reasons and is even becoming obsolete. There are various versions of this theory that vary from the exact reasons for this decline and the magnitude of this decline, but in all versions of this theory, the reality of the decline of religion, particularly in the public sphere, is constant. The more precise prediction that religious domestic disputes are becoming less frequent and may even vanish is an apparent consequence of this general prediction. This theory's political science branch was very clear that primordial and primitive problems such as faith and race would no longer be an essential basis for conflict.[8] A good example of this prediction is the definition of its assumptions by Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi: 'Whenever and wherever religion in the West manifests itself in a way that is more than a matter of private faith, it will be described as disruptive and judged to be marginal and deviant in most Western

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[8] Fox, Ethnoreligious Conflict (note 6) 2002; Emile Sahliyeh (ed.), Religious Resurgence and Politics in the Contemporary World (New York: State University of New York Press 1990), p.3.

societies'.[9] This theory is currently decreasing in popularity, but it remains influential.[10] We would expect to see religious domestic conflicts at low and diminishing levels should this theory be right.

1.7 Empirical review

1.7.1 Religion and conflict

Religion can be a tool for promoting conflict or building peace. Even for conflicting groups such as the Protestants and the Catholics in North Ireland, divided by their religious beliefs, religion is not always the core reason for the conflict. For a sparsely populated region like the Middle East, Northern Ireland, the Balkans, Sudan, Indonesia and Kashmir, Religion has always been and will always be a factor contributing to violent conflicts either on its own or for political motives. Religious activists have blamed religion for often being the cause of most differences among conflicting groups. According to research, religious beliefs have also played a better part in contributing to the most recent violent conflicts.[11]

Smock, wonders if the War between communities living in North Ireland, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, and Kashmir is due to religious differences between those communities as analysts often debate or could it be due to other causes such as land, oil, ethnicity or historical memories. Smock describes that religion fuels conflict in two ways. First, religion prepares the way for War by shaping the loyalty and identity for warring, then religion fuels the violence by directly exposing these loyalties and identities of the community as well as for political agendas which emerge to be *casus belli*. For a case like the intra-Muslim conflicts in Iran and Algeria, Religion is thought to be defining ends but not the communities. In these regions, religion shaping identities and loyalties claim that leaders within the religious setting play a role in the mobilization of the community and acting in partnership with political entrepreneurs. The second dimension is religion defining political ambitions, which describes the historical stand religion has taken as far as political and social changes

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[9] Beit-Hallahmi, B., 'The Return of Martyrdom: Honour, Death, and Immortality', Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions 4/3 (2003) p.11.

[10] Jonathan F, A World Survey of Religion and the State (New York: Cambridge University Press 2008); Daniel Philpott, 'Has the Study of Global Politics Found Religion?' (Annual Review of Political Science 12, 2009) pp.183–202

[11] Amina R. "The Role of Religion in Peace Making", (Presented at the CSID 10th Annual Conference, May 5th, 2009)

are concerned. Relative to religion's literature on conflict, its role in cultivating democracy is well documented.[12]

Just like Smock claims, in these conflicts, both the religion and identities have collaborated in that religious counterparts, and movements who have been anticipating political changes have accepted conflict as an end product. Religious allegiance could attain a renewed significance by converting political, economic, cultural and social frustrations into complaints of identity-based nature which would be of a specific and concise objective to the politico-military loads and worsened by large scale conflicts.

When conflicts originate from a religious ground, they grow into value conflicts. According to different authors, political violence resulting from religious inspirations lead to the nasty, most biased and cruelest outcomes. Value conflicts appear to be mutually conclusive or zero-sum issues since they include firm positions and right and wrong direction perceptions, and individuals do not wish to come to a common ground and address their issues. Value conflicts cannot, therefore, be solved in distributive and pragmatic methods like other kinds of violence such as resource conflicts.[13]

Based on some evidence that religion can play a role in resolving conflicts and maintaining peace, it (Religion) can now be viewed from two perspectives, as a tool that the middle of most conflicts and one that can bring peace in a region. Considering a case in Mozambique and Nigeria, Religion demonstrated its role as a tool of peace by attempting to reconcile conflicting communities. In the end, peace and social cohesion were achieved hence building a strong foundation for human development and progress. These cases in Israel, Palestine, Sudan, Iraq, Nigeria, Macedonia, and Sudan are an indication of the crucial contribution of religion to build a peaceful world. These religious contributions in maintaining peace do not in any way bring healing but compliment secular peacemaking productively.[14]

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[12] Smock, D, Religious Contributions to Peacemaking: When Religion Brings Peace, Not War, (United States institute of peace. 2006)

[13] Ibid

[14] Jeffrey H. "Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building: The Role of Religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia", Department of Law, Governance and International Relations, (London Metropolitan University, Vol. 47, 2009)

Based on trust and moral authority, most religious organization and their leaders possess from broadly based constituencies; they are in a position to facilitate and sponsor reconstruction of post-conflict-stricken regions and also offer reconciliation aids. Considering a case in West Africa, regions such as Guinea and Sierra Leone, which were stricken by civil wars, and Liberia with ongoing civil violence, different religions, consisting of Muslims, Protestants and Catholic groups come together to provide leadership and resource to reconstruct the society and provide support to the refugees. [15]

These religious networks are of great importance in building and maintaining peace across regional and national boundaries. In Kenya, after the post-election violence, the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) members were involved in various peacebuilding programs whereby they provided humanitarian support by offering food and non-food assistance to the internally displaced persons and psychosocial support like counseling and performing arts to help relieve the trauma to those socially affected by the violence.

The NCCK was focused on promoting peace both on the national and local levels. On the national level, the council was involved in peace restoration like being a party in the dialogue involving the key disputants in the violence and also taking part in the mediation forums led by the African Union. They also advised for transitional justice mechanisms. On their attempt to bring peace on the ground level, the council partnered with other religious leaders, including the Muslim and Hindu communities, to bring long-lasting peace among the warring communities by engaging them in dialogue forums and peace meetings. This paper, therefore, discusses the efforts of the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) in promoting peace in the post-election violence in Kenya. [16]

Religion can, therefore, be described as divisive, as a factor in maintaining peace and cohesion and also a factor in conflict; however, it is exaggerated when it comes to causing conflict. In the previous decade, tens of thousands of people were killed in religious warfare. This violence paints a dirty perception of the public as pertains to religion. They describe religion to be fueling most of the international conflicts. This makes religion's role

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[15] Ibid
[16] Ngari.A., "Reconciling Kenya: Opportunities for constructing a peaceful and socially cohesive nation". (Policy Brief, 2012)

in promoting and maintaining peace be overlooked by the public. Religious institutions and leaders could mediate two conflicting parties by serving as communication links and provide peace solution and training in peacemaking mechanisms. Despite religion being the reason behind violence in Sudan (the Christians fighting against Muslims), religion, both African traditional religion and modern religions could be the solution to the civil wars and conflicts in Africa.[17]

According to research, during the post-election violence in Kenya, the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) came in with immediate, long-lasting humanitarian and peacebuilding duties. Githigaro, explaining the immediate response to the Post-Election Violence claimed that after the onset of the violence, the first response was NCCK providing humanitarian help like food and non-food support to the affected. Then came psychosocial support to provide emotional and physical support to those who faced a loss of loved ones and inflicted on physical and emotional harms. Later, church leaders and other stakeholders held community forums made to help stop the youth from engaging in violence. The NCCK, in their goal to promote healing and reconciliation in Kenya after the post-election violence, they employed different intervention as pertains the Healing and reconciliation Programs. Among these was proving a psychosocial support program to the post-election violence victims to help them recover from the trauma and suffering they faced.[18]

1.7.2 Peacemaking ability of religion

There are two approaches in which one could consider when to analyze how religion could be of importance in solving conflicts. Among these is just as discussed above, considering the role played by religious denominations in conflicts. The second dimension includes considering if and how religion could be of help in maintaining peace. This section discusses how religious beliefs could be of importance in promoting kindness to humanity and nature in general. It will also discuss how different humanitarian organizations apply these beliefs as their foundation and how organizations can bring peace among conflicting parties by application of religion. This section will also present different academic theories

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[17] Stefan D. and R. Gutiérrez. "Triggers and Characteristics of the 2007 Kenya Electoral Violence." (Development studies, 2010)
[18] Tarimo, A. "The Role of Religion in Peace building, Nairobi - Kenya." (2002)

of peacemaking and religion. Since the old age, people have been using their religious beliefs in support of their deed towards attaining peace. This is an indicator that despite evidence that religion could lead to conflict; it could also be used as an instrument for people to express their peacemaking activities.[19]

Considering Martin Luther King Jr. in the Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech claimed that he believed a day should come when every person shall kneel before God's holy places and be awarded for outstanding War and bloodshed. The land would be overwhelmed by redemptive good. He quoted from the Bible, the book of Mica 4:4 "And the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and every man shall sit under his vine and fig tree, and none shall be afraid." According to Martin Luther King Jr., this was a major motivation towards his work. Dalai Lama in a speech at New Delhi in Smile Foundation claimed that merging modern education with ancient Indian knowledge would help attain peace of mind. He was speaking about universal responsibility and compassion. According to Lama, this would not only influence the past, but it would help shape the future and build a compassionate, happier and peaceful century than the previous one. These statements from Lama have two religious' aspects. One of them is that he refers from ancient Indian knowledge which is both a cultural and religious concept. The other aspect is that it is made from a person who is enacting his religious authority.

Despite proving its efficiency and effectiveness in installing religious peace dimension is a focus in conflict resolution due to the underlying academic theory tied to this subject. The nexus between religion and peacebuilding" claimed that religion could nurture feelings of empathy and compassion, through its teachings and can be used as an inspiration towards the warring parties to reconsider their stands and reconcile. Religious leaders and institutions are said to be close to their communities and hence can understand better the dimensions of conflict and also the way to bring peace out of the conflict. Religious leaders are used in conflict resolutions due to their ability to address conflicts from both sides. This is due to their strong link to the community. Religion can resolve a conflict by not only using its contents but also by application of its functions. Positive religious messages and an individual with the people's authority, respect and charisma are of high value when used

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[19] USAID "Religion, conflict & peace building: an introductory programming guide." (USAID, 2009)

in conflict resolution or influencing the conflict. The use of religious authorities and religious dimension in conflict resolution is tied to various risks. The religious leaders could feature as puppets to their people; hence losing his credibility would not be relevant in the conflict resolution.[20]

1.7.3 Conflict Resolution through the use of Religion Dimension

Peace activities and reconciliation are central to religious identity and thus is a major component of religious actors in peacebuilding. Among the major values that inform reconciliation activities in the Christian faith include forgiveness and mercy, while in Islam, the values include fitrah and Suhl. In the Christian faith, these concepts of forgiveness and mercy are informed in scriptures such as Psalms 85 and the teachings of Jesus Christ in the gospels. Christians are taught to forgive each other in order also to be forgiven by God, and to show mercy to one another, just as God shows mercy to them.

In the Islamic faith, the values of fitrah and suhl are found in Hadiths and texts found in the Quran. Fitrah signifies the individual responsibility that all people have to uphold peace by doing good works and by playing a part in the development of harmony. Sulh, which means reconciliation works hand in hand with fitrah whereby the people are encouraged to forgive the wrongdoers and reconcile them back in society in order to play their part in the building of harmonious societies as stipulated by the fitrah.[21]

There are different ways religion could be of use in conflict resolution. Religion leads people to do what is right by motivating them to come up with humanitarian organizations and doing good to others. Putting some consideration of the religious dimension would shed light on conflict resolution since religion is an essential aspect of conflicts. The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) has given various successful attempts of conflict resolution in their publications. Seminars and roundtables have been held in Kashmir to reconcile civil society leaders by trying to consider their traditional faiths as pertaining to peace and positive life issues. People from different walks of life have attended these seminars and

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[20] Kasomo D."The position of African traditional religion in conflict Prevention, International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology ".(Vol. 2, 2010).

[21] Yilmaz, J. L.. Transnational Muslim Faith-Based Peacebuilding: Initiatives of the Gulen Movement. (European Journal of Economic and Political Studies,2010)

roundtables and have built meaningful relationships with other leaders. This technique of bringing conflicting parties together for a talk has been applied in different countries. It has been used in Iraq with the creation of the Iraqi Institute of Peace, in Nigeria with Interfaith Mediation Centre under the leadership of Pastor Weyu and Imam Mohammed Ashafa. It was also applied in Sudan with the New Sudan Council of Churches. In these cases, conflicting parties were brought together but did not achieve the intended objective of bringing peace due to a lack of action. Bringing people together and talk alone cannot yield peace; there also needs action. These actions involve uniting with (inter)national political and other parties.[22]

The King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) is an organization whose success in conflict resolution on different occasions has been outspoken. KAICIID was a party in coordinating Interfaith initiatives as well as creating Interfaith Dialogue Forums for Peace in Nigeria. This organization has played a great role in training religious leaders and civil society activities on the way to promote peace and harmony among different faiths. They came up with interreligious dialogue and network of peace in Myanmar, developed and published a peace study guide as well as assessing people's needs. There are more achievements of KAICIID as pertaining to conflict resolution. Despite KAICIID and USIP using the same technique, KAICIID has attained more success. This is because they incorporate the government in their work, and their approach is more faith-based. It could be hard to connect these organizations with conflict resolution; however, they are an indicator that religion can be a key factor in conflict resolution and that religious dimension can be applied in solving conflicts.[23]

1.7.4 Gaps in The Literature Review

From the above literature, the study has identified that researchers have not adequately analyzed the role of religious organizations in conflict management in Africa. This study will, therefore, address these gaps by examining the conflict management mechanism in

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[22] Coward, H and Smith, H *Religion and Peacebuilding.* (New York: SUNY Press, 2004).
[23] Abu-Nimer, M. 'The Miracles of Transformation through Interfaith Dialogue: Are You a Believer?', in D. R. Smock (ed.). *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding.* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2002)

the continent, the nexus between religion and conflict, and finally the role that religious organizations can play in conflict management in Africa.

The reviewed literature provides insights on the various approaches used by networks of religious institutions to foster peace; it also gives an overview of the various dimensions through which religion influences conflict dynamics and conflict resolution efforts by religious institutions in African countries. However, there exists gaps in the agreed definition of religion, religious institutions and religious organizations making classification of actors, events and processes involved in conflict or peacebuilding quite ambiguous.

Despite the general agreement that conflict is a problem for all humanity, there exists gaps due to the little overall clarification in the literature on what constitutes a religious conflict. There seems to be an agreement that to be considered a religious dispute, a conflict does not need to be waged over solely religious issues. That is, it is not important that the problems about which the dispute is being fought are purely religious ones. To address religious conflict, this is a necessary assumption since it is difficult to define a particular conflict that is exclusively about religious issues and does not include any non-religious factors. There is however, controversy about the level of religious engagement needed for the dispute to be considered a religious one. Most agree that other non-religious factors are typically involved, including in disputes over religious issues. Corrupt and inefficient regimes, economic inequality, and nationalism are the non-religious variables that are most frequently cited as exacerbating or otherwise affecting religious domestic conflicts. This does not, however, exclude other variables from impacting religious disputes.

1.8 Justification of the Study

1.8.1 Policy Justification

The findings of this study will have policy implications. There is a lack of clear policy framework within the continent that seeks to partner and harness the power of religious institutions, religious organizations or leaders in order to address conflicts in Africa. Conflict management is usually a preserve of the government and its agencies. Religious groups' entry into conflict management is often complimentary or voluntary. This alone

warrants more research concerning the subject. The findings of this study, therefore, will assist the policymakers in understanding the issues at stake. This will help in the process of formulating policies that will lead to a well-coordinated system to allow religion as an entity to play a key role in conflict management.

1.8.2 Academic Justification

The findings of this study will be an addition to the written sources on conflict management, peacebuilding and reconciliation in Africa. The study will also aid in filling the knowledge gaps on the role religion can play in conflict management in Africa. The study also anticipates that its findings will be useful to the institute of diplomacy and international studies at the University of Nairobi as this study will add to the existing literature on religion and conflict management. The knowledge gained might be used in its application to the management of conflict in the continent.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

The manner in which religion is understood would greatly influence the recommendations made
towards conflict management. It is for this reason that a probable theory that would closely relate
to and explain the use of religion in conflict is important. This study will be anchored on the Neo-liberalist theory

1.9.1 Neo-Liberalism Theory

Liberalism is characterized by a positive view of human existence, based on the control of power by reason, law and institutions, where the potential for conflict between states and citizens can be mitigated by mutual interests or shared values. It is not a rejection of anarchy, but a suggestion that institutional agreements that represent the popular interest, something that is in the self-interest of a state, will reduce the risk of conflict present in anarchy. Peace is achieved by greater economic interdependence, common values of human rights (democracy, for example) and mutual security. In democracy,

institutionalized collaboration, mutual norms and economic interdependence are the conditions to prevent conflict.[24]

Neoliberal Institutional approach focuses on transnational relations and on the role that non-governmental actors have in world politics. These transnational non-state actors include multinationals, enterprises and revolutionary movements, religious institutions, trade unions, scientific networks or international organizations. The Neoliberal institutional approach does not reject the centrality of the state but recognizes the relevance of transnational non-state actors in the interstate system, in particular on areas of national sovereignty, foreign policy and challenges to international organizations.[25]

Today, few would insist that all religion is absolutely good or that all religion is totally bad; most people would maintain that there are those religion that are better or worse. This is believed when distinctions are made between 'tolerant',' inclusive',' individual' and 'progressive faiths and those that are not.[26] Interestingly, neoliberalists believe that there is a norm outside religion according to which individual manifestations of it can be judged and categorized, which is not theologically controversial in itself.[27] Morality is one standard frequently invoked: bad religion is what teaches doctrines and actions that according to natural law or common morality, are not morally justifiable, the precepts of which can be discovered by autonomous human reason.[28] Neoliberalists suggest that social peace and security standards provide an essential criterion within liberalism to differentiate between good and poor religions. It should also be remembered, however that taking the definition of security or peace as the criterion to evaluate religious traditions poses similar problems as attempting to make morality a tradition-neutral point of view.

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[24] Doyle, M. W. "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs." (Philosophy & Public Affairs, vol. 12, no. 3, 1983), pp. 205–235. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/2265298. Accessed 11 July 2020.
[25] Nye, J., and Keohane, R. "Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction." (International Organization, vol. 25, no. 3, 1971), pp. 329–349. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/2706043. Accessed 12 July 2020.
[26] Falk, 'A Worldwide Religious Resurgence in an Era of Globalisation and Apocalyptic Terrorism'; Hasenclever and Rittberger, 'Does Religion Make a Difference? Theoretical Approaches to the Impact of Faith on Political Conflict'; Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil*
[27] Astutely noted by Terry Nardin, 'Epilogue', in Fabio Petito and Pavlos Hatzopoulos (eds.), *Religion in International Relations: The Return From Exile* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 274.
[28] Ibid

1.10 Research Hypotheses

H_1: Religion and conflict in Africa are interconnected.

H_1: Religion can be a source of conflict as well as a key tool in conflict management in Africa.

H_0: Religious organizations can be mobilized to facilitate positive peace in Africa.

1.11 Research Methodology

I have opted to take a qualitative and interpretive approach, considering the scope of the subject matter in this paper, and the number of philosophical questions it poses. It is focused on a critical study of current literature from a number of academic disciplines, including but not limited to, studies of politics and international relations, peace and conflict studies, theology, sociology, history, social science, security and terrorism. It also evaluates materials created by faith-based NGOs on conflict and peacebuilding, and builds on established religion-focused research undertaken by different researchers.

An comprehensive review of literature is beyond the scope of this report, so I have organized the review into three parts for practical purposes. The first offers a broad description of religion's relationship with conflict. The second looks at sources that describe religion as a conflict driver, while the third looks at sources that provide examples of situations in which religion functions as a peace driver. In addition, I will present three case studies in an attempt to cover facets of the subject that may not have been thoroughly captured in the literature review. They look into and compare the specifics in cases where religion is generally considered a strong force that enables aggression or peace.

The case studies will be carried out on the basis of in-depth, but concentrated, secondary reviews of literature. This will allow me to define, to the degree that secondary data can be used, the particular role of religious organizations in peace-building activities, including relief, development and advocacy on specific issues in the countries of the case study. The limitations of relying almost entirely on secondary literature are evident, but the purpose of the case studies in this study was to draw up the problems from existing content. Wherever possible, African sources will be used. Interviews with personnel from many major religious organisations and other major faith-based actors working in Africa will be included in Chapters 4 and 5. The interviews will collect information from the staff of such

organizations on their experiences in the fields of conflict management, peacebuilding, development and advocacy, in particular with regard to their relationships with African partners. Therefore these two chapters are focused on the views of those interviewed for this study and reflect their perception of their current or prospective engagement in peacebuilding work.

1.11.1 Research Design

This study will adopt the descriptive survey research design to assess and analyze the role of religious organizations in conflict management in Africa. The study will employ a mixed method approach research method that includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis procedures, this is for triangulation purposes. Qualitative research will be important in determining the attitudes, opinions, understanding and knowledge on the implementation process of peacebuilding goals in Africa. Through quantitative research, it will be possible to measure the impacts and challenges of religious initiatives of conflict management as employed by the Catholic church and Islamic religions in Africa.

1.11.2 Location of the Study

The study will be carried out in Kenya, Nairobi town and its environs with case study reference to the rest of Africa.

1.11.3 Target population

The study population of the study will be religious organizations, religious leaders, conflict management entities and the general public.

1.11.4 Sample Selection

Area sampling will be used to choose the faith-based organizations that carry out peacebuilding activities in the area and the people who benefit from these activities. Purposive sampling will be carried out to identify the respondent from the target population who are deemed to be informative to the study.

1.11.5 Research Instruments

The study will utilize two instruments in the collection of data which are the Open-ended questionnaires and the Unstructured Interviews. The unstructured questionnaire will allow the researcher to get the perspectives attitude and opinions of the respondents.

1.11.6 Data Collection Techniques

This study will rely on both secondary and primary sources of data. Secondary data will be obtained from scholarly literature (both published and unpublished) from online sources, books, journals, and articles from libraries. Apart from printed written materials, the study also used written materials: Newspaper, graduate project papers and theses and Government reports and peace and conflict journals.

The primary data will be collected from interviews from the target population. Interviews with a comprehensive questionnaire guide covering all study variables will be used to get information from the target population.

1.11.7 Proposed Data Analysis and Procedure

The analysis of both the primary and secondary sources of data will be done through the use of both qualitative and descriptive approaches of data analysis here; both content analysis and Narrative analysis will be utilized. Content analysis will be used to tabulate and summarize behavioural data. The narrative analysis will be used to analyze the primary qualitative data.

1.12 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues will be given priority. The researcher will first create a good rapport with the respondent and then inform them what this study aims to achieve. The confidentiality of the information provided by the respondent will be observed. The information by the respondents will purely be for academics. The respondents will also not be forced to give their names.

1.13 Limitations of Study

Lastly, assessing the effectiveness of peace-building programmes in general remains a challenge. This also refers directly to faith-based attempts to create peace. As policy debates on how to assess the effect of peace-building programmes are still ongoing, and as no clear-cut strategies have yet emerged, the same problem has been faced by this report. I had to rely on the self-assessments of organizations gathered through online surveys, email and telephone interviews. Such self-assessments, however provide valuable information on the perceived effect of the peace-building activities undertaken. At the same

time, the need for a follow-up analysis to establish more reliable ways of evaluating the effects of (faith-based) peace-building efforts is also illustrated.

1.14 Chapter outline

The chapters covered in the study: Chapter one which is the research proposal has given the introduction to the study, the research problem, objectives of the study, literature review, theoretical framework, hypothesis and research methodology.

Chapter two will give an overview of the nexus between religion and conflict management in Africa.

Chapter three will account for the role of religious organizations in conflict management in Africa while using the Catholic church and Islamic religions as case studies.

Chapter four will analyze the impact of religious organizations' intervention initiatives in conflict management in Africa.

Chapter five presents data presentation and analysis. This chapter focuses on data analysis and presentation of data collected from both primary and secondary sources.

Chapter six concludes the study, this chapter will include a summary of key findings, conclusions and recommendation of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NEXUS BETWEEN RELIGION AND CONFLICT: AN OVERVIEW

2.0 Introduction

While religion was never absent from international affairs, the international community has taken a renewed interest in it since the Iranian Revolution, the end of the Cold War, and the events of 9/11. With the end of the Cold War, it seemed that modernization and secularization would reduce conflicts in the world. However, it has been noted that quite a number of the current conflicts in the world are influenced by ethnic ties or religious affiliations. A brief survey of the world's most entrenched deadly conflicts shows an urgent need for a deeper understanding of the role of religion in human conflicts.[29] However religion is seen not to be the main factor but is being used to influence conflict and hinder management efforts. This is largely because ethnic identity is increasingly subsumed under religious identity. This does not insinuate that ethnicity lost its critical power in national politics of a state, only that religion is now emerging as a serious divide increasingly threatening the unity of some of the post-colonial states. Sub-Saharan Africa is particularly vulnerable to religious clashes since politicians tend to exploit religious language in order to gain political credibility. This has precipitated large-scale religious conflicts in certain states.

Conflicts influenced by religion are becoming difficult to manage especially conventionally. This is as religious based conflicts are types of ideological conflicts which are hardly managed militarily. This is evident from the rate at which these conflicts escalate and are sustained. It should be duly noted that, much as religion has been used to influence conflict, it also can be used to manage and reconcile it. This is especially as no religion favors conflict. As such, religion can also undeniably play an important role in helping to overcome differences among cultures, in promoting international human rights, in overcoming great injustices and in promoting peaceful conflict management.

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[29] Moix B. Matters of Faith, Religion, Conflict and Conflict Resolution, In The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice, edited by Morton Deutch et al. (San Fransisco: John wiley& Sons, Inc, 2006),
p.583.

If religion in ideological theories is viewed as a causal or as a contributing factor to other variables, it is an integral piece of the safety puzzle and requires concentrated attention as such.[30] Participants in the reconciliation process often look at religion in a particular way, both because religious aspects can be seen as leading to conflict and because religions can contribute to deep traditions of repentance and peace-making, but most religions can provide teachings and activities that can facilitate or strengthen the reconciliation process.[31] Thus the chapter seeks to explain what makes religion a factor that influences conflict. It seeks to understand how religious positions have taken root in various conflicts so as to be able to understand why it has become a hindrance too in the management efforts.

This chapter, will examine the multifaceted connections between religion and conflict, as well as peace dynamics. It examines the role of the religious sector in strengthening social divisions that lead to instability. But, also aware that in various ways religion can also be a unifying force, the chapter analyses the bridges built by religious actors in Africa to increase social cohesion, without neglecting the divisive power of religious discourse.

2.1 Religion and Conflict

Religion is a central component of individual and group identity, although the concept eludes any single meaning. The word 'religious actors' refers to: mainstream and indigenous religious/spiritual figures, institutions and associations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and societies associated with a particular religion or spirituality, as well as informal networks and youth groups, at the macro level, for the purposes of this guide. It involves religion-based, faith-inspired, indigenous religions, and other actors. In many cultures, these actors play an important role as key stakeholders in communities where people often trust them more than secular government actors. "Religious actors" will be used in this paper to cover this broad umbrella.

The number of ideological conflicts in the world proves that religion cannot be ignored in the study of conflict management. Religion, according to Appleby, constitutes an integral

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[30] Seiple R. and Dennis R. Hoover. Religion and security: The new Nexus in International Relations.(xlibris corporation, 2012), p.13.
[31] Marshall K., et al. Development and faith: Where Mind, Heart and Soul Work together. (Washington DC:
The World Bank , 2007), p.280.

culture capable of shaping personal and social identity and deeply influencing subsequent experience and actions.[32] The mixture of beliefs and values, the power of leaders and the sense of belonging to a group, and one's participation or relationship with religious institutions and networks shape religious identity.[33]

2.2 The Church and Conflict

The history of the medieval Christian church through the middle ages is one marked by violent confrontations and bloodshed. From the activities of the protestant radical reformation followers of Martin Luther to the "Holy War", we can easily see how differences created by religious beliefs lead to violence. The crusades followed a church conference in 1095, in which A sermon was preached by Pope Urban II in which he called on Frankish knights to pledge to march to the East with the twin goals of freeing Christians from the yoke of Islamic rule and freeing from Muslim power the tomb of Christ, the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The Holy War, that is, war for the Church's sake, became acceptable, even attractive. In the mid-ninth century, Pope Leo IV announced that a divine reward would be granted to anyone dying in battle for the protection of the Church. A few years later, Pope John VIII classified the victims of a holy war as martyrs; their sins would be remitted if they died armed in combat. But the soldier's heart should be innocent. Nicholas I claimed that men should not bear arms for their sins under the sentence of the Church, except to fight against the unfaithful.[34]

Just like other religions in Africa, Christianity has also been observed to exercise power and exacerbate conflicts within the continent. It is critical to keep in mind that historically speaking, in most of sub-Saharan Africa, Christianity was introduced during the colonial period. Although conversion to Christianity was generally not enforced through the use of physical violence, missionary Christians and their converts benefited from the power

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[32] R.S. Appleby The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence and Reconciliation. (New York: Rowman and
Littlefield Publishers inc. 2000), p.9.
[33] Moix, B. Matters of Faith, Religion, Conflict and Conflict Resolution, In The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice, edited by Morton Deutch et al. (San Fransisco: John wiley& Sons, Inc, 2006), p.
593.
[34] Letter of Nicholas I in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolae,* vol. VI, p. 658. This letter was incorporated in the canonical collections of Burchard and Gratian.

inequalities that were inherent to the colonial political context. Christian beliefs and practices have frequently played a critical role in situations of conflict and violence in post-colonial African societies.

A thorough examination of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide allows critics to point fingers at religion due to the involvement of various churches in the violence that ensued the country leading to the slaughter of an estimated million tutsi leaving in the country.[35] Christian churches were deeply implicated in the 1994 genocide of ethnic tutsi in Rwanda, as demonstrated in a study by Timothy Longman. The study estimates that a majority of the Rwandese were killed in various "sacred grounds" of the country's churches, which served as killing fields. Following the explosion of ethno-political violence in the country after the assassination of President Juvenal Habyarimana in 1994, most of the minority tutsi ethnic group rushed into the Catholic and Protestant churches for refuge. This however did not stop the Hutu extremists through their wide network of youth militia, the Interahamwe, to pursue the Tutsi even into the churches and engaged in the process of eliminating them. The churches were a major site of massacres, and many Christians, including church staff and lay leaders, participated in the slaughter. As fighters embarked on a genocidal campaign against Tutsi living in the country, one of the ideas of the Christian Church, the Hamitic myth (the notion of the "lost tribe of Israel", derived from the Old Testament) was used by the Hutu to portray the Tutsi as alien conquerors from Ethiopia, to which country they should return. This call was demonstrated by dumping their dead bodies into the river Nyabarongo that leads to Ethiopia[36]. In Rwanda, individual Roman Catholic priests took part in the genocide while the Rwandan Catholic officials remained silent. Churches were deeply implicated, often through their silence.[37]

Narratives about the militias attending mass prior to embarking on their killing missions, and about some of the killers pausing during the massacres to pray at the altar, indicate that murderers considered their actions to be sanctioned by the church teachings. Rather than being mere "neutral" player, the Christian churches in Rwanda provided crucial support

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[35] Møller, B., Religion and Conflict in Africa, (DIIS Report 6, Copenhagen, 2006)

[36] Longman, T., Church Politics and the Genocide in Rwanda, in: Journal of Religion in Africa (Leiden, 31: 2, 2001) pp. 163-186.

[37] Rittner, C, et al. (eds.) (2004): Genocide in Rwanda: Complicity of the Churches?, St. Paul, Minn.: Paragon House, 2004)

for the genocide.[38] Since the church leaders did not condemn the rising Tutsi pogrom in the country, but instead exhibited their own anti-Tutsi bigotry, their persistent support for the Hutu-led regime was interpreted as approval of the anti-Tutsi message. Church officials provided credibility to those organizing the genocide by calling on their members to support the new government. As a result, they did not officially censure the tarnishing of churches' sacred grounds, creating the impression that they supported the massacres. In different parts of the country, several clergies lured Tutsi into churches knowing that they would be attacked and killed by the Interahamwe militias. In this unfolding scenario, the church personnel engaged in the violence and justified the killing as a defensive action necessitated by the invasion of Tutsi-dominated rebel forces.

2.3 Islam and Conflict

According to historian scholars, Islam first arrived on African soil as a refugee religion in search for protection, when a certain section of the earliest Muslims fled to seek refuge from persecution by non-Muslim Meccan elites (615-616). This group found refuge in the Christian kingdom of Aksum, (Present day Ethiopia) where the benevolent King allowed them to practice their faith without interference from the state.[39] This first encounter in the 7th century between Islam and Christianity on African soil was arguably one of a peaceful nature. Despite this seemingly historical peaceful encounter, subsequent relations between Muslims and Christians in sub-Saharan Africa have been characterized by higher levels of suspicions, tensions, conflict and hatred.

Today almost half of the population on the African continent does identify as Muslim, and African Muslims make up almost a quarter of the global Muslim population. The presence of Islam on the continent varies by region, and can be characterized by whether Muslims represent majority or minority groups in particular societies. The Holy Quran and the Hadith of the Prophet (PBUH) are packed with guidance and exhortations for peace in the key Islamic texts. They lays stress on compassion, tolerance and patience while condemning extremism and violence as best exemplified in the practical life of Holy

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[38] Longman, T., Church Politics and the Genocide in Rwanda, in: Journal of Religion in Africa (Leiden, 31: 2, 2001) pp. 163-186.

[39] Ahmed, H. "Trends and Issues in the History of Islam in Ethiopia". In *Islam in Africa*, edited by Nura Alkali, (Ibadan: Spectrum Books,1993) pp. 205–220.

Prophet. Just as is the case elsewhere in the world, Islam within the Africa is associated with many ideas both good and bad.

2.3.1 Islamic Reforms

Contemporary Islamic reform movements frequently trace their origins to Islam's founding period. Several verses of the Koran promote change (islah), and a declaration of the prophet Muhammad predicts that in every century a renewer (mujaddid) will emerge to reform the Muslim religion. Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali in Iran-Baghdad, 1058-1111, Taqi al-Din Ahmad Ibn Taymiyya in Anatolia-Damascus, 1263-1328, Shah Wali Allah al-Dihlawi in India, 1703-1762, Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab of Arabia, 1703-1792, and' Uthman dan Fodio of West Africa, 1754-1817, are among the scholars cited by various reform movements as fulfilling this prediction. The scripturalist desire to return Islam to the values of the sacred texts was expressed by these and other influential reformers, as well as a corresponding disdain for common traditions and contemporary religious hierarchies that they considered to deviate from these tenets. These recurring reform movements have had numerous effects on Islamic thought.

As elsewhere in the Muslim world, Islamic reform movements are not a new phenomenon in Africa. Islamic reform movements have emerged in numerous sub-Saharan African countries as a result of the crisis of modernity and globalization of the 20th century. In the 20th century, the growth of African Muslim societies was marked by the emergence of reformist movements that in a number of African countries, including Northern Nigeria, Sudan and Zanzibar, gained considerable social, religious and political influence. These reformist movements, particularly the Sufi brother- hoods, were often but not always) opposed to existing Islamic scholarship traditions. They were also frequently critical of particular elements of the secular colonial state as well as the post-colonial state (but not always). Reformist movements were thus, also characterized (but not always) by anti-establishment positions. However, Islamic reform movements in Africa have not presented a consistent model of reformism as evident from the heterogeneous approach of the various movements.

The major desire of these movements is to live up to the ideal-type of Islam founded on the Qur'an and *sunna* (the authoritative practice of Prophet Muhammad). Hence in

different changing circumstances, renewal (*tajdid*) and reform (*islah*) have involved a call for the return to what is perceived as the fundamentals of Islam. In their advocacy, they were opposed to the prevailing practices in their respective societies that they interpreted to be against the ideal Islamic teachings and principles. Islamic reform within the continent encompasses a spectrum ranging from a liberal reformism, which is open to the present social order, to the militaristic and normative fundamentalism with a Wahhabi tendency – the perceived purest form of Islamic ideal. The appeals to these reform movements are varied and they include, generational tension between newly trained Muslim youth and traditional conservative *ulama*; local Muslims' search for empowerment by embracing global Islam; dynamics presented by the emergence of the Pentecostal movement leading to Muslims' unified response; and opposition to Western modernity by adopting a global Islamic identity, which is distinct from Christianity.

2.3.2 Radical Reforms

Sub-Saharan Africa has witnessed both the message-oriented and the human-oriented styles of reforming movements as evident in the jihad of Usman dan Fodio of Nigeria 1754–1817 and the Mahdi movement of Muhammad Ahmad of Sudan 1844–1885 respectively, both of which were influenced by the works of al-Wahhab. Both these movements appeared during the pre-colonial era. Some of the reform movements that appeared among African Muslim communities have developed into Salafi-jihadi groups that employ violence in attaining their political objectives. One of the main reasons for the recent decline in peace in some parts of Africa is the increased jihad activity, driven by certain Salafi-jihadi groups such as Boko Haram in Nigeria, al-Shabaab in Somalia and Kenya, the Movement for Monotheism and Jihad (MUJAO), and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQMI) in Mali and parts of West Africa among others. These and similar Islamic groups in Africa have insisted on the "jihad of the sword" as a means for the establishment of an Islamic state in their respective countries. They have relied on interpretation of selective texts of the Qur'an to support their agenda.

 The complexity of the links between Islam and violence in sub-Saharan Africa is clearly highlighted by the experience of al-Shabaab in Somalia, which since its formation has advocated for the creation of a State governed by Islamic law. During the Sudanese

civil war, Islamic concepts and symbolism were also applied by the Islamist government to justify the application of violence in their effort to eradicate the *dhimmis* (second class citizens, such as African indigenous religionists and Christians) through jihad warfare. This determination was religiously sanctioned in 1992, when prominent Islamic clerics issued a religious decree (*fatwa*) that legalized jihad in Southern Sudan. As a consequence of this declaration, the Islamist government of Sudan launched a military onslaught against the southern Sudanese, which was strongly resisted by the latter.

In Nigeria, tension between Muslim and Christian communities has deepened social animosities and continues to ignite periodic fatal attacks. The tensions and conflicts between Christian and Muslim communities in Nigeria which over the last two decades of the 21st century seem to be on the rise, are on the one hand, deeply rooted in (pre-)colonial histories and policies, and on the other hand, in the post-colonial emergence of religious revivalist and reformist movements which are both concerned with the "contest for public space" and with exercising political influence in a context of economic, social and political instability.

The introduction of Islamic law (sharia) in the predominantly Muslim states of northern Nigeria in the late 1990s further increased tension between Muslims and Christians in the country. By the year 2003, sharia law had been entrenched in the constitutions of twelve states in the northern region. Christians living in these states felt they were being rendered second class citizens. Consequently, Christians, especially Pentecostals, began to mobilize "to fight attempts to Islamize Nigeria" and instead strengthened "their efforts to make Nigeria a Christian territory." In addition, since the 1980s Salafi-jihadi groups, in particular Boko Haram, with their rallying calls for the establishment of an Islamic state and the rule of God, have appeared in the country inflicting wide scale destruction in northern and central Nigeria. Among the various groups that have been involved in the 2012 Malian conflict are the Salafi-jihadi movements of AQMI and MUJAO whose desire was to ensure the creation of an Islamic caliphate in the country. Comparatively, Boko Haram, al-Shabaab and the different religio-political Malian groups have all "managed to gain territorial control over parts of their respective countries, a fact that reflects their quest for spatial segregation."

Elsewhere in Africa, the Salafi-jihadi leaders resort to Islamic texts to rationalize their brutal actions, which demonstrate their calculated ability to frame violence in Islamic terms. This scenario has compelled moderate Muslims to come forward and pre-empt this manipulation of Islamic knowledge. For instance in Kenya, Muslim leaders, through organizations like the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims, the Center for Ihsan and Educational Development, and Building Resilience against Violent Extremism (BRAVE) have come up with programmes to counter the jihadi ideology. BRAVE has particularly been instrumental in running anti-jihadi campaigns on media and social media platforms with anti-extremism messages.

2.4 Religion and Identity Politics

Although the concept of 'identity' is generally applied to people, in relation to their different ethnic, religious and cultural institutions, it may also be a collective concept, applying to groups, cultures and even nations. As a consequence, when people believe that others who they think share their identity, are being ill-treated, people might feel personally harmed. Including self-identified, frequently polarized, groups within or between countries, the kinds of disputes that can result are known as identity clashes. "Malek states that the opponents must allocate an identity to themselves and their opponents in order for a "identity" or inter-group dispute to take place, each side assuming that the struggle is between "us" and "them.[40]

What are the main identity sources? Many identities are based on common ideals, convictions or interests, which include not only religion, but also political philosophy, race, nationality or culture.[41] This does not necessarily mean that the identities of individuals are monolithic entities, since the self-conception of everyone is actually a unique mixture of several identities, such as: culture, faith, race, nationalism, gender, age, family, gender, etc. At different times and situations, their relative value and compatibility vary. This means that individual and collective identities, both of which are open to interpretation, are built from a variety of available characteristics and experiences. Race and faith, for instance, are

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[40] Malek Chebel, *Encyclopédie De L'amour En Islam: érotisme, beauté Et sexualité Dans Le Monde Arabe, En Perse Et En Turquie* (Paris: Éditions Payot & Rivages, 2020).
[41] Ibid

important sources of identity in some cultures, while political ideologies and nationalism are perceived to be more important in others. Furthermore, some analysts talk of different origins of identity as old, unchanging phenomena, such as faith or ethnicity. Others emphasize that all identities are socially constructed: that is, people choose their background and heritage and may, as a consequence, establish distinctions from them, as much as they discover.

A sense of identity may often help to establish or foster intense, destructive conflicts. Analysts point to what they call 'destructive' identities when that is the case.[42] That is, if a source of identity is strongly reinforced or underpinned, such as religion, ethnicity or nationality, and is extremely important to someone, then it can be difficult to disregard (real or imagined) threats to that sense of identity, and conflict can result. This is because cultural patterns may generate tension in communities, since they can necessarily entail a propensity to dislike or belittle other groups. When ideologies polarize communities, conflict between them may be the outcome. A community with a conviction that their faith is fundamentally superior to all others, for instance, will view others with distinct religious beliefs as basically inferior. If such a group thought that they were going to be the target of another group's attack, they would most probably attempt to protect themselves. Fearing physical attack, to avoid the feared attack, the group could act pre-emptively, thereby threatening the other side. A self-perpetuating destructive conflict of the kind that has unfortunately occurred between Israel and the Palestinians may be the product of threat and counter-threat.[43] Such a circumstance may be compounded by the behavior of political officials, people who may aim to profit individually from the formation of exclusive identities, who may gain authority as a consequence of arousing the feelings and enmity of their community members against others. Via past experiences, identity is also established.

Kamrava argues that it is their sense of identity that largely determines how individuals behave politically and view their own political environment in turn.'[44] It is generally recognized that both modernization and globalization-related pressures and strains lead to

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[42] Thomas Lindemann, "STEPHEN PETER ROSEN War and Human NaturePrinceton, Princeton University Press, 2005, 216 pages.", *Critique internationale* 31.2 (2006): 203.
[43] Ibid
[44] Mehran Kamrava, *Politics and society in the Third World* (London: Routledge, 1993).

religious and ethnic identity manifestations in the developing world. However these influences do not inexorably force themselves on a culturally and political situation that is otherwise blank or uniform; rather, struggles to establish modern political structures and a developed economy have often clashed with pre-modern social norms and traditions; and in some cases, a sense of religious and/or ethnic separateness has led to tensions between or within communities.

On the other hand, it is impossible reliably to predict where such conflict would occur by the use of a simple fragmentation model, as we shall see below. In recent years, in a religiously and ethnically homogeneous region, such as Somalia, severe social tensions have erupted, but not in Tanzania, a country with pronounced religious and ethnic fragmentation. This implies that governmental ability to achieve social unity that can overcome possible ethnic or religious schisms can be a significant factor in explaining whether or not there is an inter- or intra-group dispute within a country. In short, religious and/or ethnic fragmentation contributes to rivalry and conflict in some situations, but not in others.[45]

It is possible to hypothesize that in a country with substantial religious and/or ethnic schisms, political stability would typically be poor and chances for inter-group conflict are large. There is religious fragmentation in many developing countries and in some instances, even racial cleavages. Table 1 shows that developing nations have high levels of ethnic and religious fragmentation, which actually makes them potentially very unstable. On the ethnic fragmentation index, eleven Sub-Saharan African states (Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo) score very high (0.8 or greater).

A number of African countries (Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Togo and Uganda), as well as the Caribbean islands of Trinidad and Tobago, also have deep religious divisions. Eighteen African nations have to adapt to extreme religious and ethnic cleavages.

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[45] Jeff Haynes, *Religion, Fundamentalism and Ethnicity: a Global Perspective* (Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 1995).

Table 1 Religious and ethnic fragmentation in Africa

Region	Country	Ethnic fragmentation[a]	Religious fragmentation[b]
Sub-Saharan Africa	Angola	0.80	0.49
	Benin	0.75	0.53
	Botswana	0.51	0.54
	Burkina Faso	0.72	0.59
	Cameroon	0.86	0.73
	Central African Republic	0.74	0.63
	Chad	0.80	0.70
	Côte d'Ivoire	0.87	0.67
	Ethiopia	0.70	0.61
	Kenya	0.86	0.69
	Liberia	0.86	0.64
	Malawi	0.65	0.73
	Mozambique	0.75	0.62
	Rwanda	low	0.64
	Sierra Leone	0.78	0.57
	South Africa	0.68	0.48
	Tanzania	0.95	0.73
	Togo	0.72	0.64
	Uganda	0.92	0.66

a) A high degree of ethnic fragmentation is indicated by an ethnic fragmentation index above 0.55.
b) A high degree of religious fragmentation is indicated by a religious fragmentation index above 0.45.
Source: adapted from data in Lane and Ersson.[46]

The data in Table 1 do not allow us to address the following question in a straightforward manner: does religious and/or ethnic polarization in a developing world lead to violent conflict between groups which consider themselves to be separate? The reply is: occasionally. Of the 19 countries in Table 1 that rank highly on both religious and ethnic fragmentation indices, nine have recently experienced significant civil war, all in Africa: Angola, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, and Uganda. There were also significant civil wars in Burundi and Rwanda during the 1990s and in Somalia in the early 2000s: ethnic rivalry, Hutu versus Tutsi, was the key cause in the first two nations, while in Somalia it was the result of inter-clan disagreement, not ethnic or religious competition per se. However in relation to the ethnicity criterion, none

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[46] Lane, Jan-Erik, and Svante O. Ersson. *Politics and Society in Western Europe*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 1998.

of these three countries appear in Table 1 and only Rwanda is notable for 'religious fragmentation'.

In short, developing countries with seemingly the most extreme ethnic and religious differences do not generally have significant civil wars. Its probability may be related to whether governments are able to cope with the consequences of widespread, rapid, destabilizing social and economic changes that affect local power structures as well as societal groups, including religious ones. For example, following independence in 1947, a Western-style democratic political structure was inherited by the post-colonial Indian republic. Post-colonial Indian governments have been rapidly seeking to improve the economy of the country through an industrialization process. For its religious diversity, including Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity, Jainism and Buddhism, as well as ethnicity and caste variables, the country is notable. Despite occasional outbreaks of often extreme inter-religious conflict between either Hindus and Sikhs, or Hindus and Muslims, India's governments have generally managed to maintain a reasonably effective national order over the decades following independence. However, there were not only a number of bombings attributed to 'Muslim extremists' during 2008, but also the targeting of Christians in the eastern state of Orissa by Hindu zealots. These incidents indicated to some observers that the political structure of India was under severe challenge, threatened by the actions of a number of religious extremists and terrorists.[47]

2.5 Religious Contributions to Peace

The fact that religion is contributing to conflict in many parts of the world is well known and generally accepted. However, opportunities to use the assets of religious leaders and religious organizations to foster peace are typically overlooked. As the flip side of religious conflict, the contribution that religion can bring to peacemaking is just beginning to be discussed and clarified. The three religions of Abraham include powerful warrants for peace-making. There have been previous instances of mediation and of peace-making by religious figures and organizations. For instance, the short-lived 1972 peace agreement in Sudan was mediated by the World Council of Churches and the All Africa Conference of

[47] Ibid

Churches. Various churches in South Africa were at the forefront of the fight against apartheid and the peaceful transition. The most interesting case is the successful mediation accomplished by the Rome-based Sant'Egidio Group to help end the 1992 civil war in Mozambique.

2.5.1 Religious Peacemaking Negotiations

Religious peace making seems to be a suitable response to religious abuse, considering the increasing prevalence of religious conflict, and what Appleby terms as the "ambivalence of the sacred." Scholars, states, and non-profits have all developed a stronger respect for the peace-making influence of religion in recent years. One example is the work of religious leaders in the Good Friday Deal, which ended the open dispute in Northern Ireland's decades-long "Troubles" in 1998. Father Alex Reid, a Catholic, was able to persuade the Social Democratic and Labour Party's John Hume and Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams to meet secretly and begin the journey towards a negotiated peace.[48] Similarly, the Protestant Reverend Roy Magee was able to persuade his congregation to accept a truce in 1994, including prominent loyalists he ministered to and visited in jail.

A tale of religious peacemaking is itself the story of Pastor James Wuye and Imam Mohammed Ashafa. They fought on opposite sides of a religious dispute back in 1992. Wuye lost his right arm, and in a Muslim-Christian clash in Zongon Kataf, Ashafa lost his spiritual teacher and two cousins. They acknowledged in 1995 that both of their two religions include warrants for peace. They set up the Inter Faith Mediation Centre and dedicated themselves to working together to foster unity between faiths.[49] They have been helping to bring religious unity to the troubled city of Kaduna since then. In November 2004, at the invitation of the Plateau State Administrator, Wuye and Ashafa transmitted their messages and skills to Yelwa-Nshar. For five days of sharing and negotiation, they convened key leaders. The first time the two groups were brought together for a face-to-face experience was this gathering. Wuye and Ashafa used a mixture of preaching and dispute resolution methods as facilitators. The most noteworthy characteristic of the

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[48]Jafari, S. (2007). Local religious peacemakers: An untapped resource in US foreign policy. Journal of International Affairs, 61(1), 111-130.

49 Ashafa, Muhammad Nurayn, and James M. Wuye.*The Pastor and the Imam: Responding to Conflict* (Lagos: Ibrash Publications, 1999)

method was the repeated quotations of the Koran by the pastor and references to the Bible by the imam.

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has shown that the beliefs, symbols and practices of the two most dominant African religions; Christianity and Islam have been part and parcel of situations of conflict in Africa. However, religions should not only be thought of as sources of violence. As demonstrated above, even within one faith tradition there exist different political ideologies and theologies, which can variably contribute to both violence and peace-building. Due to the demographic developments, in particular the growth of Christianity and Islam on the continent, efforts that seek to promote cordial relations between members of the two faiths should be welcomed. At the same time, the awareness of the deeply political nature of religions in Africa prevents us from naïve optimism and romanticization. Religious thought and practice will undoubtedly continue to be part of processes of conflict as well as peace-building on the continent.

Linking faith-based peacemaking to secular and political systems and authorities is important. Independent of this cross-sectoral cooperation, faith-based peacemaking almost never produces peace. Even in the case of faith-based peace-making, that of Sant'Egidio in Mozambique, it is only by involving the United Nations and the governments of Italy and the United States as allies that religious peace-makers succeed. The peace agreement brokered by the Yelwa-Nshar Inter Faith Mediation Center had to be coordinated with the Plateau State Governor, who had to approve the agreement reached. In Kashmir, Iraq, Sudan and Macedonia, the same applies.

CHAPTER THREE

MAPPING AND ANALYZING CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM PEACEBUILDING ACTORS IN AFRICA

3.0 Introduction

It is in the historical past that both Islam and Christianity were introduced into Africa. Islam has gradually spread over the last thousand years, whereas Christianity was imported in the late nineteenth century and closely associated with European colonialism, particularly British and French colonialism.

As Europe's colonial powers set their eyes on new geographical regions to extend their spheres of influence in the 19th century due to its abundance of natural resources and supposedly undeveloped economies ripe for exploitation, Africa emerged as a prime location for colonization.

The presence of the European settlement placed contradictory demands on the government, and the process of asserting the settler's needs and desires in the field of land and labor, taxation and political control itself ensured obvious violations of African rights and interests. This incompatibility of interests indicates that there was an existential conflict between Africans and their colonial masters. Perhaps because of its non-European origins, Islam has been fused with struggles against European (and thus Christian) dominance in many instances. As Crawford Young has contended,

At the moment of subjugation, Islam embodied the most detailed theological challenge to colonialism available to Africa. It provided a transcendental rationale for rebellion and a religious necessity for political-military organization beyond ethnos and politics in the hands of determined opponents of colonial rule as they then existed. Islam thus played an important part, also during the scramble, in the fight against European colonialism. The jihads declared by the Sokoto Caliphate (also against suspected apostates) as well as in the Mahdist revolt in Sudan and the uprising of 1895 in British Somalia are examples of its involvement in armed resistance. In the early 20th century, under the leadership of Sheik Uways B. Muhammad Al-Barawi of the Qadriya brotherhood, an even larger, though primarily political, resistance movement emerged throughout East Africa.

3.1 Selection of Actors

As discussed below the selection of the faith-based actors involved in this research paper is subject to a variety of factors. They include the option of institutionalized actors, the differentiation between actors based on religion and secularism, and the separation of actors participating in peace-building from actors working in other fields.

Focus on Institutionalized Actors: There are certainly multiple religious actors in the field of peace-building based on faith. For example, Luttwak talks about religious figures, religious institutions, and religiously motivated laypeople.[50] Johnston notes that the spectrum of religious actors spans a continuum, with on the one side the temporal influence of religious entities such as the church and the spiritually inspired laypersons' personal initiatives defining the other'.[51] Appleby confirms this perception and adds that Christian ethicists, Muslim jurists and theologians, Jewish, Buddhist and Hindu scholars, trans-religious movements, courageous religious representatives, and local religious leaders make up the field of faith-based peace-building. Moreover, it includes the various institutions that deal with justice and peace problems within the main religions themselves. In order to create peace, it also requires numerous secular and religious NGOs that collaborate with religious actors. Because of the research format, the difficulty of selecting the various religious people involved in peace-building, and the fact that the peace-building work of individual religious actors is often somewhat invisible to outsiders, I found it fitting that this research should better focus on a relatively limited number of institutionalized faith-based actors

It should be noted that in the selection of Muslim peace-building actors, the emphasis on institutionalized actors poses some challenges. For example, one difficulty concerns the organizational distinctions between Western and Muslim cultures and institutions. The way Muslim communities and their institutions organize themselves varies greatly from Christian organizations. There are more individualistic, educated and bureaucratized Christian organizations. On the other hand, many Islamic cultures, where kinship, tribalism

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[50] Luttwak, E., 'The Missing Dimension', in D. Johnston and S. Sampson (eds), Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft (New York: Oxford University Press 1994), pp. 8-19.

[51] Johnston, D. and B. Cox, 'Faith-Based Diplomacy and Preventive Engagement', in D. Johnston (ed.), *Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik* (New York: Oxford University Press 2003), pp. 11-29.

and family relations are predominant, are traditional societies. These disparities are expressed by the organisation of social organizations like NGOs. The recognition of Muslim peace-building organizations in the Western context has been made more difficult by these disparities. The lack of special peace-building organizational capacities is another problem. Because many of these peace-building actors are not organized into secure bodies or NGOs, even less evident is their work and contribution, and they are seldom included in internet databases. In terms of communicating with non-Muslim communities, organizations, academic institutions and the media, their fund-raising capacity, and whether they are embraced or sponsored by non-Muslim, mainly Christian groups, their exposure seems to depend on the personal contact and language skills of the individuals involved. It is difficult to recognize Muslim peace-building actors, as many organizations lack or do not have the time to acquire these skills.

3.2 Religious Actors in the Colonial Period

Missionary churches in Africa were founded mainly during the colonial era. It cannot be argued that missionary work in Africa was supported by colonialism. Colonial administrators often gave missionaries a great deal of assistance and even protection. The missionaries' nationality also coincided with that of the British, French or Portuguese colonial administrators. One noteworthy characteristic of these church organisations was their close link to the government of the state. As a result, missionaries and their churches appeared to associate with the colonial state, which initially at least encouraged and reinforced their collaborative relationship, and even reluctant missionaries were forced into their work. This close relationship operated to the good of each side, each influencing the other, although the more powerful was always proven by the state.

Missionaries played a vital role in shaping African countries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, sometimes negatively and sometimes positively. David Barrett writes that the immense social, political and religious influence exerted by the missions in Africa [is at least equivalent to that exercised by the Church in the Middle Ages in Europe.[52] Alliances between the colonial administration and the missionaries, and between missionaries and Africans, were also common. It is indeed said that Western governments have often

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[52]Edward J Barrett, *A THEOLOGY OF THE MEANING OF LIFE*, 1968: 86

operated at the instigation of missionaries in African affairs. Two examples are sufficient here: first the alliance between Uganda and Britain was made on the advice of missionaries, and the Church Missionary Society (CMS), a missionary arm of the British Anglican Church, was particularly influential in this case. Secondly, the Scottish missionaries in Malawi (then Nyasaland) made the assimilation of Malawi to the British empire possible, frustrating Portuguese attempts and any Arab threat.[53] While colonial governments and missionaries worked closely with the Africans, the latter worked closely with them, studying local languages, translating treaties and offering advice. To this point, some Africans trusted some missionaries. Instances of African leaders enlisting missionary support and thereby shaping the course of events to their benefit are cited. One such example is that of Basutoland (now Lesotho) King Moshesh, who was able to make Basutoland a British protectorate, thus defeating the goal of annexing it to the South African Boers. This was achieved with the Governor of the Cape's good missionary representation. The second example is of the Masai in Kenya who as a result of missionary assistance, resisted being transferred to new land by the colonial government.

The argument seems to support the view that certain missionaries essentially cooperated with colonial authorities in the repression and cultural subjugation of Africa, although there is a strong lack of scholarly agreement about the role of missionaries in the colonization of Africa. In his How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, Walter Rodney argued that missionaries were colonial agents: "Christian missionaries were as much a part of the colonizing powers as explorers, merchants and soldiers were… In the real sense, missionaries were agents of colonialism, whether they viewed themselves in that light or not".[54] In the face of blatant injustice, inhumanity and dehumanisation, Rodney accused the missionaries of preaching modesty and obedience. The missionaries preached harmony, forgiveness and good neighborliness while British merchants abused their African customers, which actually prevented real revolt, self-preservation and determination. The missionaries worked to preserve the status quo and establish the relationship between Africans and Europeans as master-servants writes Rodney:

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[53] Emmanuel Ayankanmi. Ayandele, *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria, 1842-1914: a Political and Social Analysis* (London: Longmans, 1966).
[54] Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 1st ed. (Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 1972).

The church's role was primarily to preserve the social relations of colonialism... the Christian church stressed humility, docility and acceptance. Ever since the days of slavery in the West Indies, the church had been brought in on condition that it should not excite the African slaves with doctrine of equality before God.[55]

It is also important to note that colonial governments were in a stronger position to use missionaries in pursuit of their own goals, while some missionaries were able to exert their influence in the manner mentioned. The use of religion as an institutional instrument of social control by the imperial powers has a long and much-studied history, Barrett argues. Such forces saw 'religious congregations... as useful resources to pacify the defeated'[56]. For their part, the missionaries are considered to have tacitly accepted the manner in which religion was used by colonial governments as a means of justifying their place of power. It was also thought that many missionaries shared the color bar's activity freely and too frequently closed their eyes to other colonial injustices.[57] The Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, and the Catholic Church in Portuguese controlled Africa, are examples of the extremes of this position. But it is also interesting to say that in some African countries there were churches that did not have such a comfortable role with the colonial regimes.

When the call came to engage in anti-colonial actions or campaigns, mission churches followed various courses of action in the aftermath of the fight for independence. It was difficult for those churches who had strong connections with colonial governments to disentangle themselves from their colonial past and could do nothing more than either consciously support the role of the government or take the apolitical position of supporting the status quo, assuming that the current government was good enough and therefore should not be openly criticized. However other churches followed and advocated an agenda that was strongly anti-racist and was later promoted by radical Christians who are quoted as saying that Christians must get out of the colonial barricades... and lead the anti-colonial crusade.[58]

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[55] Ibid
[56] Ibid
[57] Op cite, p 31
[58] Ibid

Some Black African Catholic students in France proclaimed at around the same time, in 1956, that it was a Christian responsibility to decolonize, and regretted the involvement of those Catholics who opposed ending the colonial regime. Meanwhile some colonial powers, particularly Britain and France, were working towards ending colonialism, a process in which some church leaders played a prominent and significant role. Some church leaders participated in political activities in the late 1950s that they thought could contribute to the formation of good political parties with sound Christian leaders.

Political parties arose in different African countries that were marked by fairly strong religious inspiration and highlighted the values of western democracy, ethnic partnership and unity, and anti-communism. In Rhodesia, one of these movements, called the Capricorn African Society, began and expanded to other parts of southern Africa. It was funded mainly by missionary leaders from England. The Democratic Party in Uganda, which was launched with the support of Catholics, and the Basotho National Party in Basutoland were also such parties. Although several of these parties fizzled out, a few remained with weakening ecclesiastical relations as independent parties. However some church leaders did not like the implications and consequences of institutionalizing Christian political beliefs in contrast to other nationalist groups, as hardline nationalists would be alienated by this. Regardless of their loyalty to specific political parties, they preferred to offer general political advice and to maintain good relations with politicians.

In following this course of action, the Catholic bishops sought an outlet while writing pastoral letters on the evolution of society. These letters, provided by a 'full bench of bishops,' also held a lot of weight and would usually be enforced by a wide variety of churches. The letter from the bishops of 11 July 1953 entitled 'Africans and the Christian Way of Life' in Tanganyika was an example. It was about politics, education and economics in relation to Tanganyika's growth.

During the colonial period that lasted for most of Africa in the 1950s and early 1960s, mission churches, all headed by expatriates, were the main churches. Especially at the local level, the churches were only able to undertake very small lobbying programs, often only by the lone voices of individual churchmen. This was due to the close association with

colonial governments that churches appeared to have. It could also be claimed that since the Church was only establishing itself in colonial areas, which were themselves being founded themselves, such a situation resulted. It is therefore likely that in addition to offering some social services in education and health that complemented the activities of the government, the churches saw their position primarily as preachers of the gospel to attract converts, for which they were well equipped. However they had little interest, or were not prepared to deal with political problems and state injustices.

As a source of economic growth and development, Woodberry shows the value of international Christian missionary work. Since the International Conference of the Christian Mission in Africa, held in Le Zonte, Belgium, on 14-20 September 1926, there has been a particular interest in studying the contribution of international Christian organizations, especially in education, which Woodberry points out, leads to the accumulation of human capital and directly contributes to greater economic growth and development.[59]

3.3 The Post-Colonial Period: 1960s-1970s

The 1960s represented a time when a number of African countries achieved political independence. Hastings states that there was just a small change in the relationship between church and state at this time. Some nationalist leaders had an academic background and were members of different major churches. For example: Kaunda and Banda, Presbyterian; Nkomo and Sithole, Methodist; Nyandoro, an Anglican; Catholics, Nyerere, Mugabe and Chikerema, and their personal associations with leading churchmen were of considerable importance for the mainline churches to protect their position and orientation. Not only did these new African leaders trust these churches, but they also based their political philosophies on their religious heritage, such as Sengher's religious philosophy; Kaunda's

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[59] J. Dudley Woodberry, "Book Review: Understanding Other Religious Worlds: A Guide for Interreligious Education," *Missiology: An International Review* 32, no. 4 (2004): pp. 514-514, https://doi.org/10.1177/009182960403200418.

Protestant humanist ethics; and Nyerere's extreme Catholicism. Much of this led to the post-colonial churches' lives.

The privileged position of the Church deteriorated as independent governments strengthened their positions. Via emerging conflicts, the relations between the two diminished and some bonds were completely severed: in certain cases, because governments moved away from religious values and in others became intolerant of the churches, and sometimes because churches were wary of the actions of the governments that they could no longer accept or condone. In most cases, tensions emerged when: I) new governments took charge of church structures, such as schools; ii) there was a government movement away from liberal democracy; iii) governments took control of the press; iv) governments established ideologically dominated youth movements; v) governments introduced opponents' preventive detention; and vi) leaders pursued personal glorification and through Christian terminology built a religious mystique around their leadership; an example of this is in Malawi where Banda became a deified demigod.

Within the political arena, the churches have become highly wary of their interference. It left the mainline churches as the only autonomous groups with some power as governments began cracking down on civic organizations - the press, trade unions, chieftainships. These mainline churches survived in a number of cases since their contribution was recognised by the government. However, in some countries such as Zaire, and the Portuguese-controlled countries, small independent churches that were now increasing in number, were outlawed on a charge of possibly fomenting dissent and opposition, and their inability to give government anything worthwhile. Meanwhile the leaders held faithful to their Christian beliefs in other nations, such as Zambia and Tanzania. They were persuaded that the religion and politics of Christians were inseparable and that the relationship between the state and the major churches remained intact.

However, there were instances where the strength of the churches was undermined by denominational differences and the strong relations embraced by various denominations with distinct racial or tribal communities. This also meant that no one church could effectively speak to the conscience of the country on critical issues. In Kenya, for instance, the Presbyterian Church was closely connected to the political leadership of the Kikuyu,

while other churches had strong relations with political leaders who were not Kikuyu. When speaking on an individual basis, this made each church weak, before an ecumenical body, the Kenya Christian Council, was established and its voice began to be heard. In their ecclesiastical leadership, mainline churches also encapsulated powerful individuals with status and intelligence who often dared not only to speak out against state oppression with a lone prophetic voice, but often led activities such as writing joint letters and documents and establishing ecumenical structures for action. Such actions have often resulted in strong government reprisals for deportations, incarceration, revocation of resident permits, denial of passports, and the deliberate formation of tensions between churches. There were periods when a stable apolitical posture and polite ecumenism were embraced by church hierarchies. Often the values of charity, reconciliation and justice were just lip service, and in fact, the leadership of the church did not question any of the underlying assumptions or structures of oppression. It is important to note that in the fight for peace and justice, the mission churches have continued to provide leadership. While Africanization was taking place, their leaders continued to be expatriates in the main.

3.4 The Post-Independence Period: 1980s-early 1990s

After the independence era, missions turned into faith-based non-governmental organizations focused primarily on relief and missionary activities. Christian missionaries were initially seen as disposable, relics of the old regime and at best, collaborators whose motives were paternalistic and whose acts led to the arrested development of Africa. A number of countries expelled missions and missionaries at the same time as colonial officers and civil servants fled for their life as an orderly transition took place in some areas. Missions transformed to multinational non-governmental organizations committed to humanitarian relief, assistance and in some cases, education.

In many African countries, this era was marked by the struggle against authoritarian political regimes led by military or civilian dictators. In both cases, the civilian population was presented with a single authority: a military or a one-party government. Moreover, in the 1980s and early 1990s, African governments were faced with socio-political and economic crises that limited their capacity to provide state services. The role of delivering such services during this period (though its origins lie in the 1970s) fell to the voluntary

sector of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), church agencies and churches. Gifford claims that religious groups played an increasingly significant role in the broader community in the 1980s. This position involved churches not only in the traditional activities of education, health and development, but also in direct political activities. 'This included criticizing political processes, demanding changes, promoting political change, and even ruling over change itself.' In order to serve that specific function, during this time the churches became better prepared in their organizational and institutional structures. These systems, some of which were ecumenical, have exercised competence through the acquisition of specific skills to deal with critical issues. During this time, the churches played their advocacy position far more than ever before. While Firoze Manji and Carl O'Coill argued that these NGOs were undermining the efforts of Africans towards economic and political growth due to their "paternalistic approach,[60] Clark, Doces and Woodberry claim quite the opposite; that missionary operation is conducive to economic growth. Historical evidence gives us the best insight on who, when and how this assistance was executed.[61]

Inevitably, divisions between churches meant that although some churches were speaking out against political injustices, others opted for or were co-opted by the government to help them, and still others preferred to remain impartial. In many instances during this time, the mainline churches-the majority now with African leadership-played a major role in opposing despotic dictators and became agitators of constitutional and political change.

3.5 FBOs and Transnational Religious Networks Actors in Africa

The participation of faith-based actors in conflict resolution is not a new development and, in the past, faith-based actors, clergy, religious movements and organizations have played a role in conflict resolution.[62] As many of today's disputes overshadow conventional diplomacy, religious actors across the globe have become involved in peacemaking. In

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[60] Manji, Firoze Fahamu; O'Coill, Carl. The missionary position: NGOs and development in Africa. International Affairs 78 3 (2002) 567-83.

[61] Clark, William R., John A. Doces, Robert D. Woodberry. 2005. Aid, Protestant Missionaries, and Growth. Prepared for presentation at the Association for the Study of Religion, Economics, and Culture Annual Meeting, Thursday October 19, Portland, OR, Panel T1-L.

[62] Jacob Bercovitch, Kremeníuǩ V. A., and I. William. Zartman, *The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2009).

describing this state of affairs, Johnstone argues that religious reconciliation, combined with official or non-official diplomacy, is seen by many as providing alternatives to coping with identity-based disputes.[63]

Over the last 30 years, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been increasingly involved in international dialogue and decision-making on global issues. The introduction of the word "non-governmental organization" in Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations provided a political space for self-appointed members of public interest to engage and organize for the advancement of popular objectives. Over the last decade, NGO activity has increased both quantitatively and qualitatively. Organizations such as Amnesty International, Oxfam, Greenpeace, the World Council of Churches, Soka Gakkai International and the World Jewish Congress have effectively given voice to policy debates on topics such as human rights, sustainable development, the environment, peace building and governance. Some have provided comprehensive relief and social services in regions of the world where, due to lack of governmental will or power, there is no alternative.

Among the estimated several million NGOs that exist today, an increasingly noticeable number of organizations identify themselves in religious terms – referring to themselves as 'religious,' 'spiritual' or 'faith-based' NGOs. Both the term "NGO" and the term "faith-based/religious" give rise to a great deal of semantic uncertainty and as such, need to be defined at the outset. Within the diverse structure of complex organizational networks of global civil society, the emergence of national and international faith-based international NGOs not only challenges the notion that the new global order will be a strictly secular one but also reinforces the neoliberal position on the place of non-state actors as major players in the international political system.

3.5.1 Defining Faith-Based Organizations

There is generally no agreed definition of a faith-based organization (FBO) as used by government, academia or the faith-based field, and this study is consistent with the one Berger provides, as quoted by Haynes. FBOs are organizations that are "characterized by missions rooted in religious and spiritual beliefs.[64] This definition is chosen here due to the

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[63]Ibid
[64]Ibid

fact it is broad enough to describe organizations that are the focus of this thesis, yet does distinguish FBOs from secular organizations. In addition, there is not one universally accepted term for FBOs. Some other terms offered by various authors that could be used interchangeably are: religious NGOs (RNGOs), religious communities, faith based non-for-profit organizations, faith inspired organizations, religious international nongovernmental organizations (RINGO), etc.[65] The term FBO is used here in line with earlier given definitions this thesis follows and it is the most suitable term because it is the term UN uses.

The ambiguity of the word is due in part, to the large range of organizations that call themselves "faith-based" organizations and to the fact that these organizations differ greatly in scale, purpose, services rendered, degree of religiosity and links to religious institutions. An FBO can be defined as an entity with or without a non-profit status that offers social services and is either religiously inspired or religiously affiliated. Under this definition, at least four different types of faith-based organizations can be identified: (a) religious congregations; (b) organizations or programs supported by congregations; (c) incorporated non-profit organizations that are autonomous or affiliated with congregations; and) local and regional interfaith coalitions. Faith-based organisations typically arrange regular meetings with their representative members, define their decision-making processes, have permanent staff and organize themselves into logical organizational models.[66] Their membership appears to be made up of individuals or private organizations. One of the most respected values guiding non-governmental organizations particularly faith-based ones, is their dedication to non-violence.[67]

Individuals and religious groups have given aid to those affected by natural disasters, persecution, displacement and conflict long before international humanitarian law was formalized in treaty law. The theme of justice for the needy, the oppressed, the aliens is fundamental to the Hebrew Scriptures. The afflicted also sought help in temples and cities of refuge, and in later medieval times the monasteries were places of refuge and hospitality

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[65] Ibid

[66] Santiago, L. 2009. "Faith Based Organizations and Public Health." In Gaist, P. A. (ed.), Igniting the Power of Community: the Role of CBOs and NGOs in Global Public Health. New York: Springer.

[67] Ibid

for outsiders. Catholic orders were formed to provide charity to the needy, medical care to the ill, education to children and hospitality to strangers. The lay ministry, the diaconate, was founded in the Orthodox and Protestant traditions to carry out Christian service. This service for others was based not only on the Christian ideals of charity and grace, but also on the belief in the absolute dignity of the human being.

Faith-based groups have several different positions to fill. They are getting early warnings during humanitarian crises. They also combine their expertise of humanitarian aid with advocacy events. FBOs collaborate with local groups and foster collaborations with national and foreign organizations. These alliances are particularly useful for advocacy and fund-raising. FBOs are known to carry out their activities in areas such as conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance, development, human rights and peace building, among others.

The rise of many FBOs has become a catalyst for international humanitarian issues. They are present at the global level as a form of response to a variety of humanitarian issues. There are several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have emerged as having an influence on humanitarian issues.

3.5.2 Challenge of Identifying Institutionalized Muslim Peace-Building Actors

Throughout this study, I have found it more difficult to identify institutionalized Muslim-based peace-building actors than Christian and multi-faith actors. Muslim communities and their organizations are distinct in terms of their organisation. While social care, community assistance and charitable work have been an integral part of Islamic societies, Muslim organisations and bodies have less knowledge of formal organizations and (stable) institutions. Consequently, not as many entities are structured into cohesive structures. It is also difficult to find Muslim peace-building NGOs or other organisations close to those run by Christian organizations. Most of the time local imams or sheiks, or other religious leaders and elders, conduct peace-building activities in their personal capacity. Peace-building activities in this sense are not seen as a separate task, but as a social/religious duty of the person, a part of their lives and a function of leadership. As a consequence, peace-building activities are typically ad hoc and informal. Moreover, since many Muslims do not distinguish Islam from the daily aspects of their lives, they do not specifically refer to their organisation

or function as 'Muslim or Islamic.' Since they do not refer to themselves as such it is difficult for an outside observer to differentiate between Muslim peace-building organizations. Identification, review and potential help for Muslim peace-building actors therefore need a tailor-made approach.

Table 2: Mapping Christian and Multi-Faith Peace-Building Actors

No	Christian or Multi-faith Actor	Type of Organization	Staff and Annual Budget (US$)	Focus on (non)-religious conflict	Geographical Focus	Main Level of Operation	Primary Beneficiaries	Core Peace-Building Business
1	Life and Peace Institute	International and ecumenical Centre for peace research and action	Staff: 30 Budget: 28-30 million	Both	Great Lakes Horn of Africa	Grassroots and community level[31]	Churches and ecumenical bodies are natural counterparts	Education Dialogue
2	World Vision International	Christian relief and development organization	Staff: 22,500 Budget: 1,546 billion	Both	Worldwide	Community and household level	Religious and secular community-based organizations (CBOs)	Intermediary Education Dialogue Advocacy[32]
3	International Association for Religious Freedom[33]	Multi-faith NGO	Staff: 8 Budget: 680,000	Does not work on conflict	Worldwide	Local level	Religious member groups at the national level	(Advocacy) Promotion of religious freedom

4	Community of Sant'Egidio	International Catholic NGO engaged in peacemaking	-	Both	Worldwide	International level	Religious and secular, governmental and non-governmental counterparts	Intermediary Dialogue
5	Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution	Multi-faith education and research Centre	Staff: 5	Conflict with religious overtone	Middle East	Different levels	Religious and secular local counterparts, policy-makers, diplomats	Education (Research and direct action)[34]
6	International Center for Religion and Diplomacy	Multi-faith NGO specializing in faith-based diplomacy	Staff: 7 Budget: 588,000	Both	Sudan, Kashmir, Pakistan, Iran	Different levels	Both religious and secular local counterparts	Intermediary Education Dialogue
7	World Conference of Religions for Peace	Multi-faith NGO, among other things working on conflict transformation	Budget: 4-5 million	More on non-religious than religious conflict	Worldwide	National level	(Inter-)religious national bodies	Dialogue Education Intermediary

8	David Steele [35]	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	International Fellowship of Reconciliation	Spiritually-based movement committed to active non-violence	Staff: 8 Budget: 1 million	Both	Worldwide	Grassroots and community level	Spiritually-based actors committed to non-violence	Different peace-building areas, especially (non-violence) Education
10	Mennonite Central Committee	Christian relief, development and peace-building agency	Staff: 1,200 Budget: 85 million	Both	Worldwide	Grassroots and community level	Religious and secular local counterparts	Education Advocacy Intermediary
11	Center for Justice and Peace-Building, Eastern Mennonite University	Faith-based university centre specializing in conflict transformation and peace-building	Staff: 29 Budget: 1.8 million	Both	West Africa, Middle East (plus Central America and Sudan)[36]	Grassroots and community level[37]	Religious counterparts and practitioners	Education
12	Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies	Catholic - based, inter-faith research and education institute	Staff: 20[38] Budget: 2.1 million	Religious conflict	Middle East, Eastern and Southern Africa, South Asia, South-East Asia	Different levels	Catholic and other religious actors, as well as secular actors	Education (and Research)
13	Religion and Peace- Making Initiative [39]	Not applicable	Budget: 823,000	Religious conflict	Indonesia, Iran, Israel/Palestine Nigeria, Sudan	(Inter)national level	Mostly religious local counterparts	Education Inter-faith Dialogue

No	Muslim Actor	Geographical Focus	Main Level of Operation	Primary Beneficiaries	Core Peace - Building Business
1	Wajir Peace and Development Committee, Kenya	Kenya, Somalia, Uganda	Local, national and international	Muslim and non-Muslim communities	Intermediary
2	Coalition for Peace in Africa, Kenya	All of Africa, particularly anglophone, lusophone and francophone countries	Local, national, and international	Different religious and ethnic communities	Intermediary
3	Inter-Faith Action for Peace in Africa, Kenya	All of Africa	International	Different religious and ethnic communities	Inter-faith
4	Inter-Faith Mediation Centre, Nigeria	Mostly Nigeria	Local, national and international	Muslim and Christian communities	Inter-faith Mediation
5	Centre for Research and Dialogue, Somalia	Somalia	Local, national and international	Mostly Muslim communities	Advocacy
6	*Idaacadda Quránka Kariimka* (IQK) [Holy Koran Radio], Somalia	Somalia	Local and national	Muslim communities	Advocacy
7	Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone	National and international	Different religious and ethnic communi.	Inter-faith Mediation

8	Sudanese Women's Initiative for Peace, Sudan	Sudan	National	Mostly Muslim women	Advocacy
9	Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative, Uganda	Mostly Uganda and Sudan	Local, national and international	Different religious and ethnic communities	Intermediary
10	*Salam* Institute for Peace and Justice, US	Global	International	Different religious and ethnic groups	Education
11	*Salam* Sudan Foundation, US	US, France and Sudan	International	Different religious and ethnic groups	Advocacy

3.6 Women of Faith in Peacebuilding

The argument that women are more pacifist has been discussed in the context of the Women's and Peace Hypothesis (WPH) debate.[68] Scholars supporting the theory have concluded that gender equality has a direct calming impact on human rights violations and that women are more peace-oriented, participate in more cooperative talks and have greater efforts to end conflict.[69] Several feminist scholars have concluded that without the presence of women on the bargaining table, it is impossible to alter current gendered power dynamics and thereby achieve lasting peace.[70] Several research assessing the role of women in peace talks have shown that women are excluded. In addition, many researchers looked at the structural, attitudinal, political, cultural, educational and practical circumstances that allow or prevent women from participating actively in peace processes. It has been found that the major barriers that prevent women from accessing policy levels are deep-rooted disparities within

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[68] Mark Tessler and Ina Warrine, *Gender, Feminism, and Attitudes toward International Conflict: Exploring Relationships with Survey Data from the Middle East* 49, no. 2 (January 1997): pp. 250-281, https://doi.org/https://www.jstor.org/stable/25053999?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

[69] Brounéus Fredrik, Judith Schwaab, and Brounéus Fredrik, *Reinkarnation Ist Nichts für Feiglinge Roman* (München: btb, 2014).

[70] Joyce P Kaufman and Kristen P Williams, *Women and War: Gender Identity and Activism in Times of Conflict*, n.d., https://doi.org/33:3, 287-288, DOI: 10.1080/1554477X.2012.696524.

political structures, representing the prejudices and vulnerabilities of the entire structure of power.[71]

Although women have been marginalized from peace-building in general, the new field of peace-building

Religious peace building has been a particular challenge for women. With formal religious authority overwhelmingly granted to men in most of the world's major religious traditions, women seeking to work through religious institutions or to shape pro-peace religious attitudes frequently struggle to find room for effort or power. Despite these obstacles, many women of faith are actively seeking peace both within and outside religious institutions. Women such as Dekha Ibrahim of Kenya, Venerable Mae Chee Sansanee of Thailand, and Sister Marie-Bernard Alima of the Democratic Republic of the Congo exemplify these efforts.

Dekha Ibrahim lived and served as a peacemaker in Kenya until her death in 2011, serving as a trustee of the African Peace Coalition and NOMADIC, a pastoral organization based in Wajir, Kenya. She was also one of the founders of the Wajir Peace and Development Committee and Conflict Transformation Action. She has won a number of international awards for her contribution to peace building, including the 2007 Right Livelihood Award given to the Swedish Parliament for demonstrating how religious and other differences can be reconciled in different ethnic and cultural circumstances, even after violent conflict, and brought together through a cooperative process that leads to peace and development."[72] Dekha ofen, a devout Muslim, referred to the basis of her faith for her work, and to the manner in which basic teachings of the Qur'an inspired her approach to peace building.[73] She was dedicated to deepening inter-religious relationships.

Buddhist nun Mae Chee Sansanee founded and directs the Sathira-Dhammasathan Center outside Bangkok, a retreat center that runs numerous programs providing support to victims

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[71] Ibid

[72] Right Livelihood Award Foundation, "2007 Laureates: Dekha Ibrahim Abdi (Kenya)," http://rightlivelihood.org/abdi.html.

[73] Ayse Kadayifci-Orellana and Meena Sharify-Funk, "Muslim Women Peacemakers as Agents of Change," in *Crescent and Dove: Peace and Conflict Resolution in Islam*, ed. Qamar-ul Huda (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 2010), 179–204; "A Discussion with Dekha Ibrahim," Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-dekha-ibrahim-founder-wajir-peace-and-development-committee-kenya.

of domestic violence, prisoners, and unwed mothers. When conflict broke out between Buddhists and Muslims in southern Tailand, Mae Chee led a peace walk in the south and reached out to Muslim women, bringing them to her retreat center to build relationships with Buddhist women. As Co-Chair of the Global Peace Initiative of Women, Mae Chee participates in and leads interfaith dialogue in conflict zones around the world. She describes all her work as about breaking cycles of violence.[74]

Catholic Sister Marie-Bernard Alima has worked for more than two decades to advance peace and to strengthen the capacity of women peacebuilders. In 2001, she created a civil society network called the Coordination of Women for Democracy and Peace to train and support women peace leaders. Tis network now includes thousands of women across the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) who provide leadership in human rights, transitional justice, widening women's participation in the political sphere, and combating sexual and gender-based violence, a pernicious problem in the DRC. Sister Alima is the frst woman to serve as the General Secretary of the DRC Episcopal (Bishops') Commission for Justice and Peace, where she guides the Catholic Church's Justice and Peace Program in a country where half the population is Catholic. Under her leadership, the commission has become more heavily engaged in advocacy to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and to offer rehabilitative support to its victims.[75]

Despite the existence of countless women religious peacebuilders such as these in conflict zones around the world, rarely are their experiences highlighted in the major literature on religious peacebuilding, which tends instead to focus on exemplary male figures, or on initiatives led by men. Tellingly, Katrien Hertog's 2010 review of religious peacebuilding, which comprehensively summarizes the major literature shaping the field, makes little reference to women religious peacebuilders aside from reference to "lay religious" or

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[74] Dena Merriam, "Creating Peaceful and Sustainable Communities through the Spiritual Empowerment of Women" (paper submitted for the Women, Religion, Conflict, and Peace Initiative, US Institute of Peace and the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, January 2012). For more, visit Sathira Dhammasathan's website: http://www.sathira-dhammasathan.org/. Mae Chee's biography on the Global Peace Initiative of Women website can be found at http://www.gpiw.org/MaeCheeSansanee.html.
[75] Maryann Cusimano Love, "Catholic Women Building Peace: Invisibility, Ideas, and Institutions Expand Participation" (paper submitted for the Women, Religion, Conflict, and Peace Initiative, US Institute of Peace and the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, January 2012).

"religious actors."[76] Moreover, historically it is male religious clerics who have been targeted by the international community in the practice of religious peacebuilding, particularly in highly visible and well-funded initiatives. "A Common Word Between Us and You," for instance, is a movement sparked by a letter sent from Muslim scholars to the Christian world in 2007 calling for greater dialogue and engagement for the purpose of mutual understanding and peace. The letter was signed by 137 men and one woman. The Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land and its antecedent, the Alexandria Process in Israel/Palestine, have not included any female members.[77] The Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding based in New York City has struggled to receive nominations of women peacemakers for its annual religious peacemakers' award. It is no wonder that in 2011 Heiner Bielefeldt, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, remarked on "a current imbalance in the composition of high-level interreligious dialogue events where women tend to be marginalized."[78]

Even when women are included in these initiatives, they frequently have a difficult time shaping the agenda and claiming an equal seat in the process. Power differentials between ordained male clerics and lay women prove difficult to manage in current processes of religious peacebuilding. In Sri Lanka, for example, Muslim activist Jezima Ismael speaks of her challenges as one of the very few women in the Sri Lankan Council of Religions for Peace, stating that cultural norms influencing gender relations, coupled with social deference to religious clergy, face major challenges in sharing equal voices with male religious clerics in the council.[79]

In recognition of the difficulty of including women in religious peace building and their historic marginalization, a number of organizations active in religious peace building have set up separate women's initiatives. Religions for Peace, officially founded in 1970 (and formerly known as the World Conference of Religions for Peace), established a Women's Mobilization Network in 1998 with the goal of incorporating women into all its

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[76] Hertog, *Te Complex Reality of Religious Peacebuilding*

[77] Susan Hayward and Lucy Kurtzer-Ellenbogen, "Religion: Inter- and Intrafaith Dialogue," in *Facilitating Dialogue*, ed. David Smock and Dan Serwer (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 2012), 67–89.

[78] Bielefeldt, statement before the 66th Session of the UN General Assembly, New York, October 20, 2011.

[79] Interview with author. Colombo, Sri Lanka. October 2020

programming. The Global Peace Initiative for Women, an organization based in New York City, was set up in response to the marginalization of women at the 2000 Millennium Summit of Religious Leaders. However, these efforts to build women's initiatives give rise to new challenges. They generate greater competition for funding within the religious peace-building sector, face tough times to obtain funding, and can contribute to further fragmentation of the area of religious peace-building and peace-building more broadly, which is already struggling with cooperation and coordination.[80] They often end up ghettoizing women's religious peace initiatives, rather than mainstreaming them.

Given the lack of documentation of the work on the ground of women of faith to build peace, it is challenging to offer a comprehensive picture of their work. That said, from analysis of what studies are available, anecdotes, and direct field observation, some trends emerge about the sort of work they are drawn to and the values that shape these activities. Likewise, scholar Judy El-Bushra has categorized women's peacebuilding work as focused on survival and basic needs, peacebuilding and mediation at different levels, advocacy, women's rights and participation, and community outreach and building.[81]

3.6.1 Psycho-Social and Spiritual Support to Survivors

"Peacebuilding to me is not about stopping the war by standing between two opposing forces,"

In her autobiography, Lehmah Gbowee writes. "Healing the victims of war, making them whole again and getting them back to the people they once were. It allows victims to rediscover their dignity so that they can once again become active members of their communities." In the midst of violence, women of faith seem especially interested in offering psychosocial treatment to victims in conflict zones. In Northern Uganda, Catholic Sister Pauline Acayo, a member of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative, has organized Catholic Relief Services' projects providing psychosocial trauma therapy and reintegration to

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[80] "A Discussion with Mohammed Abu-Nimer," Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, June 13, 2010, http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-mohammed-abu-nimer-professor-school-of-international-service-american-university
[81] El-Bushra, "Feminism, Gender, and Women's Peace Activism," *Development and Change* 38, no. 1 (2007): 139.

former child fighters of the Lord's Resistance Army (in addition to their work in organizing women peacebuilders).[82]

Women in religious groups tend to be well placed to provide assistance to women and men survivors of sexual abuse who may not feel secure in serving male religious leaders. Although religious groups are often accused of not doing enough to tackle violence against women, including rape and sexual exploitation in war, trafficking in human beings, and domestic violence that spikes when soldiers surely return home, women of faith have tried to put this problem more at the forefront of religious peace-building and justice priorities. This is demonstrated by Sister Alima's attempts to incorporate responses to sexual and gender-based abuse within the Catholic Church in the DRC. Similarly, the Center Olame, a Catholic social assistance organization in South Kivu, under the leadership of Mathilde Muhindo Mwamini, offers psychological and practical assistance to victims of sexual abuse.[83] Andrea Blanch, president of the Center for Religious Diversity and a certified social worker, points out that "religion and faith tap into people's deepest convictions and can offer a single mechanism to begin resolving trauma and tension at a personal and community level."[84]

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has unraveled some of the various faith-based actors in different historical contexts and how their roles as well as their relationships with the various political regimes have evolved since colonialism to date. On the onset, we observe a very close relationship between the colonial governments and the Church missionary groups and how this close relationship worked at each party's advantage, each influencing the other and how this relationship had a crucial role in shaping African countries.

In the wake of the struggle for independence, we observe a reluctant call to action by these religious organization, in participating in anti-colonial activities or movements as they almost

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[82] Emiko Noma, *Born in the Borderlands, Living for Unity: Te Story of a Peacebuilder in Northern Uganda* (San Diego: Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, 2005).
[83] Marshall et al., "Women in Religious Peacebuilding," 17.
[84] "A Discussion with Andrea Blanch," Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, June 13, 2010, http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/interviews/a-discussion-with-andrea-blanch-president-center-for-religious-tolerance.

take the apolitical stance of accepting the status quo as it is. It is observed that only a few churches promoted anti-racist and anti-colonial approaches.

The post-independence period sees the transformation of most of the missionary organizations to FBOs, primarily focusing on relief but also taking an increased role in issues of good governance; speaking out against political injustices, opposing despotic dictators and calling for constitutional reform and the opening up democratic space. The chapter concludes by observing the significant increment and involvement of faith-based actors, clergy, religious movements and organizations in playing part in the resolution of contemporary African conflicts and addressing human security concerns in the continent.

CHAPTER FOUR
RELIGIOUS INITIATIVES OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACEBUILDING

4.0 Introduction

Individuals and faith-based organizations from a range of religious backgrounds are increasingly involved in efforts to end violence and promote post-conflict reconciliation between warring parties in different parts of the world.[85]

Peace is often described in the negative as freedom from war; peace, prosperity and democracy form an interconnected triangle that is mutually reinforcing. Without democracy, the distribution of economic growth and resources is unlikely to be equitable. Without sustainable growth, inequalities are marked and can be a source of conflict, and without stability, developmental advances are easily lost. Positive peace refers to the absence of indirect and systemic aggression, the lack of oppressive systems and unequal relations; it refers to peace at various levels, such as actions, attitudes or structures. Positive peace is packed with positive material, such as the re-establishment of ties, the constructive resolution of disputes and the development of social structures that represent the needs of the entire population. Positive peace includes all aspects of a healthy society that one might envisage for oneself: universal justice, economic well-being, ecological harmony and other core values. It defines a condition in which justice and equity prevail, aims to promote and enhance the quality of life.

As one would imagine, the word "peace building" is not well defined and is used in a number of fields. The phrase peacebuilding was frequently used after the declaration by Boutros Boutros Boutros-Ghali, then Secretary-General of the United Nations, on his Agenda for Peace in 1992.[86] Since then, work that has peace-enhancing effects is most commonly used to describe it and it attaches great importance to how things happen. It requires a full range of techniques, processes and stages required to turn only governance modes and equal

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[85] Tsjeard Bouta and Georg E. Frerks, *Addendum to Women's Roles in Conflict Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Dutch Translation of Chapters 7 and 8* (Den Haag: Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid, Directie Communicatie, 2002).
[86] Boutros Boutros-Ghali: An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping, 1992; Boutros Boutros-Ghali: Supplement to An Agenda for Peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, 1995

systems into more sustainable and peaceful relationships. The United Nations differentiates between various types of intervention to bring about peace.[87] In addition to humanitarian relief or emergency assistance intended to provide urgent means of survival for at-risk populations, the main types of action are: peace-making including measures aimed at resolving hostilities and achieving an agreement using, as appropriate diplomatic, political and military means, with an emphasis on diplomatic efforts to end conflict. Religion and international relations scholarly and policy-oriented literature is abundant in publications arguing that religion is a valuable tool for promoting peace, if not necessary. More precisely, in every culture and/or in the international arena, religious beliefs/values, religious leaders and faith-based organizations are thought to have tremendous capacity to foster peace.

In conflict resolution, religious actors can play a variety of roles: educators; advocates; intermediaries; mediators; they can help change behaviors; provide education, health or relief services for peace-building; disseminate ideas such as democracy and human rights; or promote disarmament.[88]

4.2 Religious Measures of Conflict Management and Peacebuilding

Faith actors have been an important force for social justice and a movement for peace in Africa in the last quarter of this century. By empowering the vulnerable, by shaping the moral-political climate, by fostering solidarity and providing humanitarian assistance, religions contribute to peace-building. By providing help to protest movements, people can be inspired. Examples include: mediation conducted by the Quakers and funded in the Nigerian Civil War by the Ford Foundation,1967-70; the work of the World Council of Churches and the All Africa Conference of Churches to mediate the cessation of the Sudan conflict in 1972; attempts made in Nicaragua in the 19th century by John Paul Lederach (Professor of International Peace-building at the University of Notre Dame);[89] In the 1980s, churches released a statement endorsing the aims of the peace movement in the East and West, and the God against the bomb operation in North America and Europe. This indicates that in various parts of the world, citizens and religious groups from a number of religious

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[87] United Nations: United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. Principles and Guidelines, 2010; United Nations: Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice, 2008 Chapter VI and VII
[88] Ibid
[89] Op cite, p21

backgrounds are increasingly involved in efforts to end conflict and facilitate post-conflict reconciliation.

4.2.1 Diplomatic Engagement

4.2.1.1 Church Diplomacy

The pope himself is the principal representative for the diplomacy of the Church. For this mission, the early Popes relied on delegates. In the nineteenth century, an awakening of true papal diplomacy began.[90] During times of political crisis, the pope carried more weight in speaking to the world. John Paul II (1978–2005)[91] was the master of centralized and personalized diplomatic conduct. Arguably, in their diplomatic missions, popes might and did indeed have influence.[92] The successful appeal by Benedict to Iran to free British naval personnel in 2007 is one example of their many diplomatic activities. The British government asked the pope for aid because of the almost nonexistent official diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom and Iran. The pope finally succeeded in releasing the imprisoned sailors by sending a letter to Ayatollah Khamenei.[93] More recently, the interest and use of diplomatic service by Pope Francis has led to the deterioration of US-Cuban relations, the formal agreement between the Holy See and the state of Palestine, and his reference to the 1915 massacre of Armenians as a "genocide".[94]

The Church supports a broad foreign policy apparatus, despite its small geographic scale and restricted office space in Vatican City and its inward-oriented processual engagement.[95] This becomes especially clear in the raw numbers of countries in which the Holy See actually has

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[90] Peter C. Kent and John F. Pollard, *Papal Diplomacy in the Modern Age* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994).

[91] When dates are provided with popes' names, they refer to the span of their terms. Before Pope Benedict XVI's "retirement," it was a given that popes stay in office until their deaths.

[92] Consider the political ramifications of the 1998 visit of John Paul II for political liberties in Cuba (see Johnston and Cox 2003, 22–23).

[93] Francis Rooney, *The Global Vatican: An Inside Look at the Catholic Church, World Politics, and the Extraordinary Relationship between the United States and the Holy See.* (Lanham, MD, 2013).

[94] David Gibson, "How Pope Francis' Diplomacy May Change Everything, Not Just US-Cuba Relations," December 18, 2014, http://www.religionnews.com/2014/12/18/pope-francis-diplomacy-may-change-everything-not-just-us-cuba-relations/.

[95] There is not much literature on either the theoretical education or the actual work of papal diplomats. Moreover, there is no memoir tradition of retired diplomats. The exceptions are the memories of Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli (later Pope John XXIII), former nuncio to France (1944–1953). However, these consist of reprints of official letters and addresses (John XXIII 1966) For a historical treatment of the diplomatic service, see Kracht (2011). Over the last few years WikiLeaks, via published cables from and to the Vatican embassy, has revealed a "clumsy" practice of the Holy See's diplomats http://wikileaks.org/origin/33_0.html.

diplomatic relations: 183. The nuncios (also known as apostolic or papal nuncios; "envoys" or "messengers" literally) are the representatives of the pope. Two essential duties are fulfilled: overseeing the local Church and acting as a liaison between the Holy See and the host country. "The formal external-political relations are regulated in the internal-political realm by canon law, canon 362 of which states: "The Roman Pontiff has the inherent and autonomous right to name, send, pass and recall his own legates either to specific churches in different nations or regions or to states and public authorities". [96] The diplomacy of the Holy See is controlled in formal external-jurisdictive areas by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961.[97]

While most theological authorities within the Church have opposed the attempt to assign ecclesiastical diplomatic roles (such as the nuncios') a theological basis for most of its existence, they are still expansive.[98] The Holy See's presence in formal international relations points to its empirical influence (e.g. the demand for diplomatic recognition by the Holy See of other emerging nations, as well as vice versa, such as with the state of Palestine).

The Church's leading position in international relations is through the so-called track-two diplomatic activities, which includes faith-based diplomacy.[99] These initiatives range from the participation of civil society in the public domain to official government diplomatic initiatives. Civil society participation is initiated and led by lay people or groups, but receives the help of the Catholic clergy and therefore the "official" involvement of the Church. It is a bottom-up engagement, whereas official government diplomatic efforts are by definition, top-down ones. What is similar to both approaches, in the case of international politics, is that they are primarily concerned with and for peace-building activities.[100] Well-known examples of Church participation in the second half of the twentieth century are:

- Pope John XXIII's contribution to a diplomatic solution to the Cuban Missile Crisis;[101]

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[96] http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_INDEX.HTM.
[97] http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_1_1961.pdf. See particularly art. 14.
[98] Murphy, Francis X. 1974. "Vatican Politics: Structure and Function." *World Politics* 26 (4): 542–559, 547
[99] Ibid
[100] Ibid
[101] Michael Flamini, *Pope, Premier, President: The Cold War Summit That Never Was* (New York: MacMilan, 1980).

- The Solidarity Movement, which led to the democratization of Poland;[102]

- The Philippine People's Power Movement, which led to the ouster of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos;[103]

- • Mediation of the Holy See in the Beagle Channel Dispute between Argentina and Chile;[104]

- Reconciliation attempts in emerging democracies or transition nations, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa;[105] and

- Peace-building negotiations during the civil war in Mozambique and elsewhere by the Catholic RNGO of St. Egidio.[106]

The Holy See's diplomatic engagement in international bodies such as the EU and the UN is another field in which the normative and neoliberal analysis of the Holy See's foreign policy blends. On the one hand, there are the raw statistics of the Church's participation in the given "playing rules" (e.g. participation in diplomacy and international organizations) in international politics. In the other hand, the normative, that is, theological and doctrinal, underpinning this dedication. Two clear examples of this strategy of the Church and of the respective theoretical studies are the portrayal of the Holy See and involvement in discourses within the EU and the UN. The Church's participation in European party politics has therefore come as no surprise. In addition to the principle of subsidiarity, solidarity is one of the cornerstones of Catholic social teaching and doctrine.[107]. The other case, even more illustrative, is the representation of the Holy See in the United Nations. From its formation,

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[102] Timothy A Byrnes, *The Polish Church: Catholic Hierachy and Polish Politics." In The Catholic Church and the Nation-State. Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Lawrence Lawrence Reardon, Paul Manuel, and Clyde Wilcox (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006).

[103] Robert L Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church: Economic Development and Political Repression in the Philippines* (Ithaka, New York: Cornell University Press, 1990).

[104] Thomas Princen, *Mediation by a Transnational Organization: The Case of the Vatican." In Mediation in International Relations: Multiple Approaches to Conflict Management*, ed. Jacob Bercovitch (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1992), 149–175.

[105] Ibid

[106] Andreas R Batlogg, *Die Optimisten Von Sant'Egidio: Zum Profil Einer Christlichen Gemeinschaft Mit Weltweitem Einfluß* (Stimmen der Zeit, 2011), 613–628.

[107] Charles E Curran, *Catholic Social Teaching, 1891–Present: A Historical, Theological, and Ethical Analysis* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002).

the Holy See has taken an interest in the United Nations.[108] In 1964 the Holy See was officially invited by Secretary-General U Thant to send a permanent observer to the United Nations.

4.2.2 Religious NGOs at the United Nations

The United Nations has maintained relations with non-state actors since the time of its foundation. During the 1990s, actors of this kind became increasingly involved in transnational endeavors to bring about global social and economic justice, and this led to the formalization of their relations with the UN.[109] Although the role of religion in international relations is an established area of study, until very recently the involvement of religious NGOs in UN affairs was not an aspect of it that elicited much interest, yet Religion and religious groups have been at the United Nations since the earliest days of the Organization. Over the last sixty years, the relationship between religious actors and the United Nations has evolved significantly shaped by dramatic shifts in geopolitical realities and the increasing persistence with which religious groups have sought to inject their voice into public debate.

The terms of the NGO-UN relationship were first defined in Article 71 of the UN Charter, which states that the Economic and Social Council, one of the principal organs of the UN, could consult with (primarily international) "non-governmental organizations," which had expertise in issues relevant to issues before the Council. On this basis, the Charter succeeded in creating the necessary political space for interaction and association between the UN and civil society organizations.

The first generation of NGO-UN relations, from 1945 to roughly 1990, was characterized by mostly formal, arms-length contributions by NGOs to UN deliberative processes. Of particular significance for Catholic organizations was the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), which sought to redefine the Church's relationship with modern society, developed Catholic teaching on social justice issues, and profoundly impact Catholics' understanding of their role in the international arena. In 1964, the Holy See was granted "Permanent Observer" status at the United Nations and became the first non-member state and religious

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[108] Alan Chong and Jodok Troy, *A Universal Sacred Mission and the Universal Secular Organisation: The Holy See and the United Nations*, vol. 3, 2011, 335–354.
[109] Ibid

body and to be granted such status.[110] (Around the same time, the 12-storey Church Center for the United Nations was erected by the United Methodist Church and, today, serves as a central meeting point for religious and other NGOs and perhaps the most visible presence of religion at the UN.) Since the 1980's, interstate conflicts, humanitarian crises, declining capacities of national governments, and rapid advancements in communications technology– have added further impetus to the expansion and increased participation of civil society at the UN.

FBOs that are present at the UN are often connected among themselves as well as with secular NGOs, where they often try to create partnerships but disagreements are not rare either. In addition, they do have their agendas and do try to maximize their influence on decision-making. However, FBOs as well as secular NGOs have only observer status at the UN and are not members of any decision-making body. FBOs make up around 10% of organizations that have a constitutive role with UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).[111] There are more than 300 of them, and between half to two thirds are based in the North and have Christian orientation. However, this is not representative of religious demographic realities, but is not surprising since north based Christian organizations do have more resources to be represented on the international level. This should also not be surprising because most of the UN membership base is Western (Western European and USA) and comes from Christian background countries.

In the nearly 20 years following September 11th, UN- and member state-led initiatives concerning matters related to religion have proliferated and assumed a growing importance. To cite but a few examples: the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution outlining a 'Global Agenda for Dialogue Among Civilizations in 2001; UNESCO launched a flagship project on the promotion of interfaith dialogue in 2004; a tri-partite coalition of Member States, UN agencies and religious NGOs organized a high-level UN conference on interfaith cooperation—exploring the role of religion in promoting intercultural understanding as well as strategies for interfaith cooperation for sustainable peace in 2005; UNFPA (United Nations

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[110] While the Holy See does not have the voting rights accorded to full Member States, it is able to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly, holds full membership in UN specialized agencies and has voting rights at many UN
conferences (allowing it to shape the language of conference documents and declarations).
[111] Ibid

Population Fund) has begun partnering with and building networks of faith-based associations, recognizing their pivotal role in health care infrastructures in underserved regions.

Within the context of the UN today, the aim of RNGO activity is ultimately to influence thought and action among those in decision-making positions. This ranges from influencing debate through the contribution of additional information or perspectives, pushing for the realization of stated commitments, bringing excluded voices to the table, or facilitating forums for NGO collaboration which lend impetus to the development and shaping of global public opinion on issues merit the consideration of the UN. Religious NGOs, often deeply connected into extensive networks of human and material resources, are uniquely suited to these tasks.

How effective are RNGOs in the new diplomacy?

Even though FBOs have very low status in UN in terms of decision making, here is also an expanding network on international FBOs, as well as expanding areas of their concerns to be more oriented towards political and broader social issues. Trying to operate in a highly competitive environment like that of the UN to make one's voice heard on global policy issues is not easy, but it is also an opportunity for FBOs to be heard on a global level at some capacity.[112]

A study of various efforts by FBOs by the Peace Research Institute in Frankfurt found that there were ambiguous results. On the one hand, involvement of FBOs to promote justice often further polarized the conflicting groups. On the other hand, over time the context and continued process involving the FBOs often changed and worked towards bringing peaceful solutions.

4.2.2 Mediation

Faith-based mediation refers to third-party involvement initiatives in which religious values, objects (i.e. symbols, documents, pictures, concepts, etc and entities play an important role. The use of religious objects and the participation of religious actors in mediation is not a new phenomenon. For example, the Pope successfully mediated the Beagle Channel dispute that

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[112] Ibid

broke out between Chile and Argentina in 1985.[113] Conflicts have also been mediated by other religious actors in various parts of the world, such as Quakers, Interfaith Mediation Center in Nigeria. [114]

Sierra Leone is another case in point where the mediator's religious affiliation has played a key role. In Sierra Leone, religious actors such as the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRCSL) have played an important role in fostering reconciliation and mediation efforts and have been instrumental in negotiating and signing the Lome Peace Agreement. One of the reasons for the establishment and involvement of IRCSL was that both mosques and churches were important players in the spiritual, cultural and socio-economic growth of Sierra Leone before and after independence. When the war broke out both ordinary Muslims and Christians urged their religious leaders to play a more active role in stopping bloodshed.[115] Formed in April 1997, IRCSL leaders have used their religious credibility and power to settle the conflict peacefully by actively seeking dialog with the leaders of the coup, listening to their concerns and condemning the coup and human rights violations committed by the junta.

In addition, IRCSL initiated a negotiated settlement initiative and proposed the convening of a national consultative conference, the closure of the Liberian border and the appointment of a peace ambassador. "The active position of the Council in facilitating and supporting the negotiations that led to the Lome Agreement was recognized by giving IRCSL a predominant role in the Council of Elders and Religious Leaders to be formed to mediate disputes on the interpretation of the Agreement."[116] Although the Council has never been formed, IRCSL members have been involved in reconciliation, relief, human rights training, democratization and reintegration programs, particularly for children and combatants. Among other things, IRCSL was also able to persuade the rebels to release fifty-four kidnapped children during the talks.

One of the main factors leading to the success of IRCSL was its religious identity and affiliation, which were considered to be reliable and valued mediators by both the government and the rebels, as well as the general public. The role of Quakers during the 1967 Nigerian

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[113] James M Garrett, *The Bomb and European Security*, 1985.
[114] Abu Nimer, op cit
[115] Thomas Mark Turay, *Toward a Global Culture of Peace: A Transformative Model of Peace Education*, 2000, https://doi.org/https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1541344608330602.
[116] Ibid

Civil War is another example where the mediator's religious background had a direct effect on the mediation process. The President of Niger, a member of the Advisory Committee formed by the Organization of African States (OAS), proposed that Quakers might convene a secret meeting of lower-level officials from both sides to discuss potential areas of agreement with their informal status and long experience at the conference.[117] Quaker's intervention was deemed fruitful, as both the rebels and the government were convinced to convene a peace conference. The importance of the position played by the Quakers was recognized by the Biafran representative who said, "Although the Biafrans were the most recalcitrant side when it came to the negotiations…. The Quakers succeeded in persuading us to go to the Peace Conference and keep talking while the war was going on.".[118]

There are a variety of features that differentiate these religious initiatives from secular ones. These include: (a) the explicit emphasis on spirituality and/or religious identity; (b) the use of religious texts; (c) the use of religious beliefs and vocabulary; (d) the use of religious or spiritual practices during the process; and (e) the participation of faith-based actors as third parties. This section focuses on the characteristics of faith-based mediation actors and addresses the question: do faith-based actors have unique attributes, tools, motives and techniques that can lead to their effectiveness in responding to ethno-religious conflicts? In essence, I argue that the various characteristics of faith-based actors equip them to effectively mediate conflicts. This include the characteristics of the mediator, the tools they carry into the process, their motivation and the techniques they employ.

Mediation studies have repeatedly shown that the mediator's identity plays a role in the effectiveness of the intervention.[119] Religious actors have also served as mediators in disputes. Conflict participants often call for faith-based mediators rather than secular ones. Religious actors also have a long-term commitment to their families, and their social standing as cultural insiders gives them prestige and authority.[120]

Some mediation processes value the independence and impartiality of the mediator; processes involving religious actors tend to fall at the other end of the continuum. FBOs who are aware

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[117] Ibid
[118] Op cite, p 69
[119] Jacob Bercovitch, Kremeníuǩ V. A., and I. William. Zartman, *The SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2009).
[120] Op cite, p 9

of the conflict are engaged with the parties and who do not leave the region after the settlement are considered cultural insiders who have a vested interest in seeking a solution for peace, without endorsing either side.[121] This helps them empower the peace societies.

Whether or not they belong to the same religious group as the parties to the dispute, religious actors are likely to gain confidence from both sides. This is because they are seen as having a predominant dedication to the work of God and a lack of vested interests in the result other than peace.[122]

The Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone consisted of mixed-faith people from conflict groups, which allowed them to discuss issues with representatives of all warring parties.[123] In other cases, actors from outside the community or other religions have been successful.

FBOs can use religious mediation techniques to encourage parties to reach an agreement. This could include prayer, meditation, religious ceremonies, religious vocabulary, beliefs and myths.[124] In Muslim cultures, the FBOs have effectively used conventional methods of dispute resolution (suluh) that are familiar and thus legitimate.

4.2.3 Convening Dialogues

Interfaith dialog has been adopted by governments and organizations as a critical tool for promoting peace building in circumstances where conflict has an inter-religious aspect. In some academic work, cultivating relationships between various groups is often referred to as building social capital.[125] This form of work, which is a key focus of many FBOs, has very many examples. Here are some instances.

The Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel brings together 60 FBOs and promotes discussion and study groups, including the study of each other's sacred texts, which can foster greater understanding.[126] Similarly, in order to improve empathy and tolerance between violent groups, Caritas Southern Africa brings black people together in South Africa to work on community projects. In Jos, Nigeria, many organizations participated in or founded peace-

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[121]Ibid

[122]Ibid

[123] Op cite, p9

[124]Ibid

[125] E I van Ommering, , *The Roles of Faith-Based Educational Institutions in Conflict Transformation in Fragile States* (ICCO Alliance Working Group Religion and Education, 2009).

[126] Ibid

building and dialogue seminars after violence in 2001. The Nigerian Christian Association (CAN) organized Christian and Muslim meetings, participated in interfaith seminars and developed dialogue with Muslim counterparts. The Islamic organization Jamatul Nasril Islam led the Christian-Muslim dialogue and participated in all the government-organized peace committees.[127] It seemed that religiously mixed workshops helped to create confidence among the participants. Mixed faith sports tournaments, non-violence seminars, addressing diverse sectors, such as students and indigenous communities, and radio messages of unity were other tactics.[128]

4.2.4 Development, Aid and Humanitarian Assistance

Africa is often considered an underdeveloped, or developing, continent, in contrast to other parts of the world, especially Europe and North America, which are considered to be developed. "Development", from this Western-centric perspective, is typically conceived of in largely socio-economic terms. It is part of a broader narrative of modernity according to which societies progress from a pre-modern to a modern stage, the latter being associated with high levels of (Western-style) education, technological advancement, scientifically informed healthcare systems and democratic nation-building.

Because indigenous religions are usually not institutionalized in the way that Christianity and Islam are, they are not typically engaged in formal development projects. However, sometimes NGOs (non-governmental organizations) do engage indigenous religious and community leaders (such as priests, diviners and chiefs) in development projects, for instance asking them to pour libation for the ancestors or to perform divination when a new project is launched. Indeed, some scholars have argued that acknowledging the significance of such indigenous religious rituals, as well as of indigenous knowledge more generally, is crucial to the success of development processes in Africa.[129] However, the present section limits its scope to Islamic and Christian development activities.

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[127] Shedrack Gaya Best and Carole Rakodi, *Violent Conflict and Its Aftermath in Jos and Kano, Nigeria: What Is the Role of Religion?* (Birmingham: RaD, 2011).
[128] Ibid
[129] Munyaradzi Mawere, *Culture, Indigenous Knowledge and Development in Africa: Reviving Interconnections for Sustainable Development* (Bamenda, Cameroon: Langaa Research & Publishing CIG, 2014).

With regard to Islam, there are a growing number of Islamic NGOs that are active in many parts of Africa. The activities of these organizations are said to represent an "entanglement of aid and *umma*".[130] In other words, they combine traditional development and humanitarian aid work, such as medical assistance, food supply and education, with proselytizing activities through promoting particular forms of moral livelihood and instilling a sense of belonging to the *umma*, the notion of the global community of Islamic believers. As such, the work of these organizations can be seen as linked to broader processes of Islamization and Arabization of the region. In a 2004 review of Islamic NGOs in the central African country of Chad, Mayke Kaag counted eleven of them, six of them having Saudi origins, one Kuwaiti, one Libyan, and three Sudanese, with funding coming from these and other countries on the basis of the Islamic principles of solidarity and charity (*zakat* and *sadaqa*).

With regard to Christianity, a major player in the sector of development is the Catholic Church. Historically speaking, the Catholic Church during and after the colonial period has established itself as a major player in education and healthcare in many African countries. According to Gifford (2015, 86, 90), in 2009, "there were claimed to be over 12,000 Catholic infant schools, 33,000 primary schools, and almost 10,000 secondary schools, plus about twenty universities", while the church also "operated 16,178 health centers, including 1,074 hospitals, 5,373 out-patient clinics" alongside orphanages, elderly homes, centers for mentally disabled people and rehabilitation centers. Where education and healthcare have always been core activities, in recent decades the Catholic Church has intensified its efforts and expanded its work terrain. As Nigerian theologian Stan Chu Ilo explains, ever since the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council in 1965, the role of the church in development has been quite prominent. The renewal of the Church's self-understanding with respect to the social context in which the gospel is to be preached is one of the reasons for this. Evangelization is integral and demands an immersion in the social conditions of the people who receive the good news.

The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) was a series of meeting of all Catholic Bishops worldwide in Rome, where a new vision for the church and its mission in the world was developed. Discussions and decisions of the Council revitalized the tradition of Catholic

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[130] Benjamin F. Soares and Otayek René, *Islam and Muslim Politics in Africa* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 89.

Social Teaching, which is concerned with Catholic thinking about human dignity and the common good in society, addressing a whole range of socio-economic and political questions. This was reflected in one of the Council's official documents, Gaudium et Spes, the "Pastoral Constitution on the Church and the Modern World" of 1965. In the aftermath of Vatican Council II, in Latin America and later to some extent also in Africa, liberation theology emerged. It is based on the notion that God is on the side of the poor, and that the mission of the church therefore is to work towards socio-economic justice. As a result of these developments, the Catholic Church in many African countries in recent decades has become more and more involved in activities that are broadly associated with development. Typically, these activities are coordinated by Commissions for Justice and Peace and/or Commissions for Development which fall under the direct authority of the national conferences of Catholic bishops, while funding often comes from Western Catholic charities as well as secular development organizations.

Faith-based organizations are strategically positioned in humanitarian contexts to provide vital links to local faith groups, promote rapid disaster response and enhance resilience for peace building and recovery in local communities. In providing positive and profoundly rooted language about human dignity, human relationships and their significance in influencing the debate on human rights, faith narratives have much to contribute. Therefore the moral obligation of FBOs, as is especially the case in multi-religious and multi-sectarian contexts, is to offer assistance to people of other religions. Recent studies show that the vital role of the FBO culture in humanitarian response is increasingly recognized.

Non-governmental humanitarian assistance and development organizations have long relied on governments and institutions addressing the issues of poverty, development, crisis and conflict as partners and key actors to meet humanitarian needs around the world. A broad variety of organizations focused on faith and motivated by faith participate in this work, with variable access to donors. Historically, faith-based organizations have revived demands for inclusion by governments and donors, having restricted access to policy tables and suffering from the mistrust of secular and institutional donors, perhaps due to bad faith literacy within development circles," as the vital position they play is well demonstrated. The British Government's Faith Relationship Strategy, which actively engages with the FBO group, is an instance of this initiative producing tangible results.

Religious values and beliefs can form the foundation of a vital devotion to human weakness and precarious social and economic orders, and can underpin popular attempts to promote human well-being, equality, social justice and civil peace. At the same time, faith-based organizations engage with local faith groups for the good of donors and aid recipients by adhering to the universal obligation of offering help, irrespective of faith, to all those in need by maintaining international humanitarian standards and values, as well as by strengthening the basis of confidence and shared respect for the restoration of plural communities. It should also be remembered that international humanitarian values are aligned with the core religious convictions of the major world religions and are ultimately focused on them, thereby complementing the efforts of humanitarian actors and faith-based organizations.

Relation should be made explicitly to inter-faith work and partnerships between FBOs and leaders of faith. This is especially important in conflict settings, such as post-war Sierra Leone, recent developments in Northern Kenya, Iraq and Syria, and where conflict resolution, conflict prevention and peace-building should be an important part of the humanitarian response. The scope for connecting faith-based action to security should be revised in the sense of humanitarian aid. Multiple religions that pool their voices and acts to protect people can serve as a multiplier of powers.

In recent years, several campaigns have taken place in order to improve interaction with FBOs. The UN organizations, UNFPA in particular, have tried to strengthen dialogue and to call for active and strategic alliances with FBOs. The World Bank hosted and participated in a series of meetings in February 2015 aimed at developing successful partnerships between the public sector and faith communities, including the "Faith Based and Religious Leaders Roundtable" in February 2015, the first high-level meeting between President Jim Yong Kim of the World Bank Community and faith leaders. Several side events have taken place in the lead-up to the World Humanitarian Summit, addressing the role of FBOs in humanitarian crises, the importance of interfaith cooperation, and the unique role that FBOs and religious institutions play in responding to people in need.

Faith-based organizations have unique features that in specific contexts provide both tangible and intangible benefits, particularly where individual aid recipients and/or local partners are from the same faith group or developed ecumenical or interfaith councils, where pre-existing reservoirs of trust provide access to facilities and networks, including community spa gathering A sense of mutual purpose and values offers a shortcut to successful local community partnerships.

Many FBOs offer immediate relief, delivering social services and psychological help during and in the wake of violence. Some of the literature suggests that where FBOs feel most relaxed is this place. Faith groups and FBOs offered urgent assistance to victims and their families in Nigeria, following violence in Jos in 2008, through prayer and therapy, rehoming, food, clothing, and medical distribution.[131] A week-long fasting and prayer session was arranged by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN).[132] Most organizations first offered assistance to their own faith groups in this instance, and most did not reach out to people of other faiths.

4.2.4.1 Impact on the Ground

Perhaps the most challenging task of this research is to determine the on the ground" effect of international social and economic development organizations based on faith. I rely on Narayan et al. in this respect and quote from them. These authors reviewed all available country reports from the World Bank and provided the following summary:

The NGOs with the greatest presence in certain regions are religiously associated. For example, in Benin, where these organizations act as one of the most prominent and widely spread institutional safety nets for the vulnerable, this is the case. The majority of the orphanages are run by Catholic sisters, Cathwell (Catholic Relief Services) operates the only country-wide nutritional program, and nuns and priests have set up many projects to support the poor, the abandoned, and the destitute. The Catholic Church in Cotonou is arguably the most powerful force that supports the most needy. In Sudan the PPA reports "a deeply entrenched tradition of private charity and welfare reinforced by Islamic religious

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[131] Ibid
[132] Ibid

obligation." Mosques and shrines are valued as sites of charity. Ashrams are mentioned in some places in Lamu, Kenya as places of refuge for the poor.[133]

Narayan et al. also searched for negative examples of the work of faith-based international social and economic development organizations. They managed to find some examples but they were all related to small highly evangelical groups whose overall share of international social and economic development was marginal. These evangelical groups often put proselytization ahead of service provision and, as such, agitated local communities and their traditions.

Bennell, Harding, and Rogers-Wright estimated that in Sierra Leone, FBOs own and manage about 75 percent of primary schools.[134] Daun states that Christian missionaries (Catholic and Protestant alike) pioneered the notion and practice of formal education and the development of educational institutions to Africa.[135] The spread of Islam later contributed to the provision of education all over the continent. Throughout Africa, these main world religious influences are the cornerstone of educational facilities and institutions. "My generation is the result of missionary education," the late Nelson Mandela told the audience at the World Council of Churches in 1998. I would not be here today without it). I'll never have enough words to thank the missionaries for what they've done for us.[136]

"Historically, churches were much more interested in education than colonial governments in Africa," Gifford notes. In fact, according to Hastings in 1945, 96.4% of the school-attending children did so through a mission school in the areas of tropical Africa that were governed by Great Britain. "In 2009, there were reportedly more than 12,000 Catholic infant schools, 33,000 elementary schools, and almost 10,000 secondary schools in Africa, plus about twenty universities," Gifford found. The qualification in the above sentence relates to the fact that African governments actually support many of these schools. Gifford also

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[133] Deepa Narayan, Raj Patel, Kai Schafft, Anne Rademacher, and Sarah Koch-Schulte. *Voices of the Poor: Can Anyone Hear Us?* Washington: World Bank Publications, 1999. Available online: http://siteresources. worldbank.org/INTPOVERTY/Resources/335642-1124115102975/1555199-1124115187705/vol1.pdf (accessed on 27 October 2020)

[134] Paul Bennell, Jeanne Harding, and Shirley Rogers-Wright. *PRSP Education Sector Review*. Freetown: British Council Sierra Leone, 2004.

[135] Holger Daun. "Primary education in Sub-Saharan Africa—A moral issue, an economic matter, or both?" *Comparative Education* 36 (2000): 37–53.

[136] Nelson Mandela. "Together on the way." Address by President Nelson Mandela to the WCC on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, Harare, Zimbabwe, 13 December 1998.

showed that the majority of university students graduated from Christian schools, and when there are national assessments, religious school students succeed at a far higher pace.[137]

In 2015, the Catholic Church in Africa ran 26,178 health centres, 15574 hospitals, 5373 outpatient clinics, 186 leper colonies, 753 elderly and physically and mentally impaired homes, 979 orphanages, and 2947 education and recovery centers, Gifford assessed.[138]

He also reported that half of all AIDS-related organizations in Africa are provided by Catholic organizations. Gifford concluded that in health "As with schools, the church led the way, long before governments". At least in one occasion, in 1947, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to two Quaker organizations—the Friends Service Committee in London and the American Friends Service Committee in Philadelphia—for humanitarian service and dedication to peace and nonviolence. Other religious leaders such as the Dali Lama, Mother Teresa, and Bishop Desmond Tutu also received the Nobel Peace Prize.

There are very few empirical studies of effectiveness comparing religious and secular development organizations. One related study compared Christian and secular micro-finance organizations. Mersland, D'Espallier and Supphellen reported that "Christian MFIs have significantly lower funding costs and consistently underperform in terms of financial profit indicators. Contrary to the hypothesis that Christian MFIs are as efficient in assuring loan repayment and their average loan sizes are on par with those of their secular peers".[139] It is not my point that international faith-based development organizations should be deemed superior to their secular counterparts. The simple fact that they are adding international development programs that would not otherwise have been offered is a significant contribution that needs to be analyzed and better understood.

4.2.4.2 Healing of Trauma and Injuries

Communities engaged in conflict are typically traumatized and have profound injuries because of gross violations of human rights and extreme abuse. Deep emotional and psychological stress has been triggered by traumatic recollections of conflict, loss of loved

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[137] Ibid

[138] Deryke Belshaw. "Enhancing the development capability of civil society organisations, with particular reference to Christian faith-based organisations (FBOs)." June 2005. Available online: http://www.sarpn. org/documents/d0002355/CFBOS_Belshaw_June2005.pdf (accessed on 27 October 2015). Pp 90

[139] Roy Mersland, Bert D'Espallier, and Magne Supphellen. "The effects of religion on development efforts: Evidence from the microfinance industry and a research agenda." *World Development* 41 (2013): 145–56.

ones, and other injuries sustained. Healing these injuries and trauma is a major component of peace-building efforts at the grassroots level, especially for reconciliation. Religion offers emotional, psychological, and moral tools to treat trauma and accidents when that is the case. In these situations, Islam, like other religious practices, is typically a source of healing. Together, among other things, the Islamic principles of peace-building, the restoration of harmony and justice, reverence for others and the Islamic concepts of destiny, predestination, and God's absolute sovereignty serve as the basis for healing and reconciliation. For example, organizations such as the Interfaith Mediation Center concentrate on healing trauma and injuries inflicted during conflict periods.

4.2.4.3 Ongoing Challenge of Impact Measurement

Measuring the effect of peace-building activities based on faith is still difficult. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, different organizations are grappling with how to understand the effect of their peace-building work. Some organisations prefer to measure the impact through narrative assessments that identify the activities at stake along with incidents or processes that accompanied the operation (e.g. the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy, the United States Institute for Peace, the Mennonite Central Committee). Other organisations are more likely to incorporate their peace-building efforts strategically into relief and development programs to which reasonably standard evaluation and assessment tools (e.g. World Vision International) may be applied. Again in order to verify whether their peace-building activities have successfully contributed to the goals set, other organizations are in the process of establishing impact measures. One such organization is the Mercy Corps Conflict Management Agency, which is currently working to create a logical mechanism for tracking and assessing the effects of peace-building initiatives such as the "improving relations between ethnic groups at municipal level in Macedonia" project in Macedonia. Measuring impacts remains a challenge for some of them, assessing how a number of Muslim actors have represented the outcomes and effects of their peace-building work. Faith-based actors and donors are more keen to know the precise outcomes of their peace-building work, and if they want to say with any more confidence that faith-based peace-builders contribute to peace, it is important to find better ways of impact assessment. Organizations such as World Vision International and Mercy Corps Conflict Management should have made more comprehensive attempts.

4.2.5 Religious Peacemakers

Religious peacemakers are religious people or members of religious groups who strive to help settle inter-group disputes and create peace.[140] They are more likely to succeed when they: (1) have regional or transnational reach; (2) strongly emphasize peace and avoid the use of force in conflict resolution; and (3) have good relations in conflict situations between different religions, as this will be the key to their positive input.[141]

To define a variety of events, Coward and Smith use the phrase religious peace building. Conducted by religious actors and organizations in order to address and turn deadly dispute, with the aim of establishing social and political systems that are marked by a tolerance and nonviolence ethos.[142] In these positions, religious figures are underutilized, to the detriment of the peace process.[143] In particular, this is where the use of religious institutions and leaders comes into play. Religion is always, if not always, an important factor in conflict and social unrest and thus it often needs to be part of the solution during rebuilding times.[144]

4.3 Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building in Action: Case studies from Religious Organizations

4.3.1 The Role of Sant'Egidio in Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building in Mozambique

A popular example of a religious community participating in faith-based peace-making is Sant 'Egidio. It is an international Catholic NGO which in many parts of the world, takes part in attempts at peace making in various conflicts. Its main objective was originally to serve the needs of the urban poor in Italy.[145] Sant'Egidio was founded in 1968 in Italy and has expanded and now has approximately 50,000 members in 70 countries. Sant'Egidio, officially recognised by the Catholic Church but with an independent statute, is a church-based public lay organization. This suggests that its membership, although its followers have a strong

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[140] Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter. Haar, *Mundos De Poder: Pensamiento Religioso y Práctica Política En Africa* (Barcelona: Bellaterra, 2005).

[141] Op cite, p.17.

[142] Harold Coward and Gordon S. Smith. Religion and Peacebuilding. (New York: State University of New York Press, 2004.) p.5

[143] Op cite, p.9.

[144] Katherine Marshall, et al. Development and faith: Where Mind, Heart and Soul Work together. (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2007), p.279.

[145] Tsjeard Bouta, *Gender and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Building Blocs for Dutch Policy* (Den Haag: Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, 2005), 71.

religious motivation, is 'lay'-that is not professionally religious-an important part of its negotiating activities. Appleby states that Sant'Egidio started its activities mainly through charity, humanitarian intervention and development collaboration, issues formed by faith and common values, including prayer, gospel contact, solidarity with the poor and dialogue with other religions. Despite its avowedly religious focus, however the conflict resolution and peace-building efforts of Sant'Egidio have concentrated more on 'non-religious' conflicts than on 'religious conflicts, and more on the international level than on the national or local level.

Sant'Egidio became involved in numerous international dialogues during the early 1980s. The goal was to try to avoid or mitigate opposing groups' tensions and to try to mediate between them. Since then, Sant'Egidio has played an active role in the peace-building of many African religious conflicts in the civil war-torn countries of Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia, including: Algeria, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique and Sierra Leone. Colombia, Guatemala and Kosovo have also been involved elsewhere, including: In each case, the nation was afflicted by serious disputes between divided groups; conditions were aggravated, in some instances, by the fact that the efficacy of central government administration had dramatically decreased.[146]

Between 1989 and 1992, one of the clearest success stories of the peace-making efforts of Sant'Egidio occurred when the organization was highly successful in resolving the civil war that had destroyed Mozambique since the mid-1970s. From the time he had spent in Rome years before the Catholic Archbishop of Beira, Don Jaime Goncalves, was acquainted with Sant'Egidio and its work. Archbishop Goncalves claimed that Sant'Egidio could succeed in bringing the government together to talk peace with the rebels of the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) insurgents, following well-intentioned but ultimately futile attempts to end the war emanating from the international community. He'd been right. The initiative took months, but Sant'Egidio finally not only approached the leadership of RENAMO, but also persuaded Mozambican government officials to agree to meet with them.[147]

In its efforts, Sant'Egidio was successful because both RENAMO and the government regarded Sant'Egidio as an organization marked by both a welcome neutrality and a

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[146] Ibid
[147] Op cite, p24

humanitarian perspective, with but one interest in Mozambique: ending the civil war and fostering peace. That is, it was known that Sant'Egidio had no political or economic agenda; this impression was reinforced during the negotiations as the organization showed a stance of even-handedness and neutrality.[148] As far as the government of Mozambique was concerned, as an NGO, Sant'Egidio was in a position to create a meeting between RENAMO and the government without suggesting that the rebels of RENAMO would be treated as having the same status as the ruling regime. But Sant'Egidio had a second valuable advantage as well:' humble knowledge of its own shortcomings in the orchestration of foreign diplomacy, contributing to the quest for unique skills from governments and international organizations.' The Archbishop of Beira, Don Jaime Goncalves, an Italian Socialist parliamentarian and former diplomat, and two main leaders of Sant'Egidio were the core of the Sant'Egidio mediation team. Not only the United Nations, but also 10 national governments, including those of the United States, Italy, Zimbabwe and Kenya, complimented these efforts. The United Nations assumed responsibility for the enforcement of the peace agreement once peace talks were effectively concluded in 1992. Mozambique has been stable for the last three decades. The ruling FRELIMO party won multiple national-level elections, and RENAMO acted as the main political opposition to the government.

In summary, Sant'Egidio's mediation work in Mozambique demonstrates how faith-based organizations with sufficient abilities can provide a unique opportunity to mediate between historically warring groups. They do this by building on a reputation for neutrality and tolerance and by using not just their own abilities but also those of other organisations, not exclusively, in an effort that brought the fighting parties together in the case of Mozambique and brought the civil war to a close.[149]

Impact

The real effect of the mediation and dialogue activities of Sant'Egidio in the different situations of conflict appears to be rather evident and to say the least, rather impressive. In Mozambique, in 1992, it contributed to the Peace Accords along with numerous other stakeholders. It also made a similar contribution to the Guatemalan peace process,

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[148] Ibid
[149] Ibid

culminating in the December 1996 Peace Agreement. In Kosovo, its actions influenced the prospect of returning to school for Albanian children. As the mechanism is still underway, the impact of its involvement in the DRC has yet to be completely evaluated. In general, not only was Sant'Egidio particularly successful in mediating between the parties to the conflict, but also in fostering interfaith dialogue, as well as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

General Observations on Faith-Based Peace-Building

Looking at how the above-mentioned impacts have been accomplished, a number of factors that shape Sant'Egidio's peace-building work, especially in Africa, can be discerned. Next the Group creates an indefensible record of the honesty and good offices of the society it represents. Sant'Egidio conducts non-partisan social action through numerous programs, from orchestrating international humanitarian relief to delivering direct assistance to the vulnerable, underlining its equanimity and devotion to the common good. Besides the humanitarian one the 'Diplomatic Sant'Egidio' does exist. That is, the Community recognizes the connection between humanitarian assistance and political processes and utilizes them productively. This was also the case in Mozambique, where since 1976 the Group had been engaged with the Christian churches before taking on a more constructive role in 1990 as mediator.

The Community, however does not pursue political or economic influence on its own but neither does it hesitate to rely on its influential friends for the cause of peace. It has an unconditional religious commitment to friendship, which helps it to develop relations with both governmental and non-governmental actors, but also needs hard work at all levels to establish and sustain the 'friendship networks.' This made it possible for Mozambique to serve as a neutral mediator, while also involving its large network of political, diplomatic and non-governmental players, including churches, in peace talks.

In addition, the mediators of Sant'Egidio may be successful because (and to the extent that they have demonstrated an intimate knowledge of the language and culture of the conflicting peoples; have access to first-hand information about the conflict as it develops; have or draw on political expertise; and help develop and accept a long-term vision of peace for the

conflicting community.[150] An organization such as Sant'Egidio can probably match these expectations, because it mainly drives on volunteers. The Community's volunteers can follow a certain conflict situation for a long period of time, building up an intimate knowledge of the situation. Sant'Egidio's undertakings are also not influenced by time, deadlines and compulsory success in the short run. In other words, they are not bothered by deadlines, deliverables and political flavors of the day. Once the momentum for the Community is there to intervene in the conflict, its Board can easily approach the members that have followed the conflict over the years and harness their information. Working with volunteers also has the advantage that the Community is relatively independent in terms of finance. In contrast to many other NGOs, the lion's share of its employees are volunteers, so the Community does not cease to exist if subsidies stop. This also enables the Community to monitor conflicts over a long period of time, and to concentrate on conflicts and forgotten wars in which donors are not directly interested and not willing to invest. Once the conflict then (re)appears on the international agenda, the Community can usually count on the donors' renewed (financial) interest. From a donor perspective, it would be a challenge to fund an organization such as Sant'Egidio for the long term, as it will be able to monitor a conflict closely for a longer period of time, but cannot guarantee donors concrete deliverables as long as there is no momentum actually to intervene in the conflict situation.

Finally, these lessons learned should not necessarily apply to faith-based organizations like Sant'Egidio, but even to secular organizations. This then raises the issue of the degree to which faith-based peace-building genuinely varies from secular peace-building. According to one of the Community staff members in Nakuru, Kenya, peace-building activities as such do not vary. Explicitly put, in Sant'Egidio's peace mediation efforts, religion does not play a part, rendering Sant'Egidio's peace diplomacy in principle secular in nature. What can make a difference is that people give a certain moral authority to Sant'Egidio, and what can make a difference is that Sant'Egidio has access in the 'Christian world' to a vast network of actors. The main distinction, however according to Sant'Egidio itself, and what makes its peace-building work so special and successful is its faith-based motivation to participate in peace-building, referring to the deep sense of obligation of the members of the Group to those in pain and suffering, and in particular to the vulnerable. It is this loving attitude that offers the

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[150] Ibid

chance for person-to-person interaction for Sant'Egidio. The deep conviction that peace comes through dialogue and comprehension lies beyond the dedication to personal relationships with those in need.

4.3.2 Conflict and Cooperation between Religious Communities in Nigeria

Religious rivalry between Muslims and Christians is perhaps the country's single most important political problem in Nigeria.[151] More broadly, religion has been prevalent in the Nigerian civil war since the 1960s, where missionaries and religious partisans see themselves in a zero-sum game to win souls, often entering into deadly conflict. In the 1980s, antipathy flared between them as many Christians felt that the country's overwhelmingly Muslim north possessed a disproportionate portion of both political power and economic wealth. Tensions were posed by the secret decision of the government in 1986 to join the 45-member Islamic Conference Organization (OIC), through which Saudi Arabia and Iran aim for diplomatic and political prominence with their contending visions of the appropriate Islamic society. The incentive of the Nigerian government to try to join the OIC was likely mainly economical. Oil-rich OIC member states would have expected economic assistance, but many Christians believed that Nigeria's membership of the OIC would jeopardize the status of the country as a secular state and undermine the position of Christians. Muslim membership bid supporters argued that Nigeria was a member of the Commonwealth, a 'Christian' body headed by the British monarch, who would legally be a Christian Protestant.[152] Until another theological controversy arose in 1987, the topic was not resolved. Now the point of contention was whether in the democratic regime that was intended (as it turned out, abortive) to accede to religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia at the end of 1992, a Sharia court of appeal would be allowed. Sharia law in the Nigerian constitution was required by Muslim members of the Constituent Assembly, though Christians did not support such a change. Negotiations broke down (and were to some extent superseded by other controversies) on the issue, while President Babangida was forced to affirm in October 1988 that despite membership of the OIC, Nigeria would remain a secular state.

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[151] (Chima J. Korieh and Raphael Chijioke. Njoku, *Missions, States, and European Expansion in Africa* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

[152] Jeffrey Haynes, *Religious Transnational Actors and Soft Power* (Routledge, 2012).

Tensions had already erupted into political conflict between the two groups. Anti-Christian protests broke out in parts of northern Nigeria back in early 1987, and again in May and October 1991. In total, between 1987 and 1993, over 3,000 people were killed in Christian-Muslim clashes. The death toll included around 1,000 killed when Christian Katafs engaged Muslim Hausa and Fulani in a series of pitched battles in May 1992. Churches were burned, killing and injuring both Christians and Muslims. The continuation of the military government, a regime which sought not to foster public political debates, was the political background of this religious violence. As a result, public outrage and resentment among Muslims was channeled into religious problems with political parties barred and with no legislature. In consequence, in the sense that they started to view their Christian countrymen and women as their greatest enemies, many ordinary Muslims were converted into 'fundamentalists,' while many Christians retaliated, fearing what seemed to them to be an increasing threat from Islam.

Since the early 1990s, inter-religious conflict, mostly involving Muslim and Christian groups, has become a popular feature of life in Nigeria. The northern state of Kaduna was one of the worst-hit states. In general, during the 1990s, Nigeria had a high level of religious violence that claimed more than 10,000 lives, and the main region of death was Kaduna.[153] In 1995, this led to the creation of a charity to encourage Christian-Muslim dialogue, the Muslim-Christian Dialogue Forum (MCDF). It was the result of the joint efforts of two former rivals, James Movel Wuye, a Christian priest, and Muhammed Nurayn Ashafa, a Muslim imam, both respected members of their religious groups. They served as national joint coordinators of the Kaduna-based MCDF. Both made the decision to move away from similar aggression and militancy directions. Instead, they advocated non-violence, unity, and the advocacy of their communities' good relations, and sought to inspire others to join them in this objective.

Three years earlier, in 1992, relations between the two men were very different: in a dispute in Zangon Kataf, Kaduna state, each attempted to have the other killed. Ashafa's uncle was murdered by Christian gunmen, claiming that the latter was Ashafa himself; Wuye's arm was hacked by Muslim assassins and left for dead. Both men, discovering their errors, saw the events as a signal from God and began to work together as peacemakers. They formed MCDF

[153] Op cite p12

and co-authored a book in 1999, The Pastor and the Imam: Reacting to Conflict, which explains their encounters and demonstrates the contributions to peace of the Bible and the Qu'ran. A few years later, in 2003, both were enrolled as students at the School for International Training (SIT), participants in the peace-building institute held every June at the Vermont campus of SIT wrote in their book that religion today is used to cause sa sa sa instead of serving as a source of curing illness, hunger and poverty, and stimulating tranquility and peaceful coexistence between human beings. Instead of relief, it brings pain, hate instead of love, discord instead of unity, sorrow rather than joy, discrimination and devastation instead of accommodation and development. For some followers of Islam and Christianity, this is particularly true. Of this negative phenomenon, Nigeria has its own share. It has been so extreme and destructive in its ethnic-religious conflict that it can now be seen as a harbinger of the danger of a crisis, such as those that ravaged the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Liberia.

In March 2003, the MCDF and the US Institute of Peace jointly promoted a five-day dialogue workshop in Kaduna in order to help resolve these problems. Participants came from the Christian and Muslim cultures, with one youth leader from both religions selected to participate from 30 states in Nigeria. Recognizing that both Muslims and Christians from this age group have been responsible for much of the religious violence in Nigeria in recent years was the reason for concentrating on the youth at this case. More broadly, the forum aimed to add to the work of the Inter-Religious Council of Nigeria, a body composed of older, senior religious leaders who have consistently condemned religious violence in Nigeria. Plans were made to organize more inter-faith meetings in other parts of Nigeria after the Kaduna forum. Each side was adamant when the workshop began that the other was to blame for religious violence in Nigeria. Participants decided, when it concluded, on a 17-point consensus statement containing numerous recommendations, including:

- Both Christians and Muslims should unconditionally love each other as if Sisters and brothers;

- Both cultures should show each other good will at all times;
- It was appropriate to better educate members of each religious group.
- On the values and ideals of the other' faith; and on religion.

- In order to hand over for justice those individuals who continue to use religious violence in violation of the law, cooperation with government was required.

4.3.3 Inter-Faith Mediation Centre, Nigeria

The core business of the Inter-Faith Mediation Centre, founded by the Evangelical Reverend James Movel Wuye and Imam Istaz Muhammad Nurayn Ashafa, is mediation and the fostering of dialogue between youth, women, religious leaders and the government. Furthermore the Centre undertakes efforts to instill and foster a culture of mutual respect and recognition of the richness of the cultural, historical and religious heritage of each other to promote the importance and virtues of religious harmony and peaceful coexistence; to serve as a resource body for conflict intervention, mediation and mitigation; and to cooperate and collaborate with others

The Centre uses Islam and Christianity as instruments to promote social justice, equity, healing and peace, and works to create mechanisms for youth and women victims of ethnic and religious crises to manage conflicts and alleviate poverty. Imam Ashafa, for instance, is an Islamic preacher who promotes peace and reconciliation among religious groups in Nigeria and other parts of West Africa by reaching out to excluded young people. In his immediate grassroots field, he engages in building peaceful coexistence as well as with students in teaching what the Qu'ran instructs, including Islamic values and peace principles. In de-escalating ethno-religious crises in a culture, state and the nation in general, he works in areas of involvement. He also tries to mediate between people of different religions, since religious social, political, economic and environmental justice are linked to these issues. He deals with grassroots groups, NGOs, religious organisations such as *Jama'atu Nasril Islam* (JNI), and Islamic Matters, a government agency, the Bureau for Religious Affairs.

Peacebuilding Activities

The Inter-Faith Mediation Centre has been particularly involved in Nigeria in various peace mediations. As the co-founder of the Centre, for instance, Imam Ashafa was the initiator of the peace agreement between the religious Muslim and Christian bodies of the Kaduna State, promoted the outcome of peaceful coexistence between the warring groups of the Plateau Birom and Fulani communities, and mediated in Zangon Kataf in ethnic and religious disputes. Imam Ashafa, along with Reverend Wuye, received the Tanenbaum Peacemakers

in Action Award in 2000 because of these accomplishments and his contribution to peace-building.

The book The Pastor and the Imam: Reacting to Conflict in 1999, as a guide to peaceful conflict management and reconciliation based on passages from the Bible and the Koran, was also co-published in terms of educational activities by Imam Ashafa and Reverend Wuye. In addition to his inter-faith mediation work, Imam Ashafa also teaches Islamic values and peacemaking concepts and practices to Muslim youth. In addition, he works on policies that regulate the usual behavior of religious clerics and strives for a document on the religious peace treaty, which will serve as a working document for the group to follow the rules and regulations laid down. He also advises on teacher training and student training policies with regard to the importance of religious understanding among the different religious groups in schools.

Impact

A field trip to the area and interviews with community members such as school teachers and students will be appropriate to find out more specific results and results of the activities carried out by Imam Ashafa and his colleague, Reverend Wuye. It is safe to say, however that the efforts of Ashafa are highly respected and his tangible accomplishments are appreciated by both his society and the international community. Imam Ashafa won the Ansarhdeen Islamic Merit Award for Meritorious Service to Islam in Nigeria in 1999, and as already stated, the Tanenbaum Peacemakers in Action Award in 2000, because of these achievements and his contribution to peace-building. In order to perform peace-building positions in his society, his religious credentials give him the requisite authority, moral strength and reputation. Therefore, his key contributions to peace include healing, behavioral reform, mediation, facilitating unity and dialogue between Christians and Muslims.

It is important to remember that Imam Ashafa faced numerous difficulties in his endeavors. Some of these obstacles and challenges include the lack of awareness of the scope of peace itself; some have found his attempts to be for financial benefit, or to support the personalities of political leaders who are seeking to create community peace. Others regarded these attempts as bringing in a new-formed religion or because of donor agencies' support. They were criticized by some as supporting the West (the US and the UK, for instance) and its

economic growth. Imam Ashafa has had to contend with the misinterpretation of the Koran, using it with opposing parties to justify those ends.

In short, this Nigerian case demonstrates that it may inspire former religious rivals, particularly those who have personally been engaged in conflict, to work together for peaceful accommodation when interfaith dialogue is skillfully coordinated and followed. However this does not inherently mean that more broadly, religious disputes are dealt with through such initiatives. This may be because, as in Nigeria between Muslims and Christians, disputes that seem to concentrate on actual or perceived religious differences are often concerned with human development problems such as poverty, and these will, of course take sustained and dedicated government intervention to address them.

4.4 Religious Influence on Transitional Justice

Only in the broadest sense do many of the documented religious contributions include transitional justice: they bring about peace and justice where there has been none before. Some take place within civil society and do not specifically involve governments; some take place within conflicts rather than after conflicts. Not all of them invoke the notion of reconciliation explicitly. In civil wars and regime changes, they include mediation between government and opposition forces, forging cooperation between leaders of different faiths, establishing 'peace zones' in rural villages, educating people and leaders in the resolution of conflicts, conducting reconciliation ceremonies, building friendships and societies between representatives of hostile religious and community groups, imparting However, religious leaders and activists often influence transitional justice in the way that the word is used most frequently: in political attempts to deal with the injustices of a previous dictatorship or civil war era.

Religious actors have almost always promoted truth commissions in those places in Africa where they have proven to be successful in shaping these political efforts. There are two facets of structures for transitional justice that have been influenced by religious leaders: their creation and their actions. The most dramatic are situations where the religious, unofficially or secretly, have coordinated and carried out the work of a truth commission. The Catholic Church in Chile and Catholic and Protestant leaders in Brazil investigated the abuses of the human rights of the dictators of their countries and subsequently provided this information to

the reports of the truth commission after democratic transitions. The Catholic Church, led by Archbishop Juan Gerardi, launched its own Recovery of Historical Memory Project (REMHI) in Guatemala following a peace agreement that ended three decades of civil war, a truth commission that was impressive for the extent of human rights abuses it documented and for the personalist nature of its research, which provided psychological and spiritual support Elsewhere, religious actors have lobbied their governments for truth commissions in South Africa, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique, openly campaigned for truth commissions, and when these actors are lay political leaders, have used their power and prerogatives to control the transitional justice institutions of their country.

Once institutions of transitional justice have been selected and established, religious actors often engage in their actions. Most notably, Tutu headed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, decked out in full episcopal regalia and referencing religious language and ritual regularly. In South Africa, at the country's unusual hearings for corporate organizations, religious communities also testified, as did corporations, journalists, parties, and other groups. Religious communities have provided logistical support not only in South Africa, but also in Guatemala, Peru and Sierra Leone, helping to coordinate and carry out hearings, identifying and supporting victims and witnesses, and offering counseling once the hearings are over.

Sometimes, they influenced the parameters of the public communication and discussion surrounding commissions, often introducing the idea of reconciliation into the discourse. In other nations, on the other hand, religious groups have played no part at all in developing or operating transitional justice institutions. In Rwanda, most notably, existing churches-Catholic, Anglican, and Presbyterian-have had little impact on state-level attempts to deal with the past, although they have provided repentance statements for the position of repentance

Faith approaches to transitional justice aim to emphasize the personal as well: building relationships and shifting minds and hearts. Although this emphasis is neither unique to religious activity nor exhaustive, it is a hallmark of it and a fourth asset. The person pervaded

the actions of Tutu of the TRC of South Africa, just as it pervades the grassroots of the Mennonites, the community approach to peacebuilding. In my opinion, the starting point for understanding and fostering processes of reconciliation is a reorientation towards the centrality of relationships. "We find the birthplace and house of reconciliation in the ebb and flow, the consistency of interdependence of relationships," writes Mennonite John Paul Lederach, a peacebuilding pioneer.[154] Finally, reconciliation, including repentance, apology, healing enmity between alienated groups within and between cultures, and all the other themes found in theologies of reconciliation, lies at the core of gravity of theological approaches, in practice as in theory. Political scientists Leslie Vinjamuri and Aaron P. Boesenecker notice this "attention to long-term inclusive social reconciliation" in their extensive documented survey of faith-based and secular NGOs engaged in transitional justice. Faith actors that are involved in transitional justice have become a hallmark."[155]

4.5 Conclusion

Any attempt to address religious armed conflicts and other violence based on faith must be based on a careful diagnosis of the problem. Because armed conflicts in Africa and elsewhere originate from a combination of causes, a variety of steps must be included in the answers. Next, both religious and non-religious causes need to be resolved by policies. Governance must be improved if the different facets of poor states raise the likelihood of confrontation. Programs of de-radicalization and prevention of radicalization will yield results if extreme religious views are the issue. Civil society actors have launched an initiative to prevent the radicalisation of Muslims through the Internet and other platforms in Ghana, a country so far largely spared from religious armed conflicts and terrorist attacks; similar initiatives exist in other countries, according to a 2016 UNDP study.

Distinguishing between motive and capability is also necessary. Intuitively, we still look at the motives of individuals, their readiness to take up weapons. Peacebuilding efforts,

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[154] John Paul Lederach, "Five Qualities of Practice in Support of Reconciliation Processes," in Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy, and Conflict Transformation. ed. S.J. Helmick, Raymond G., and Rodney L. Petersen (Philadelphia, PA: Templeton Foundation Press, 2001), 185.

[155] Leslie Vinjamuri and Aaron P. Boesenecker, "Religion, Secularism, and Nonstate Actors in Transitional Justice," in The New Religious Pluralism, ed. Thomas Banchoff (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press), 9. As discussed below, Vinjamuri and Boesenecker argue that not all religious actors in fact invoke explicitly religious languages and methodologies. Reconciliation is a hallmark among those who do.

however, should also require the containment of actors' capacity to organize and use violence. This difference between motive and skill roughly translates into the difference between protection and development. Observers often fall into an either/or thought pit and fail to recognize that both components are central pillars of any cohesive strategy designed to deal with violent conflicts. In the long run, social, economic, and political growth works and dries out the swamp from which the motives of rank-and-file leaders and rebels arise. As development can not take place without security, it is also important to tackle imminent threats. Skilled security forces are invaluable, including the military, police, and intelligence services. Of course, avoidance is best, but the use of force is sometimes required for the safety of potential victims. The security forces have to behave responsibly, however because the excessive use of violence would only escalate and not mitigate the conflict. Security sector reform must also be part of institution-building and government-building strategies in fragmented societies. Institutional structures should also ensure the representation outside the security sector of all religious groups in government.

Advocates of religious approaches to conflict management, both theorists and practitioners, have their work cut out for them because their combined efforts have succeeded in illustrating how there is a lot to offer communities confronting troubled past historical experiencesfrom a particular form of actor. Theologies of reconciliation, the role of repentance, responses to past injustices that provide different solutions to multiple wounds, and theological involvement in peacebuilding both within civil society and at the level of state institutions provide an approach to restoration that is theoretically more holistic than the approach of the tradition of liberal human rights, though in many respects consistent with the tradition of liberal human rights It is this assurance that led the public to call for religion to be effectively integrated into peace-building politics.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on analyzing the role the religious organizations in managing African conflicts through peacebuilding initiatives. To achieve this, the study was guided by the following objectives; to examine the nexus between religion and conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa, to account for faith-based actors involved in conflict and peacebuilding in Sub-Saharan Africa and to assess the impact of conflict management initiatives employed by faith-based actors in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Chapter integrates both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected by use of questionnaires and interview guide (Appendix I) targeting religious organizations and religious leaders in case study countries in Sub-Saharan Africa while secondary data was from newspapers, magazines articles and books.

5.2 Rate of Response

From the data collected, it was noted that out of the 50 questionnaires administered to key staff in religious organizations in Kenya, Nigeria and South Sudan, 38 were fully filled and returned. This represented an excellent response rate of 77.1% as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda.[156]

Table 5.1: Response Rate

Response rate	Frequency	Percentage
Returned	38	77.1
Unreturned	12	22.9
Total	50	100

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[156] Mugenda, O.M., & Mugenda, A.G. *Research Methods; Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches.* MacMilan Publishers (2003) Nairobi

5.3 Background Information

The study hoped to get respondents information particularly on gender, age bracket, highest level of education and their religion.

5.4   Gender

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender. Their response is as shown in Figure 5.4.1.
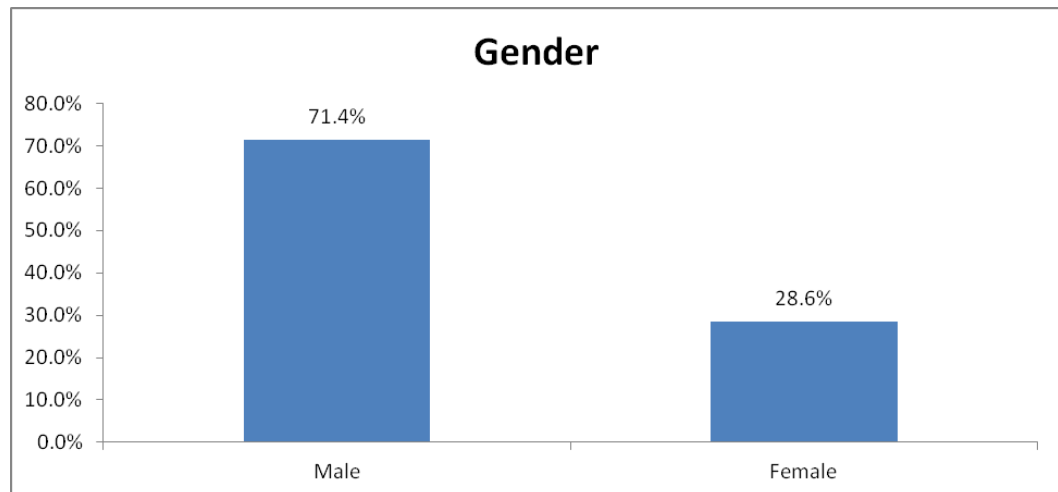
Figure 5.4.1: Gender of the Respondents

The study found out that 71.4% of the respondents were male while 28.6% were female. This shows that majority of the leaders in religious organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa are male.

5.5.1   Age Bracket

The respondents were consequently asked to indicate their age bracket. Their response is as shown in Figure 5.5.2
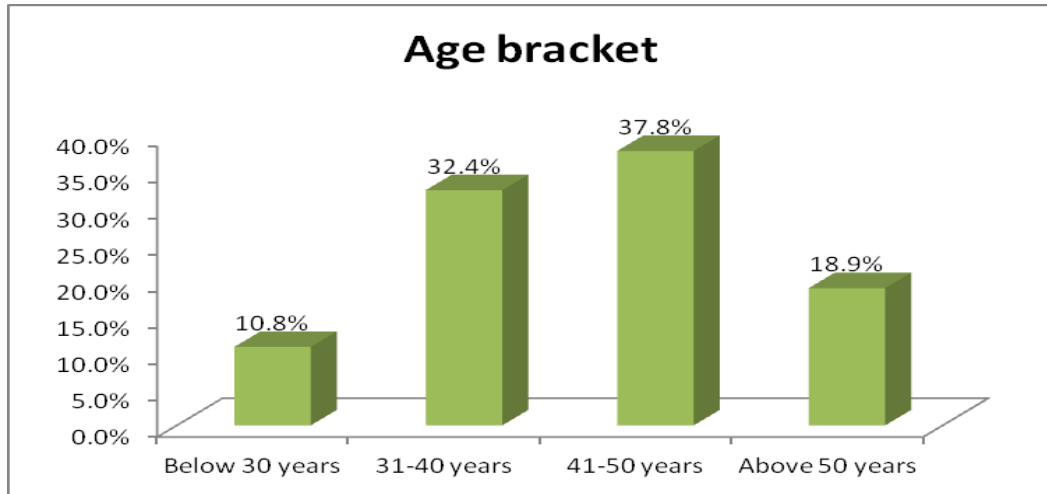
Figure 5.5.2: Age bracket

As shown in figure 4.2, a majority of the staff and religious leaders were between the age of 41-50 years followed by 32.4% between 31-40 years. An additional 18.9% were above 50 years while the remaining 10.8% were below 30 years. This indicates that the religious leaders were evenly distributed in all age groups and thus varied responses were expected.

5.6 Highest Level of Education

The respondents were then required to indicate their highest level of education. Their response is as indicated in Figure 5.6.1
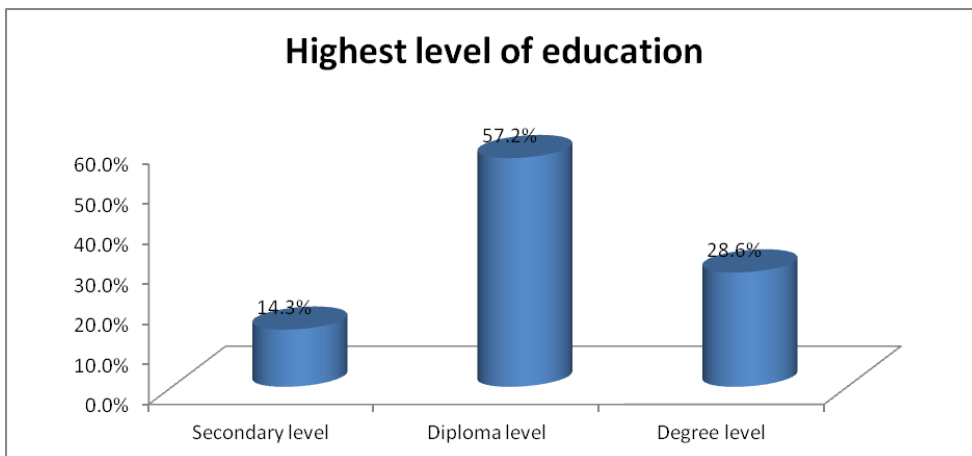
Figure 5.6.1: Highest level of education

Many respondents as indicated in figure 4.3 had diploma level education followed by 28.6% with degree level of education while 14.3% had secondary level education. This shows that the respondents were well educated.

5.7 Religion

The study further needed the respondents to show their religion. They are as indicated below;

Many respondents were Christians (70.3%), Muslims were 24.3% while Hindu were 5.4%. The high number of response by Christians was expected since the region is predominantly Christian.

5.8 Causes of violent conflicts

The study required the respondents to indicate their opinion on the extent to which the given statements contributed to violence in their area. They were to indicate using a scale of 1-5 where 1=no extent, 2 = little extent, 3 = moderate extent, 4 =great extent and 5 = very great extent.

Table 5.2: Causes of violent conflicts

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Poverty	4.857	.3779
Low level of education	4.428	.7868
Political discrimination	2.714	1.6035
Economic marginalization	3.857	1.3451
Discriminative law enforcement practices	3.000	1.7320
Lack of employment	4.428	1.1338
Religious fanatism	1.142	.3779
Search for self-identification	1.714	1.1127
Poor parenting	2.000	1.4142

The respondents indicated that poverty contributed to violent conflicts in their area to a very great extent (mean=4.857, SD=0.3779). Low level of education (mean=4.428, SD=0. 7868), lack of employment (mean=4.428, SD=1.1338) and economic marginalization (mean=3.857, SD=1.3451) contributed to a great extent towards violent conflicts in their area. The respondents further indicated that discriminative law enforcement policies (mean=3.000, SD=1.7320) and political discrimination (mean=2.714, SD=1.6035) contributed to a moderate extent to violence in their area. Further, poor parenting (mean=2.000, SD=1.4142) and search for self-identification (mean=1.714, SD=1.1127) contributed to violent conflicts in their area to a less extent while religious fanatism (mean=1.142, SD=0.3779) did not contribute violent conflicts in their area.

The respondents through an interview pointed out that lack of employment was the major cause of violent conflicts in their region. Lack of employment contributed significantly to youth radicalization and involvement in violent conflicts as well as making them susceptible to religious violence. The respondents suggested that creation of employment opportunities would play a significant role towards peacebuilding. A religious leader from Lamu, Kenya said ―many youths are radicalized due to lack of employment. The central and county government should come up with means to engage the youth properly. Another respondent supported this idea when he said ‒The government of the day should reduce unemployment level since idleness renders many youths available to such negative activities

5.9   Measures used by religious organizations in conflict management

The study required the respondents to indicate their opinion on the measures used by religious organizations in peacebuilding and to what extent. They were to indicate using a scale of 1-5 where 1= no extent, 2 = little extent, 3 = moderate extent, 4 = great extent and 5 = very great extent.

Table 5.3: Measures by religious leaders in peacebuilding

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Advocacy	4.142	.8997
Education and training	4.714	.4879
Convening dialogues	3.571	1.3972
Mediation	3.285	1.7043
Reconciliation	4.285	1.1127
Forum with government agents	3.285	1.3801

The respondents indicated that one of the measures used by religious organizations in peacebuilding to a very great extent was education and training with a mean of 4.714, and SD of 0.4879. Measures used to a great extent were advocacy (mean = 4.142, SD = 0.8997) reconciliation (mean=4.285, SD 1.1127) and convening dialogues (mean = 3.571, SD=1.3972). Other measures such as mediation (mean = 3.285, SD = 1.7043) and forum with government agents (mean = 3.285, SD=1.3801) were used to a moderate extent by religious leaders. The findings agree with Van et al. The peace and security role of religious leaders includes activism, dialogue, and direct interaction with youth at the local level. Religious leaders should also work with young people to motivate them to stay in school, find jobs, start a business, and participate in civic activities and decision-making. Religious leaders in Sub-Saharan Africa should collaborate on a youth jobs action research project to evaluate opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship development, as well as youth barriers. The study also conducted an interview by asking the religious leaders in their area about conflict management measures. Some of the proposed steps were as follows;

5.9.1 Community involvement

The respondents were of the opinion that involving the community holistically would prevent religious violence. One respondent said that peacebuilding initiatives must ensure that the communities affected and those accused of committing the violence are involved holistically. The communities brought together to chat the way forward and their grievances solved

properly. Another respondent said that the government and faith-based organizations should organize frequent forum to dialogue with the public on issues affecting them and not only leave it at that but also ensure implementation of the proposed solutions. Yet another respondent indicated that;

> ‒Initiate community-based practice that might investigate the root cause of the issue and come up with a constructive measure and services that would mitigate or limit the problem. Second, there is a need for mutual accountability to work hand in hand with the society, other stakeholders and the government to bring such a concern to rest.[157]

5.9.2 Training

The respondents advocated for training of youths and young children through creating seminars and vocational centers to not only make them busy, but also to make them productive members in the organizations they sometimes volunteer in. Another respondent was for the idea of training so as to improve their orientation towards alternative dispute resolution mechanism like having dialogues, mediation and arbitration. ‒Since Africa is religious continent, religious leaders should be on the front line bridging the gap between the public and the relevant institutions expected to address the contentious issues in the public domain, to avoid them from expressing themselves through extreme violent means, was an opinion of yet another respondent.[158]

Sheikh Abubakar Ingabo said;

> ‒Islamic religious groups have done a lot through different projects in conflict management and peace building. We have begun teaching interfaith dialogue and the consequences of extremism to Muslims. We organize group activities that encourage participants to discuss all value positions, free of critique or social pressure, on issues central to extremist discourse and related to events in Kenya.

He further added that they held forums that allowed participants to propose interventions to solve terrorism-related topics according to a broad array of their own values. He also said that they traveled to different parts of the country preaching counter-narratives and mainly during Friday *khutbahs*.

5.10 Effectiveness of religious leaders in peacebuilding

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[157] Rugar interview with respondent 2 Zeddy Oloo 12th sept 2020
[158] Rugar interview with respondent 1 Sheikh Abubakar Ingabo 12th sept 2020

The study required the respondents to indicate their opinion on the extent to which the given statements on effectiveness of religious leaders in peacebuilding. They were to indicate using a scale of 1-5 where 1= no extent, 2 = little extent, 3 = moderate extent, 4 = great extent and 5 = very great extent.

Table 5.4: Effectiveness of religious leaders in peacebuilding

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Enhancing cultural identity	2.857	1.5735
Peace-building	4.571	.5345
Restoration	3.428	1.2724
Community cohesion	4.000	1.1547
Intercultural interaction	3.285	1.3801

The respondents indicated that religious leaders were effective in peace-building to a very great extent (mean=4.571, SD=.5345). They were effective in community cohesion to a great extent (mean=4.000, SD=1.1547). They were effective to a moderate extent in restoration (mean=3.428, SD=1.2724), intercultural interaction (mean = 3.285, SD = 1.3801) and enhancing cultural identity (mean = 2.857, SD =1.5735).

The respondents through an interview were asked to indicate the effectiveness of religious leaders in peacebuilding in their region. Religious leaders were depicted as contributing to unity in their respective communities. One respondent said that by working with others in faith groups they strengthen the ability of local communities to fight extremism by addressing community needs through collaboration with all the religious groups and the political groups.

> ‒Religious leaders hold a special place in the society by educating and propagating the importance of our social norms and values which is the basis of the understanding and practicing what is required of us in Islam. This therefore enables them to interact with communities they operate in and advice accordingly. This has been proven and approved by all.[159]

Another respondent said that religious leaders were best placed to mediate identity political

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[159] Respondent 1 Brad Kolwa 9th sept 2020

conflicts with enough support from the relevant authorities. He however added that proper monitoring and evaluation of the work of the religious leaders was also important.[160] Religious leaders know how to persuade their way into the community hence their effectiveness authority. Religious leaders can reach the maximum number of people in churches, mosques, madrassa and other religious gatherings.

They are effective because they are considered to be opinion leaders in religious setup. Their presence within the society makes them more of genuine moderators than other leaders and the communities they operate in trust them better. This enables them to engage better with the people they are tasked to help.[161] The religious leaders have knowledge on the changing dynamics of terrorism and there is the will from these leaders to fight radicalization and promote coexistences amongst their communities and bordering neighbours.

Some youths through focused group discussion indicated that most of religious leaders only say a word once the issues of concern have escalated into violent conflicts, when they could have intervened during the initial stages before emotions of complainants are high.

> ‒Religious leaders 'task should be a continuous role of not only preaching but also engaging the societies around them and trying to find solutions to their issues and also call in government and nongovernmental organizations whenever they need assistance or legal redress. Most of them wait for believers during their sacred days of the week but during the other days do not engage them. This is because a formality exercise and why intervening once it's turned violent to me proves no effectiveness. They should have done something before‖ they added[162]

5.11 Challenges faced by religious organizations in conflict management

The study required the respondents to indicate their opinion on the extent to which the given statements on challenges faced by religious leaders in peacebuilding. They were to indicate using a scale of 1-5 where 1= no extent, 2 = little extent, 3 = moderate extent, 4 = great extent and 5 = very great extent.

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[160] Respondent 2 Zeddy Oloo 15th sept 2020

[161] Ibid

[162] Focused group discussion response

Table 5.5: Challenges faced by religious organizations in faith-based peacebuilding

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lack of financial support	4.428	.7868
Lack of training	4.428	1.1338
Accusations of proselytizing	2.142	1.6761
Lack motivation to the religious leaders	3.714	1.3801
Potential lack of professionalism	3.571	1.8126

The challenges that faced religious organizations in peacebuilding to a great extent were lack of financial resources which exposes other partners to a certain degree of vulnerability (mean = 4.428, SD = 0.7868) and lack of training (mean = 4.428, SD = 1.1338). Challenges that faced them to a great extent were lack motivation to the religious leaders (mean=3.714, SD=1.3801) and a potential lack of professionalism (mean = 3.571, SD=1.8126). Accusations of proselytizing was indicated to face religious organizations to a little extent (mean = 2.142, SD = 1.6761).

The respondents through an interview were asked to indicate the challenges faced by religious organizations in conflict management. some of the challenges they specified were as follows;

5.11.1 Financial shortages

One major challenge noted by the respondents was financial issues. One respondent said that some religious organizations lack the necessary financial ability required in undertaking their activities for instance moving from place to place in convening community and other

stakeholder meetings.[163] Another topped by saying that religious leaders lack funds to carry out their duties. Therefore, they don't have the means to move across the count. He further added that they need funding so that the organizations can take on more development projects over longer periods of time.[164]

5.11.2 Lack of cooperation

The apparent lack of cooperation between the government agencies, religious organizations and religious leaders was also noted as a challenge. ―" There is lack of trust and cooperation between the security apparatus and society hence hindering any possible undertaking of such initiative by the religious organizations and leaders." Said one respondent. ―There is lack of Government intervention in offering skills and knowledge training to religious leaders, this will help them to understand the work on conflict management and to put it in culturally and religiously relevant frames‖ indicated yet another respondent.[258]

5.11.3 Accusations of proselytizing

Faith-based peace-builders tend to run the risk of proselytizing, which can adversely impact their ability to undertake peace-building activities. For example, in nations where Christians are a relatively small minority, the (perceived) proselytizing activities of some Christian organizations may impede the peace-building activities of other Christian organizations, since the beneficiaries may not always be able to differentiate between the two sets of organizations. Beneficiaries can find it difficult to see where specialized therapeutic assistance ends and proselytization operations begin in peace-building activities such as trauma-counselling.

5.11.4 Less result-oriented

Although not substantiated by any in-depth study, one respondent noted that certain faith-based peace-building actors may be less outcome-oriented than secular peace-builders, arguing that they appear to concentrate more on long-term peace-building initiatives than secular peace-builders, with the potential drawback that they focus more on long-term

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[163] Respondent 1 Brad Kolwa 9th sept 2020
[164] Respondent 4 Suleiman Ahmed 10th sept 2020

relationships than shorter-term settlements. This is not to suggest that faith-based peace-builders should remain focused on long-term peace-building activities, but that more attention needs to be paid to the consequences of their peace-building efforts, recognizing that they are unlikely to be observable in the short term.

5.11.5 Potential lack of professionalism

In this report, other respondents noticed that some and only some ecumenical peace-building organisations seem to lack the ability to work as professionally as their secular counterparts. Some of these ecumenical peace-building actors seem to concentrate more on their faith-based inspiration for peace-building, or on maintaining deep and long-term relationships with local counterparts, than on the fact that peace-building is a career for which an organization and its local counterparts need unique skills and experiences.

5.12 Women in Religious Peacebuilding in Sub-Saharan Africa

Of the women in religious organizations interviewed for this study, 70% were involved in peacebuilding activities through their various faith-based organizations. 38% are Christians while 32% are Muslim. The women who did not participate in peacebuilding are predominantly single and range from the ages of 22 – 30 years.

Motivated by spiritual and personal levels, the women who participated in religious peacebuilding show dedication to carry out peace activities regardless of the dangers and challenges they face. Mary Salat, a widower who was active in carrying out peacebuilding activities was motivated to help in building peace by the scriptures, "I am a staunch Christian, and the bible's teachings enabled me to get involved in peace activities after the post-election violence. Jesus teaches us to love our neighbors as ourselves and to be peacemakers. The violence in 2007 gave me an opportunity to show love for my neighbors who were affected by the violence.165 " Her sentiments are echoed by Sophia Lemosa who claims that "Jesus embodied forgiveness and helping those less fortunate through his works and even through teachings such as the parable of the good Samaritan. This gave me the courage to help the victims of the post-election violence and to preach peace and forgiveness, based on Jesus teachings.

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[165] Interview with Mary Salat

Women engaged in peacebuilding in the Muslim faith are also motivated by their faith to engage in peacebuilding activities. According to Sadiya Mohammed, "Islam means peace, as Muslims, we all have a duty to promote peaceful coexistence among all people."166 Amina Mohamed further adds that, My faith has instilled in me the value of fitrah.167 I felt a responsibility towards my society based on these teachings to promote peace and harmony in my community by taking care of those who had been affected by the conflict and later to encourage them to forgive those who had hurt them during the post-conflict violence."168 Women in religious peacebuilding carry out their activities both individually and as a group. Individually, the women worked in their own neighborhoods, advocating for peace and forgiveness, and showing their support for the traditional methods that were incorporated in the peacebuilding process.

Mary Adeze, a member of the Pentecostal Church of Jesus Christ, talked to her neighbors to forgive each other, and to embrace peace. She also participated in the traditional practices such as the sharing of the food and the exchange of gifts by acting as a witness in several occasions, and also participating in the preparation of meals that were consumed during these ceremonies. Faith based organizations have allowed for the formation of various groups that bring together the congregation of different ages and sexes. Women groups have been formed in all religious institutions and bear different names, ranging from the Catholic Women's Association, the Sisterhood Ministry of the Church of Jesus Christ, outreach programs that bear the names of saints like Saint Anne and Saint Elizabeth and Hospitality Ministries.

In the Muslim set up, women are generally taught together, separate from the men, and these frequent meetings offered ample ground for the women to carry out peace activities together in the patronage of their respective mosques. The activities these women are involved in range from humanitarian assistance, preaching peace, reconciliation efforts, visiting the victims and trauma healing. The Mosques have supported women's peacebuilding initiatives in their respective institutions. Mohammed Haji, a senior leader in a Lamu Mosque points out that the mosque actively supports women in their peacebuilding efforts, "we (the Mosque Committee) together with the Sheikhs and Imams ensure that the women are well equipped

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166 Interview with Sadiya Mohamed
167 This denotes the individual responsibility to uphold peace, to be good and to work for the establishment of harmony.
168 Ibid

to carry out any peace activities in the society. Men are not involved in tackling gender issues that may be encountered in the field, the women's leaders are therefore given guidance and counseling skills and equipped with knowledge of the Quran. The work that the women do in the society to bring peace is important, and so we make sure that they are well prepared to handle anything that they may face." 169

Equally in the Christian institutions, the churches provide the women with adequate support in carrying out peacebuilding activities. According to Rev. John Leku of the ACK church in Juba, the congregation mobilized clothes and foodstuff for the women to take to the victims during their visitation to the Limbe Showground which provided shelter for hundreds of families in the aftermath of the chaos caused by the civil war. The church leadership supports women's peacebuilding efforts by providing spiritual and fiscal support of the women's groups whenever it is needed.

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[169] Interview with Mohamed Haji

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

This paper emphasizes the potentially positive role of faith-based actors in the field of peace-building in order to carry out research. It includes a partial list of institutionalized faith-based peace-building actors, including mostly Christian and multi-faith actors operating internationally and Muslim actors employed nationally in Africa. In more detail, these Christian and Muslim peace-building actors were investigated, examining a variety of their peace-building operations, effects, progress and greater contribution to peace-building. Based on this analysis, I was able to draw the following tentative findings.

6.2 Summary of Key Findings

1. There is no rigid or one-dimensional relationship between faith and conflict or peace-building. It is important not to enforce secular Western criteria when determining and designing policy responses to potential or existing conflict situations. Contextual variables (historical, socio-economic, cultural) influence results and thus no scenario is similar to another so that even the most popular group or leader who has been able to achieve peace in one country may not be able to mitigate a dispute in another country or at a different historical moment. Religion matters in four critical ways in contemporary peacebuilding affairs.

   a) It presents strong perceptions of the cosmic order, also generating political articulations as well. This is especially evident in monotheistic religions, where there is an impulse to connect transcendent beliefs in the immanent world to transform human life (in the ways of God).

   b) Religious traditions, scriptures, rituals and symbols, since they have powerful narratives, may easily become the cornerstone of ethnic or nationalist projects. But they can create narratives of human dignity and reconciliation in equal measure.

   c) A varied range of ordinary people, leaders, grassroots organizations, NGOs, transnational networks, and organized institutions are religious actors. Therefore the right to communicate with religion should not be limited to restricted hierarchical

(Westerncentered) understandings in which valid interlocutors are individuals and groups.

d) Most religions are based around patriarchy and male leadership; this aspect has not only had the effect of institutionally marginalizing women and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, but has also allowed violence against these communities to be justified or even committed, and male narratives of war and martyrdom to be exaggerated. Contemporary Progressive focus on women's liberation and LGBT rights can be contrasted with conventional religious ideals that are supposedly eternal (in whatever religious tradition) and thereby mobilize support for a cause from traditionally minded people who might otherwise be repelled in the name of faith by programs of militant action.

2. Recognizing and participating in the various facets of the role of religious institutions in conflict management should not replace the other work needed to resolve other interlocking problems (e.g. inequality, marginalization, structural malfunctioning, state failure, global dependence dynamics, etc.) related to conflict and peace. Research demonstrates that political exploitation of religion rather than doctrinal bodies is what matters most, even in those disputes where religion appears to be a clear causal factor. In order to help them accomplish their goals, searches for power and legitimacy by opportunistic religious and political leaders are also behind their strategic mobilization of group identities.

3. National relations between religious organizations and other institutions are critical: the joint functioning of the Kenyan churches at national level for example, through the National Councils of Churches and the Catholic Justice and Peace Commissions, gives weight to the Church's voice and thus the power it can wield. The various approaches taken by religious institutions can also be very successful when the need for and course of change is fundamentally agreed upon. However, the diversity of opinion and strategy of the different organizations on the other side of the coin can also lead to divisions and inconsistencies that undermine their power. Although ecumenical bodies have played a very important role in advocacy, they face a challenge that is common to many membership organizations, which is that a lot of energy is inevitably devoted to the business of finding consensus and to the cumbersome processes that are part and parcel of their life. Despite the challenges, the

churches' collaborative work has been successful in pushing for political reform. Collaborative work between churches and other non-church organizations, such as: trade unions in Zambia; Kenya's legal institute; and a wide range of civil society organizations in Malawi that have come together to form the Public Relations Committee, amplifies the effect that churches can have on their own. While there may be a propensity for the churches to operate in isolation, the influence they can have is greater where they have been able to link up with others.

4. In their peace-building work, leadership and professionalism have been crucial success factors for religious organizations. The pastoral letters of the bishops, for example, and the highly trained and competent nature of the leadership and staff working for ecumenical organizations such as the NCCK, have deeply influenced the impact the churches have been able to have. There is no question that the manner in which those at the top of the Church hierarchy approached the state, organized the press, and spoke out was influential.

5. Secular and Faith-Based Building of Peace are linked and complementary. Several cases in this study have shown how inter-related and complementary secular and faith-based peace-building work can be. For example, the report shows how mediation in Yelwa-Nshar could be initiated and supported by the Inter-Faith Mediation Centre in Nigeria, and the Governor of Plateau State and many other dignitaries were eventually forced to ratify the peace settlement. Another good example is that of the commitment of Sant'Egidio in the early 1990s to the peace process in Mozambique. While it was able to create the first contact at its headquarters in Rome between the RENAMO leadership (Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana-Mozambican National Resistance) and the FRELIMO government (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique-Liberation Front of Mozambique), it had to call on the Italian government, U.S. advisors, and the United Nations to engage in the peace negotiations Since this research focuses solely on peace-builders based on religion, follow-up studies are required to substantiate the relationship between faith-based and secular peace-builders and their (un)complementarity.

6.2.1 Challenges and Opportunities for Faith-Based Organizations in Peacebuilding

In the sense of religious peace building, a range of problems have been raised. One is that religious leaders may lack the capacity for the philosophy and practice of peacebuilding in some instances and may therefore be unsuccessful. Secondly, there might be concerns from certain organizations or individuals regarding collaborating with actors of a particular faith or those opposed to the intersection of religion and peace building. Third, through deliberately trying to attract religious participation or conversion, religious peace participants may be considered to be proselytizing.

6.2.2 Strengths and Weaknesses of Faith-based peacebuilding

There are a variety of strengths and limitations of the faith-based peace-builders included in this research. These are however not inherently unique to religious peace-builders and therefore shouldn't be over-generalized. Accordingly, on an actor-by-actor basis, I urge interested stakeholders to verify the strengths and limitations apply to each actor. Strengths include:

- Strong faith-based motivation for building peace;

- Long-term history/participation in the communities they represent. A number of international peace builders have served in countries for decades before participating in peace-building activities, mostly through development aid and relief assistance;

- Ability to participate in long-term peace-building work before during and after conflict;

- Moral and spiritual authority, giving some leverage to faith-based actors to alleviate religious tensions in religious conflicts or to serve as forums for mutual understanding in non-religious conflicts;

- A niche for religious groups to mobilize for peace. Faith-based actors tend to have the networks, contacts and confidence to mobilize significant numbers of people, both locally and globally.

Likely *weaknesses* of faith-based actors comprise:

- Potential risk (and often accusation) of proselytization, especially when their religious mission work is not properly separated from their religious peace-building work;

- Lack of emphasis on outcomes, as some faith-based peace-building participants are likely to focus on long-term peace-building activities, with the potential drawback of paying more attention to long-term partnerships than to shorter-term peace-building deliverables.;

- Compared to other peace-building organizations, lack of professionalism because some and only some faith-based actors tend to participate in peace-building because their divine obligation urges them to do so and not because they are actually willing to do so through their unique abilities and experiences.

It is noteworthy that these last two vulnerabilities were suggested by only one actor in this study, and thus calls for further investigation.

6.2.3 Multiple Contributions to Peace -Building

Despite the scope for strengthening impact assessments, faith-based peace builders included in this study have contributed to peace-building across various aspects, with varying degrees of success and in their own particular way:

- Encouraging their communities of faith and others to alter their actions, minimize violence and rehumanize the 'other';

- Providing war-affected societies with emotional, psychological and spiritual assistance;

- Disseminating ideas within their communities on peace, peace-building, justice and development;

- Mobilizing their groups and other individuals to foster peace;

- Challenging conventional biased beliefs (like women's place in society and discrimination against marginalized groups);

- Reaching out to states, introducing institutional reforms and strategies (such as incorporating peace modules into school curricula) and reaching out to young people;

- Mediating between parties in dispute;

- Fostering reconciliation, dialogue between religions, as well as disarmament, demilitarization and reintegration;

- Connecting faith-based communities and others around the world, including by holding significant interfaith meetings between them.

6.3 Recommendations

It was the aim of this research to investigate the role of religious organizations as significant actors in prevention and resolution of the many conflicts plaguing Sub-Saharan African countries. The following recommendations provide some general guidelines of how that might be accomplished successfully.

6.3.1 General recommendation for all actors

Develop inclusive spaces for all relevant actors to dialogue: including intermediaries, so-called 'extremists', armed groups, hardliners, state actors, etc. Deliberate about how to communicate with new or difficult' actors and interact, rather than pondering whether to engage. Paradigm changes take place as we are exposed not only by mistake, but also by carefully orchestrated action, to encounters and circumstances that are new to us. Play an important role in the creation and management of collaborative support systems in the context of the dispute you are part of. Identify the parameters of the traditional (patriarchal) or religious context (if any) which prohibit or restrict the position of women negotiators and young people, in collaboration with the related actors. Then the potential benefits of women and young mediators are identified and conveyed through a conflict-sensitive approach, using inspirational stories from similar contexts.

6.3.2 International, supranational and intergovernmental actors, INGOs, donors, and academics

1. Challenge biased Traditional Structures

There are traditional mechanisms in many Muslim societies that limit successful peace-building efforts and lead in many ways to the continuation of conflicts. Any of these traditional systems include religious affiliation and gender based hierarchical social structures and discrimination. Religious leaders can reinterpret religious scriptures and question these conventional frameworks through their moral authority, knowledge of sacred texts, and by offering successful examples. Along these lines, Wajir and the Sudanese Women's Peace Initiative Network were able to question and alter conventional views of the role of women in society in general and in peace-making in particular by presenting effective

examples of reducing violence and resolving conflict, and by involving religious leaders and elders. In many of these societies, since women's role in public decision-making is not acknowledged, they also face major challenges. Religious organizations must challenge certain prejudiced positions in their peace-building activities that restrict the involvement of an influential group in society.

2. Pay Attention to 'Religious Conservatives' and 'Religious Moderates'

I recommend that governments and intergovernmental actors regard 'religious moderates' as possible drivers of change, but also 'religious conservatives. These moderate individuals can help in facilitating dialogue between polarized groups since they have the potential of persuading others who might be religious conservatives with hard line positions that might hamper negotiations in a peace process.

3. Donors should develop customized approaches to identify and encourage Muslim faith-based peacebuiders

Some particular types of support may be expected of Muslim peace-building actors. Many of the actors involved in this research are severely under-funded. They have no or rather restricted access to basic services (such as electricity, internet, e-mail and fax) and often journey with limited resources and under difficult circumstances to remote areas of their countries. Not only does this lack of resources impede their contact with the international community, but also their organizational ability and effectiveness within their communities. It seems important to provide some form of basic funding. In addition, given the low levels of literacy that some of the Muslim actors involved in this study are working on, funding for visual and audio (e.g. radio programs) tends to be a fruitful way of educating broader parts of the population in peace-building. In addition, since the level of institutional development of Muslim actors is relatively low, support for the development and management of NGOs is critical to expanding the effectiveness and progress of Muslim actors in peace-building. In addition, as many of the analyzed Muslim actors operate in relative isolation from each other, it is necessary to support the development of regional or national umbrella networks that can facilitate meetings between Muslim peace-builders. Lastly, in terms of peace-building and dispute resolution, numerous Muslim peace-building actors lack educational tools. Therefore, funding for the purchase of books and other educational instruments, the translation of papers

and books, in particular on Islam, peace-building and conflict resolution, and investment in the production of materials such as a handbook on Islamic peace-building, may also be an invaluable contribution to the capacity of Muslim actors to create peace.

I encourage policy makers and scholars to make additional efforts to recognise Muslim actors in peace-building. They are largely invisible since Muslim peace-building actors are often not structured in the form of NGOs or other organizations and often consist of individuals in the group.

4. Develop More Effective Means for Measuring Impact of Programmes

The impact assessment of (faith-based) peace-building programmes continues to be a problem, as seen in this study. It is insufficiently clear in what qualitative and/or quantitative ways it is best to evaluate the effect. Options to be analyzed include:

a. Narrative assessments that identify the activities at stake along with events or processes that followed after the activity;

b. Some kind of effect measures, which could be difficult to create, however, given the 'intangibility' of peace;

c. Combine peace building more with relief and development programs, the effects of which could be less difficult to determine.

4. National governments should work with religious organizations which are involved in campaigns to try to address the push and pull factors of religious violence. These organizations lobby and advocate for policy change in different levels of government because there are also genuine grievances. These are very appealing to communities where there are practical issues that we need to service.

5. National and county governments should look for ways of creating job opportunities to the youths in the region. The research has found out that more youths are likely to engage religious violence due to idleness which makes them prone to being lured by extremist groups. When the youth are made busy they will have no time to engage in such activities.

6. Governments should also build a nexus with relevant civil society actors, which is necessary for success in sensitive environments. This connection can enhance the quality of activities and demonstrate government support for the peace process to participants.

7. Capacity-building for youth networks is an important tool in environments where youth are direct perpetrators of violence. Networks can help reduce violence by engaging youth and giving them a sense of ownership during the peace process. They can also help to reduce violence if given the opportunity and can serve as a check and balance on government by raising their ability to influence policy and government programs.

8. Donors should consider demanding more attention for faith-based peace-builders in international discussions in the field of peace-building (such as in the EU, UN bodies, OSCE and OECD/DAC);

9. Governments should sensitize and train staff of the ministries of foreign affairs and defense that are involved in peace-building on the topic and role of faith-based approaches. It is in particular vital to train embassy staff, which are usually in direct contact with faith-based peace-building organizations. It could also be relevant to train peacekeepers in order to increase their cultural and religious sensitivity;

10. Donors should try to regard 'religious moderates', but also 'religious conservatives', as possible drivers of change. They are encouraged to explore further the possibilities of establishing true dialogue with conservative, politicized, religious groups in order to engage them in peace- building;

11. Researchers should aim at developing a more systematic and comprehensive database of faith-based peace-building actors and compile case studies of successful faith-based peace-building initiatives;

12. Finally, conflict programming should engage grassroots participation to reduce conflicts in target communities who have a stake in bringing lasting peace. This can ensure local buy-in and a sense of ownership, essential to building peace organically, and building a bridge to regional and national diplomatic efforts.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Survey Questions for staff of religious organizations

1. What is the goal or mission of your organization / institution?

2. How do religious ideals and beliefs affect and shape your work for peace?

3. What kind of peace-building activities do you engage in your region or community: education at schools, training in conflict resolution, community centers for peace-building, practical, intervention to resolve a conflict, addressing root causes of conflict mediation between conflicting parties, and working for the re-establishment of justice, social, political, economic and environmental?

4. In particular, what kind of projects or problems do you deal with?

5. 5. Who do you work with and who are your partners: other religious group leaders, local, regional or national governments, international organizations, the UN?

6. Please offer two real life examples of your participation in peace building activities;

7. How are your activities and involvement viewed by your community and other parties?

8. How would you measure your contribution to the establishment of peace and justice in your society or region?

9. What are the biggest obstacles and difficulties you face in fostering peace in your society in general?

10. Do you work on changing policy and how? Give an instance of your success;

11. What kinds of assistance, engagement or cooperation would you like to receive from other faith-based organisations and international organizations to boost your ability to engage in conflicts effectively and increase your capacity to create peace in your community or region??

Appendix II: Questionnaire for Religious Leaders Section A: Background information

1. Indicate your gender

   Male   [ ]

   Female   [ ]

2. What is your age bracket?

   Less than 30 years   [ ]

   30-40 years   [ ]

   40-50 years   [ ]

   Above 50 years   [ ]

3. What is your highest education level?

   Secondary level   [   ]

   Diploma level   [   ]

   Degree level   [   ]

   Post graduate level   [   ]

4. What is your religion?

   Christian   [   ]

   Muslim   [   ]

   Others   [   ]

5. In your opinion, to what extent do the following factors drive conflict within your area? Use a scale of 1=5 where 1=no extent, 2=little extent, 3=moderate extent, 4=great extent and 5=very great extent.

	1	2	3	4	5
Poverty					
Low level of education					
Political discrimination					
Economic marginalization					
Discriminative law enforcement practices					
Lack of employment					
Religious fanatism					
Search for self-identity					
Poor parenting					

Measures by religious leaders in peacebuilding

6. To what extent do you use the following measures in countering religious violence in your community?

	1	2	3	4	5
Advocacy					
Education and training					
Convening dialogues					
Mediation					
Reconciliation					
Forum with government agents					

7. Please explain on your best measures of countering conflict management in a conflict in your country.

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Effectiveness of religious leaders in conflict management

8. How would you rate the achievement of each of the following as a result of involvement of religious leaders in conflict management?

	1	2	3	4	5
Enhancing cultural identity					
Peace-building					
Restoration					
Community cohesion					
Intercultural interaction					

9. In your opinion what is the effectiveness of religious leaders in peacebuilding in your community?

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Challenges faced by religious leaders in peacebuilding

10. To what extent do the following challenges face religious leaders in their peacebuilding work in their communities? Use a scale of 1=5 where 1=no extent, 2=little extent, 3=moderate extent, 4=great extent and 5=very great extent.

	1	2	3	4	5
Accusations of proselytizing					
Financial limitations					
Lack of international/national laws					
Lack motivation to the religious leaders					
Lack of professional preparedness					

11. In your own opinion are the main challenges facing religious leaders in countering violence extremism in your county?

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Appendix III: Interview Guide for religious leaders

1. What is the current role of religious leaders in peacebuilding in your country?

2. Are religious leaders involved in effective measures to resolve any?

3. What kind of action programs could be implemented in collaboration with religious leaders to avoid the spread religious violence?

4. What are the various strategies put in place to counter religious violence in your community?

5. Describe the effectiveness of the strategies above?

6. What are the challenges you face in combating religious violence and in your peacebuilding work

7. What recommendations can be made in improving the management measures/strategies applied in your community?