



UNIVERSITY of  
RWANDA

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**CENTRE FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

**UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF FORUM FOR UNITY AND  
RECONCILIATION IN POST GENOCIDE PEACEBUILDING  
RWANDA: CASE OF GASABO DISTRICT**

Dissertation submitted to the University of Rwanda in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Masters of Arts Degree in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation

By

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Musanze June 2021



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**Prof MASABO Francois**

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## APPROVAL



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### AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT THE DISSERTATION FOR EVALUATION

I, undersigned Dr. Innocent RUGARAGU, hereby testify that under my supervision,

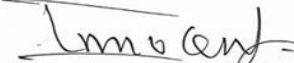
Mr. Emmanuel HITAYEZU, has successfully completed writing his MA Dissertation entitled:  
**Understanding the Role of Forum for Unity and Reconciliation in Post Genocide  
Peacebuilding Rwanda: Case of Gasabo District.**

Therefore, he stands with my authorization to submit required copies to the Administration of  
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## DECLARATION

I, HITAYEZU Emmanuel, declare that this dissertation titled Understanding the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding in Rwanda: Case of Gasabo District is my original work and has never been presented anywhere in any high institution of learning or universities for any academic qualification. It is a result of my own endeavour and the work of others has been acknowledged as indicated in the references.

Names

Date

Signature

## **DEDICATION**

This work is firstly dedicated to my beloved wife UWERA Alice who supported me with affection on this journey and my children who have endured my absence at the time when they needed me most. Secondly, I dedicate this work to my relatives and friends for their support, advice and encouragement that they accorded me during the research process.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First and foremost, I am grateful to God for His protection throughout the entire academic year that was threatened by the COVID 19.

I am most thankful to the Rwanda National Police for having offered me a great study opportunity while granting all the necessary support in the course of my studies at the National Police College. I also like to thank the administration of the College for their admired support during my stay in the College.

My sincere thanks also go to the University of Rwanda staff members and particularly lecturers from the Centre for Conflict Management for their assistance during my studies. I especially thank my Supervisor Dr Innocent RUGARAGU, who guided and supported me in the process of writing this thesis. It would not be possible for me to finalise it without his guidance.

Special thanks also go to the respondents who provided invaluable information that helped me to reach my goal of completing this research. The immeasurable gratitude is also addressed to my colleagues for their encouragement and invaluable support. As a team, they helped me to attain the end of this journey of academic growth.

May God bless you

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
CISP	Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli
CoK	City of Kigali
CSO	Civil Society Organization
HPCR	Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Programme
HWF	Harambe Women's Forum
KPC	Kibimba Peace Committee
LPC	Local Peace Committee
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NURC	National Unity and Reconciliation
SME	Small and Micro Enterprises
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDESA	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

## **ABSTRACT**

The study aimed at understanding the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda: case of Gasabo District. It is an exploratory research and used qualitative approach, with purposive sampling. The selected respondents were 28 from the forum for unity and reconciliation, leaders at sector level, convicted genocide perpetrators, genocide survivors, and different leaders at district level. During data collection, semi structured interviews and documentary techniques were used. This research had three specific objectives: to explore the impact of campaigns for peace education in peacebuilding in Gasabo District; to analyse the contribution of community dialogues in relation to peacebuilding; and to examine the role of psychosocial healing sessions in post genocide peacebuilding. In addition, the study examined the challenges that the forum for unity and reconciliation members face while performing peacebuilding efforts in Gasabo district.

The findings showed that the respondents cherished the forum for unity and reconciliation's role. The study found out that despite many successes, forum for unity and reconciliation faces some challenges related to resources, both human and finance. There is also a challenge of poor collaboration with local authorities. In addition, genocide ideology still exists especially by diaspora genocide perpetrators. The study recommended NURC, Gasabo District and Forum for unity and reconciliation to take strong measures to ensure that all challenges that the forum faces related to the capacity, capability, genocide ideology and collaboration between stakeholders are handled.

**Key Words:** Peace, peacebuilding, leadership and reconciliation

## CHAPTER ONE

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Background of the Study

In aftermath of conflicts, there exist around the world different evidences of local initiatives including local peace committees (LPC), forum for unity and reconciliation. Such evidences have been used as mechanisms to promote peacebuilding. The reaction to the conflicts generated a favourable environment for emergence or the rise of local peace initiatives to take part in public affairs. Moreover, the government reforms after conflicts created political space to introduce local initiatives (McNamee, et al, 2021).

According to Odendaal and Retief (2008, p. 9), local peace committees is a “general name which is used to refer to committee (s) or structures of other kinds that are formed with the intention to encourage and facilitate inclusive peace-making and peacebuilding processes within its own context”. The strategy of a local peace committee is branded by its emphasis on dialogue, promotion of mutual understanding, trust-building, constructive and inclusive conflict resolution, as well as collective action that is inclusive of all conflict parties and aimed at reconciliation and sustainable peace.

Generally, local peace committees are useful instruments for local peacebuilding. In Africa, the local peace initiatives such as local peace committees emerged as mechanisms based on grassroots peacebuilding in 1990s. Local communities, who had been affected by deadly conflicts, resorted to a multitude of local structures to assist dialogue, manage conflict and encourage peaceful coexistence. Thus, the role of Local Peace Committees and other structures formed at the local level to encourage and facilitate peacebuilding and community development has been appreciated and adopted by many countries across the globe (Nganje, 2021).

In the sub-Saharan region, there are countries including Kenya, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Ghana and Malawi among others, where the role played by local peace committees were not only significant in resolving conflicts but also in encouraging community engagement and rural development at grassroots level (Odendaal, 2010).

In Kenya for instance, a local peace structure was established to facilitate peacebuilding in Wajir District situated in the North-Eastern Province. It was classified as a district with limited resources, with marginalization and discrimination among the residents. With these problems, the fight over limited natural resources among tribes occupying the district triggered the 1991-1992 violent conflict. This violent conflict in the area saw number of people and their belongings exterminated (Tongeren, 2013).

Therefore, it took the effort of a local peace committee for women, originally known as the Wajir Women for Peace Group to return the calm. This group later changed the name to Wajir Peace Group, composed by people from all tribes living in the district. Finally, this group was given a name of Wajir Peace and Development Committee (WPDC). This facilitated peace building in Wajir after the outbreak of violent conflict (Tongeren, 2013). Considering the WPDC's experiences and its achievements, the leadership of Kenya and different civil society bodies appreciated the need for peacebuilding using local conflict management mechanisms such as local peace committees.

In Rwanda, after the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, the country was left with a broken governing structure, a polarized society marked by distrust and terror among residents, and a lack of national unity (Uwimbabazi, et al, 2014). Despite this, two decades after the Genocide committed against the Tutsi in 1994, the country has made significant progress in addressing post-genocide challenges.

Under such context, many efforts have been put in place to attain sustainable peace. These include the establishment of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) by the Government of Rwanda. This commission was mandated to foster unity, build trust and move Rwandan society towards sustainable peace and development. This had impact on peace and security in the country. Rwanda has become one among the African counties to demonstrate political willingness to lead towards sustainable peace and development, almost three decades after war and Genocide against the Tutsi.

The NURC by implementing the mandate entrusted by the government of Rwanda initiated the forums for unity and reconciliation in all districts of the country by 2017. The purpose was to promote reconciliatory initiatives and peacebuilding, especially at the community level. According to Uwimbabazi, et al, (2014), the forum for unity and reconciliation initiative is an approach of ensuring continuous consultations with the grassroots. The forum interacts with local communities, and exchange ideas and information with actors involved



in reconciliation and peacebuilding. It also decentralizes the processes by encouraging local leaders and communities to take ownership of them.

The Rwandan history constitutes a transition from violent conflict to peace and from the classical order of managing public affairs altered to the level of involving community members in matters affecting their day-to-day lives. This includes mechanisms of reconciliation and peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding has been generally used since the ancient times and in Rwanda almost three decades ago. It has become a familiar concept within the UN following Boutros Boutros-Ghali's 1992 report, *An Agenda for Peace*. In spite of some debates about the definition of peacebuilding, it remains a complex concept to define. Peacebuilding can narrowly be defined in relation to the post-violent conflict era.

Generally, post-conflict peacebuilding refers to a variety of activities connected with capacity building, sustainable reconciliation and societal transformation. Its main purpose is to repair the broken relationship of destroyed human relationship (Hopkins, 2010). In addition, peacebuilding is meant to make peace last, and in many people's understanding, it is based on the recognition that peace, development, and democracy are symbiotic.

According to Sezibera (2018), Rwanda's efforts at peacebuilding have been anchored in ideological clarity. They are founded on a critical assessment of the society's history (both ancient and modern), the cultural values that have cemented an evolving Rwandan society over time, and the leadership and governance deficiencies that have pushed Rwanda to the brink of extinction.

The journey to peacebuilding required Rwandans to resort on the return to normality grounded on the rebuilding of the national unity, national sovereignty and the security of Rwandans and their belongings. This involved the intervention of different actors in peacebuilding including the forum for unity and reconciliation in all districts of Rwanda.

Considering important role, the forums for unity and reconciliation members have played in rebuilding the national unity and the return of interrelation among Rwandan society. This has led to sustainable peace and security in the country. Though some studies have been done on these initiatives, no much attention has been made to explore the role of these unconventional players. This is the reason why this research was initiated with a view to

understand the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda, with a focus on Gasabo District.

According to 2019-2020 NURC report on the role of districts in implementing activities aimed at promoting unity, reconciliation and peacebuilding towards sustainable peace, Gasabo District was ranked number 19 out of 30 districts, with 77% (NURC, 2020).

The district is one of the three districts that make the City of Kigali (CoK). It is assumed to be among the districts that could have ranked among the best top performers because of its different potentials. These potentials include; the office of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission being near the district office and a number of various national leaders residing in Gasabo. This district could easily benefit expertise from the commission staff; various stakeholders in peacebuilding operating in the district, to mention but few.

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

Ideally, for an effective conflict intervention and transformation, an approach with peace as an outcome is desired. This is where structures for peace such as local peace committees come to play as well as forum for unity and reconciliation. The structures for peace including forum for unity and reconciliation are the ones that have been used to intervene in conflicts, in a non-violent way. Thus, helping to build peace especially in local communities and the society at large (Dylan 2019).

As non-violence structure for peace, the forum for unity and reconciliation is accessible to all and does not seek to alienate the opponents including the third parties. Thus, it can be used to bring everyone on board and has the potential to end cycles of violence and counter-violence. The forum opens window of opportunity of conversion as well as producing constructive outcomes.

In the Rwandan context, the post genocide era was characterized by broken relationship among Rwandans, polarization, divisionism, and suspicion to mention but few. To rebuild the interpersonal relationship that was destroyed during the Genocide, the Government of Rwanda has established a number of mechanisms aiming at fostering peacebuilding and sustainable peace among the community. They have positively impacted peace and security in Rwanda. The forums for unity and reconciliation are believed to be among the actors that played a big role in achieving the peace and security the country has today that are enjoyed by Rwandans and non-Rwandans alike.

Since the forums for unity and reconciliation has been established countrywide, little is known about the role they played in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda. To the best of my knowledge, little research has been conducted to understand the role forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding in Gasabo District. Hence, this research intends to address this gap. This justifies the rationale behind why conduct this study and the gap in knowledge to be bridged.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

This study has the following general objective and specific objectives.

### **1.2.1 General Objective**

The general objective of this study is to understand the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda, particularly in Gasabo District.

### **1.2.2 Specific objectives**

The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- a. To explore the impact of campaigns for peace education conducted by the forum in peacebuilding.
- b. To analyse the contribution of community dialogues conducted by the forum in relation to peacebuilding.
- c. To examine the role of psychosocial healing sessions carried out by the forum in peacebuilding.

## **1.3 Research Question**

To understand the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda: Case of Gasabo District, this research will answer the following questions:

### **1.3.1 Main question**

How can we understand the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in the post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda, particularly in Gasabo District?

### **1.3.2 Specific questions**

- a. What is the impact of campaigns for peace education conducted by the forum in peacebuilding?

- b. How do the community dialogues conducted by the forum contribute to peacebuilding?
- c. What is the role of psychosocial healing sessions carried out by the in peacebuilding in Gasabo?

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

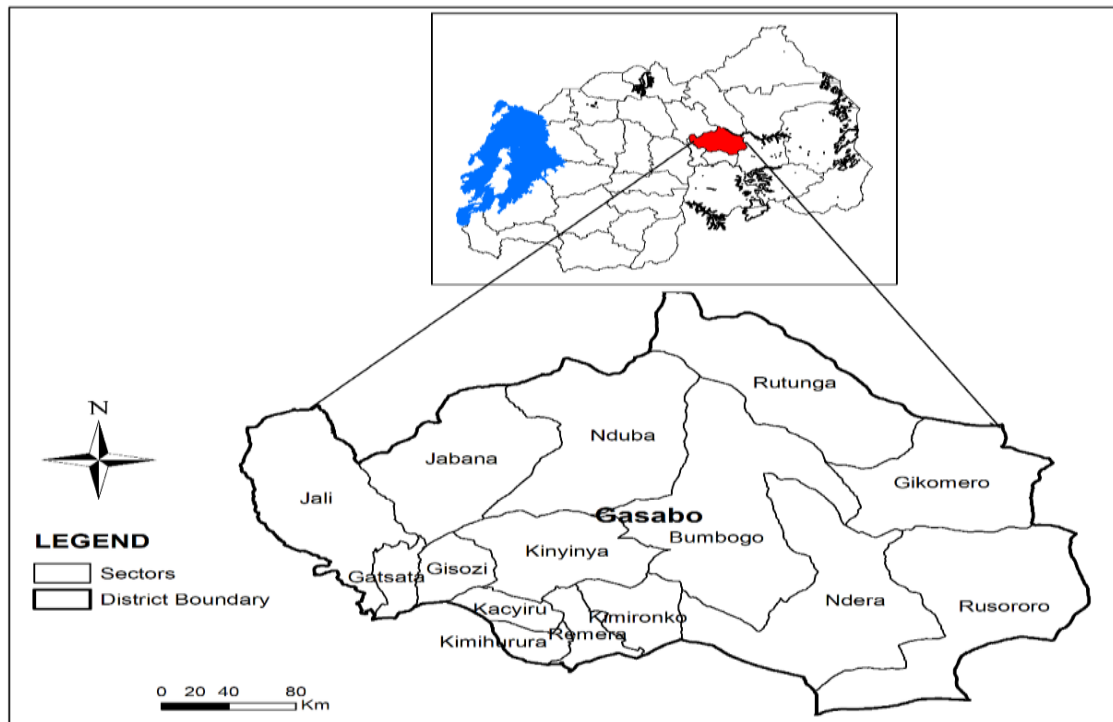
This research intends to understand the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda, particularly in Gasabo District. The results of research are believed to inform the leadership of Gasabo District about the performance of the forum for unity and reconciliation in order to influence decision and policymaking processes. The findings will also help to review mechanisms of attaining the optimum level of peacebuilding that leads to sustainable peace and security in the district. Moreover, the results of the study will inform the NURC about the situation of peacebuilding in the district to improve since peacebuilding is a journey and a process.

Besides, the research will contribute to the existing knowledge about the role played by the forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda, particularly in Gasabo District. It will also open windows for further studies about the forum for unity and reconciliation in the district. The study will provide practical recommendations to partners and stakeholders of the district with view of fostering the peacebuilding process. Finally, the study comes to enrich the knowledge of the researcher about the role of this forum in post genocide peacebuilding in Gasabo District.

#### **1.5 Scope of the study**

The study is designed to understand the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda, particularly in Gasabo District. Considering the gap in literature about the role of the forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda, this interested the researcher to conduct the research in order to contribute in the area of peacebuilding and reconciliation in Gasabo District.

**Figure 1: Location map of Gasabo District with Sectors (Study Area)**



From Figure 1, the current study covered the entire Gasabo District in terms of scope through the 15 administrative sectors.

### **1.6 Structure of the Study**

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one is about the general introduction, chapter two covers the literature review, chapter three discusses the methodology used, chapter four focuses on data analysis and interpretation, and finally, chapter five presents the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

### **1.7 Summary**

This chapter highlighted the general introduction of the study, background, problem statement, research questions, and objectives of the study. In addition, the chapter introduced the significance of the study, scope and the structure of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Definition of key concepts

This section covers definition of key concepts such as forum for unity and reconciliation, peacebuilding, reconciliation, and post-conflict-genocide peacebuilding. Defining these concepts will enable the researcher and the readers to understand fully the operational meaning of the topic under study.

##### 2.1.1 Forum for unity and reconciliation

According to Uwimbabazi, et al, (2014), forum for unity and reconciliation is defined as a “gathering of people from different levels of society with the purpose of promoting reconciliatory and peacebuilding initiatives, especially at the community level”. The NURC describes the forum for unity and reconciliation as a permanent decentralised structure that facilitates the process of reconciliation and peacebuilding at the community level (NURC, 2015).

In this context, the forum for unity and reconciliation is understood as the structure composed by people from different background that have the responsibilities of promoting peacebuilding in post genocide society. They do so through the means of conducting community dialogues, campaigns for peace education and psychosocial healing sessions with a view to building sustainable peace.

##### 2.1.2 Peacebuilding

According to Waldman (2009), peacebuilding refers to activities that go beyond crisis intervention or conflict management, such as long-term development that focuses on developing social, governmental and nongovernmental mechanisms that favour nonviolent, constructive means of resolving differences.

Furthermore, Lilja and Höglund (2018) add that peacebuilding encompasses activities aimed at social, political and institutional transformation required to create a lasting and self-sustaining peace. Additionally, peacebuilding is anchored on actions that create and sustain a peaceful society. Ultimately, this should embrace remedial actions that include the healing of relationships and classical conflict transformation measures already initiated.

### **2.1.3 Reconciliation**

The concept of reconciliation is a concept that originated from the Latin expression *conciliatus* with basic meaning of assembling. In this study reconciliation, indicate a series of actions reviving the devastated relationship between parties in conflict. Reconciliation is an important initiative for peacebuilding that aimed at eliminating distrust and abhorrence that may have triggered the re-emergence of conflicts and attaining the comprehension of sustainable peace (Tamai, 2017).

It is based on the foundation that the individual perceptions need to be changed in order to subdue abhorrence and suspicion among the parties in conflict.

### **2.1.4 Post-conflict and post- genocide peacebuilding**

According to Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1992) post conflict and or post genocide peacebuilding is understood as an action to identify and support structures in place inclined towards strengthening and solidifying peace with a view to preventing degeneration into new conflict.

He further mentioned that post-conflict peacebuilding plays its biggest role after a conflict. The opportunities for post-conflict peacebuilding are strengthened whenever the peace making and peacekeeping processes have been successful.

## **2.2 Understanding the forum for unity and reconciliation as local structure for peace**

Forum for unity and reconciliation is expected to contribute towards improving activities of peacebuilding by various stakeholders at community level for sustainable peace in Rwanda. The structure has also to effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of community driven peacebuilding initiatives. It has to set practical approaches focusing on reinforcement of capacity of partners in peacebuilding and putting in place ways of exchanging information and solving conflicts (Uwimbabazi, et al, 2014).

According to Bukari (2013), human centred approaches coupled with enhanced security and cohesiveness are pivotal in successfully accomplishing conflict resolution to far reaching human well-being and grassroots-based development. Predominantly each conflict resolution strategy is unique to itself and particular individual stakeholder has the liberty to settle on tactics that are applicable in his or her environment.

The home-grown peace committees in African countries have institutionalized and applied negotiation, mediation, reconciliation, advocacy, joint problem solving, community

dialogues and peace education as part and parcel of instruments to ensure progressive and effective conflict resolution. These varying approaches have been tested and proved in numerous countries that suffered from wars.

### **2.2.1 Forum for Unity and Reconciliation as local peace committees in the region**

Local peace Committee is broad title typically applied to grassroots assemblies domiciled within administrative structures of village, town, municipality or district with aspiration to enable localized application of all-encompassing peace-making and peacebuilding processes (Retief and Odendaal, 2008).

The applicable titles of these local peace committees are derived from a country's context and vary from country to country. The common ones are district peace advisory council, district multiparty liaison committee, village peace and development committee, committee for intercommunity relations, forum for peace and reconciliation among others (Nganje, 2021). In the context of Rwanda, such structure is known as the forum for unity and reconciliation, conceived as kind of local peace committees established at local level after the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

The established local peace structures are characterized by meaningful participation of local communities and inclusion of conflicting factions, and contributing in psychosocial support interventions. Additionally, community empowerment and capacity building strategies should focus on the vulnerable and marginalized. It has to rescue those who are discriminated in order to influence and build ownership of community level peace initiatives.

Briefly, the realisations of local peace committees are branded by their emphasis on peace education with focus on mutual understanding, dialogue, trust-building, comprehensive and constructive resolutions to conflict and collective actions visioning towards reconciliation and peacebuilding (Retief and Odendaal, 2008).

Since local peace committees are mostly found in countries torn by conflicts, they are renowned for the influence and roles they have played in reducing the effects of conflict and creating needed environment for local peace actors to become agents of peacebuilding. Additionally, the local structures have successfully accomplished reduction, management and in some instances completely resolved tensions in conflict ravaged communities in Africa and in the world.



### **2.2.2 The relevance of the forums and local peace structures in Sub-Sahara Region**

The local peace structures named variably basing on country context, either as local peace committees or as forums for unity and reconciliation, have evidently facilitated achievement of reconciliation and sustainable peace in different countries in the sub-Saharan region.

In Kenya, during violence due to scarcity and unequal sharing of natural resources, infrastructure and properties of the residents were destroyed and several people were reported dead in inter clan conflicts in 1991 to 1992 in Wajir County. It was dominated by high poverty, marginalisation, discrimination, inadequate human capital and scarce natural resources (Tongeren, 2013).

A local peace committee known as Wajir Peace and Development Committee (WPDC) spearheaded the successful resolution of the cited conflict; it evolved from the initial titles of Wajir Women for Peace Group and Wajir Peace Group, with representatives of all the clans in the district.

Grounded on the series of achievements of the WPDC in application of homegrown solutions to local conflicts, the Government of Kenya and different Civil Society Organizations cherished the pivotal prominence of such structure in peacebuilding and appreciated the need of using the mechanisms in attaining sustainable peace.

In Burundi, the case in point is the Kibimba Peace Committee (KPC), which adopted holistic village approach to achieve its effect in peacebuilding process, having operated as a village peace catalyst for more than seven years. In collaboration with other peace committees, it managed the reconciliation of feuding and traumatized ethnic groups that resulted to peace and security of the devastated communities (Issifu, 2016).

In Ghana, particularly in Northern parts of the country have witnessed protracted and very deadly conflicts from time immemorial (Issifu and Asante, 2015). These conflicts are predominantly attributed to political and economic marginalization of the North in comparison to the power wielding and affluent South (Odendaal, 2010). In attempts to solving these conflicts, Western world strategies like the law courts, peacekeeping committees of enquiry, and peace enforcement mainly by the government for conflict resolution have been employed unsuccessfully (Bukari, 2011).

The unsuccessful previous attempts have been complemented by the inclusion of Kumasi Peace Talks, a local peace initiative, which facilitated round table dialogue amongst the

antagonists. This particular action by the Kumasi Peace Talks initiative resulted in comparatively peaceful co-existence in the locality and upheld by the Ghanaian Government.

In South Africa, in spite of the protracted apartheid system, in the post-apartheid era, local women encountering problem related to poverty, gender-based violence and trauma, struggled to change their distressed communities and eventually emerged as champions of peace through the Harambe Women's Forum (HWF). Zandile Nhlengetwa and some other local women to build sustainable peace in the country initiated the local peace committee (Issifu, 2015).

The foundation for peace, reconciliation, security and community development have subsequently been accomplished in different communities over time through implementation of adult literacy and community-based peace classes (Noma et al, 2012).

### **2.2.3 The establishment of forum for unity and reconciliation in Rwanda**

The Rwandan people have been pre-dominantly pre-occupied with rebuilding and reconstruction in response to the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis. In counter planning, the Government of Rwanda institutionalized the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) in 1999, mandated with coordination of reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts.

In the implementation of bottom-up and decentralization approach of its work, and ultimate outreach to all the 30 districts of Rwanda, the NURC adopted the forums for unity and reconciliation for effective implementation. The key driver behind the approach was to ensure formidable consultations that are accompanied with seamless interactions with the local citizens of varied backgrounds but concurrently inspire the stakeholders for buy-in in the reconciliation and peacebuilding processes (Basabose, 2015).

The forums were anticipated to simplify the publicity and coordination process of the reconciliation policy and peacebuilding in Rwanda at the grassroots level on the one hand, and guide against duplication of building peace efforts on the other. Additionally, the forums were formed with a view to accelerating capacity building of all the stakeholders in the reconciliation and peacebuilding space. This was to be done through information dissemination and redressing possible relapse that may hamper the sustainable peace.

The composition of the forums draws representation from various relevant segments of the community, which encompasses religion, youth, security organs, civil society, Ibuka

representation, local administration among many others. To complement the forums, open and critical dialogue sessions are constituted as a must ingredient to enhance trust for purposes of honest reconciliation, sustainable social cohesion and peacebuilding.

#### **2.2.4 Activities of forum for unity and reconciliation**

The importance of the forum for unity and reconciliation like any other local peace committees is underscored in solidifying social cohesion, enabling dialogue, and preventing violence (Njanje, 2021). By facilitating dialogue, forum for unity and reconciliation can perform certain major activities that include the following:

- a. Enable communication between current or former protagonists to deal with potentially destructive rumours, fears and mistrust;
- b. Prevent violence through joint monitoring, facilitating negotiations and joint planning for potentially violent events;
- c. Facilitate local peace-making processes leading to local peace agreements;
- d. Mediate on-going or new disputes to achieve joint problem-solving;
- e. Strengthen social cohesion through forums-facilitated dialogue, a necessary precondition for sustainable, collaborative and inclusive governance;
- f. Facilitate reconciliation and
- g. Enable local and national information flow so local peacebuilding challenges can receive proper attention at the national level.

Briefly, just like other local peace committees in the region, the forum for unity and reconciliation has proved its worth in mitigating issues to do with division within the local communities and enhancing creation of enabling environment at both national and local political scenarios. The “Do no Harm” approaches that are founded on dialogue, facilitation and negotiation are given top priority against antagonism.

### **2.3 General understanding of peacebuilding in post conflict society**

The late former UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s agenda for peace facilitated the international recognition of the term “peacebuilding” and made a landmark in the listed tools that effectively mitigate violent conflicts. In the maiden days, it was denoted as post conflicts activities focus on strengthening and solidifying peace, to address emergence of sporadic conflicts, progressively evolving to include integrated approaches as included in

the conflict management continuum. This therefore means that conflict prevention and peacebuilding are a clear reflection of each other (Tschirgi, 2003.)

Peacebuilding entails concerted efforts contributed by various stakeholders drawn from government, local society actors, national and international levels focusing on instantaneous and short-term impacts, pre, throughout and post violent conflict periods (Ahmed, 2020).

Peacebuilding intercessions in post violent conflict do not vary so much from those planned for sustainable development, especially in situations that have experienced physical and social destruction (Waldman, 2009). Similarly, Schirch (2013) supported that peacebuilding comprises a multiplicity of activities performed by various role players from different backgrounds either national or international with a variety of capacity to deal with consequences and root causes of conflicts.

According to Schilling (2012), peacebuilding is a far-reaching process implemented with a reflection to appropriateness at given stages of the peacebuilding continuum and traverses capacity building, reconciliation and societal transformation. In simple terms, this forms the foundation for sustainable peace through multi-faceted actions on capacity building, reconciliation and societal transformation.

In view of Waldman, (2009), peacebuilding includes pre-determined steps that fulfil the principles for revolution towards sustainable peaceful interconnectedness including governance structures. Overall peacebuilding personifies extended actions as presented in the conflict continuum envisaged to result to long lasting peace.

Conceptually, the development of a peaceful and conducive atmosphere focuses on three main pillars: dealing with the fundamental causes of conflicts, restoring broken relationships and dealing with psychological trauma at individual level. Further, this process may adopt either top-down approach initiated by either the international bodies or national governments. In other circumstances, it may also take a bottom-up approach by the civil society organizations including private sector stakeholders (Lederach (1997).

### **2.3.1 Dimensions of peacebuilding interventions**

There are many ways of grouping the different dimensions or aspects of peacebuilding activities. Differing ways of presenting such dimensions are often linked to differing assumptions relating to the basic causes and drivers of conflict.

According to Waldman (2009) differing dimensions of peacebuilding processes are perceived in terms of three key areas:

- a. **Containing violence.** This dimension includes efforts to break the cycle of violence by restricting perpetrators and creating a safe environment in which other aspects of peacebuilding can develop. This might involve ceasefire agreements, the establishment of safe zones or displaced people's camps, external military intervention, the deployment of peacekeepers, or the building of strong judicial and law enforcement.
- b. **Transforming relationships.** A major part of peacebuilding is the effort to transform relationships at all levels from being mostly harmful and conflictual to being constructive, rights respecting, and nonviolent. This dimension includes psychosocial activities, forums for constructive discourse, principled negotiation, and mediation at various levels. In the right circumstances, restorative and transitional justice systems can also be effective in promoting reconciliation.
- c. **Building capacity.** It is essential for sustainable peace that countries must establish the social architecture, structures, institutions, and organizations essential to help them in their transformation, as well as the requisite people resources and competencies. Training and education programs, as well as social, economic, and political growth, as well as security sector reform.

### **2.3.2 Intervention of actors in peacebuilding**

Attaining sustainable peace is the target of all stakeholders in peacebuilding from international, local or grassroots institutions and aim at successful and sustainable peace (Cherotich, 2018). Drawing from this view, transformation towards engaging in dialogue across social structures, complimented with regular interfacing outline the formation of peace that may befitting or out of place with tested principles of peace (Lilja and Hoglund, 2018).

#### **2.3.2.1 National Actors**

Any successful peacebuilding strategy must include a multi-stakeholder engagement process including a wide variety of actors (HPCR 2008). Peacebuilding players agree that national stakeholders, including the government and civil society, are the driving force behind economic recovery.

A report on economic recovery made by the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) underlines the importance of local ownership of the recovery process, which it refers to as indigenous drivers (BPCR, 2008). According to the report, the term indigenous drivers of economic recovery refer to the efforts and activities of local communities, individuals, households, and businesses to promote and propel economic activity following a conflict.

Government actions in the space for economic recovery and peacebuilding are largely complimented by the NGOs. The three key roles include pointers (laid back roles), whistle blowers on eminent conflict and material and soft goods providers (NGOs, private sector) to cushion victims (UNDESA, 2004).

UNECA report (2003) precisely cuts out a number of actions that NGOs can assume in the private sector investment. Key among these is resuscitation of Small and Micro Enterprises (SMEs), embarking on quick win mini-investments and last but not least actions that catalyse re-integration of ex-combatants, refugees and displaced persons into their communities.

Presence of local business stakeholders in peacebuilding undertakings always ensures a win for all parties (HPCR 2008). Support by international donors, particularly via microfinance projects or business associations provide an impetus to the dynamic innovators and entrepreneurs, representing future growth. These informal outfits largely propel the micro level economy.

The government, the principal overseer offers regulatory services, policy formulation and creation of enabling environment for all stakeholders. The mandated roles of the government therefore determine conclusive actions in view of private investment (MacDonald, 2006). Overall, the government is mandated to offer upholding of human rights and ensuring inclusion and consumer protection (HPCR, 2018).

The actors at national level must enhance their capacities in readiness to steer ahead the policy making process upon exit of the international support amidst dwindling resources. Approaches to regaining lost glory are dependent on prowess to uphold untainted leadership and responsible leadership (BPCR, 2008).

### **2.3.2.2 International Actors**

Human capital is often lost in the emergence of war. This is evident in the war-torn countries in Africa. The gap is often filled by international aid agencies while addressing

recovery needs. This recognizes the pivotal role played by the national stakeholders (BPCR, 2008).

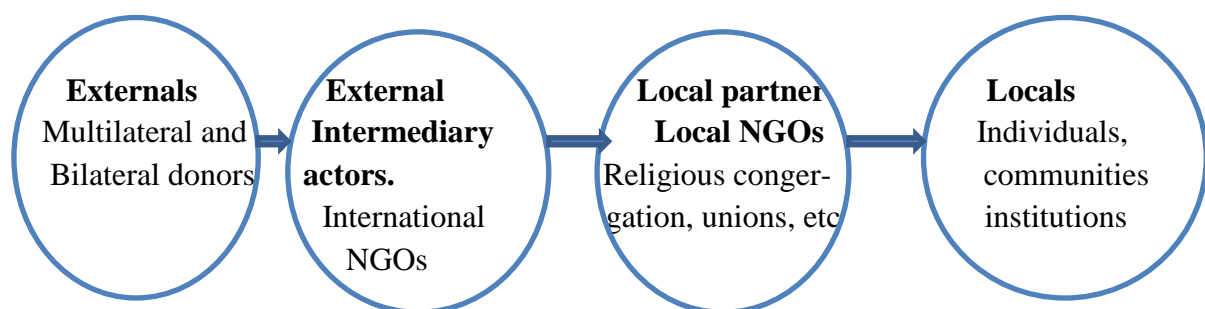
In as much as the international or external partners' support is key, they must recognize that they must harmonize and carefully balance the support they give to both the political elite and the championing. They should also to consider the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), as well as private sector and the warring factions while focusing on the recovery in the continuum (Ohiorhenuan and Kumar, 2005).

Ohiorhenuan and Kumar further reiterate that the international actors should also slowly and diplomatically consult with the politicians rather than rush the transition process as a contrary approach may suffocate the efforts of the other organs like parliament, CSOs and the business community.

The international aid providers who often provide monetary aid to the governments and NGOs form a fulcrum for both the mother offices and the local stakeholders and individuals meeting the thresholds for in terms of fiscal policies. The NGOs undertake the role of identification and mobilization of local partners and civil society organizations with which they cooperate (Lilja and Hoglund, 2018).

External actors involved in local peacebuilding are diverse and include multilateral and bilateral donors, peacekeepers, diplomats, regional actors, international civil society, international religious movements, international business, and academia, to name a few. These variations contribute to shaping both interventions and peacebuilding outcomes.

**Figure 2: International Peacebuilding Chain: from externals to locals (national)**



Lilja and Höglund (2018) explained that the examples of peacebuilding activities are the setting up and support of inclusive peace and reform processes; facilitating the creation of peace movements or networks; building up the capacity of local peace partners through training and mentoring; and pro-peace advocacy and lobbying.

## **2.4 Impact of campaigns for peace education in peacebuilding**

Campaigns for peace education in peacebuilding help reduce conflict on three levels: structural, behavioural, and attitude. Peace and literacy can help lessen the likelihood of conflict by altering societal inconsistencies (structural), improving relationships and interactions (behavioural), and encouraging changes in attitudes (Phyllis, 2012). The goal of peace education or civic education is to combat and reject violence. It centres on peace education, education for peace, and education programs through peace and the knowledge and skills to foster peaceful cultures.

The end objective of peace education is to instil in each person a notion of universal principles and forms of behaviour that underpin a culture of peace. Standards that are likely to be widely accepted can be found in a variety of socio-cultural circumstances. As a result, education fosters the ability to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence and the cultivation of inner calm in people's thoughts, allowing them to establish values more firmly such as tolerance, empathy, generosity, and caring.

Like the global education paradigm, (most academics agree that peace education has become a player in global education), contemporary school-based peace training comprises a wide range of goals and methodologies, depending on the audience and socio-political and ideological setting. Peace education, particularly global education, has practical and theoretical parallels with other forms of progressive educations (Sharon, 2008).

Current school-based peace education, like the global education movement (a greatest number of academics agree that peace education has become a part of global education), comprises a wide range of goals and approaches, depending on the audience and socio-political and ideological context.

The core premise is that the more individuals' study and learn about peace, the better equipped they will be to deal with all aspects related to conflicts. Reviewing the subjects deeply also helps in the establishment of different conflict resolution strategies. It is stated that to develop the world, we must first teach individuals (Askerov, 2010).

Peace education is a planned action with the primary goal of achieving particular short- and long-term objectives connected to peace and nonviolence at all stages, from the individual to the societal and universal. Peace educators must address current dangerous conditions in society and build permanent structures in human consciousness that enhance the foundation



of peaceful coexistence, which is essential for the transition of human values to advocate nonviolence (Harris and Morrison, 2003).

People are admonished about the dangers of their destructive illusions through the campaign for peace education, which offers alternatives that make people peaceful in their minds and actions. Peace education has a variety of crucial goals aimed at achieving immediate or long-term aims. These include assessing the richness of the notion of peace, addressing anxieties, providing security information, comprehending war behaviour, building multicultural understanding, promoting social justice, instilling a sense of respect for life, and non-violently resolving disagreements.

Peace education also adds to a more in-depth understanding of the issues that lead to catastrophic conflicts. It would be difficult to formulate effective solutions to problems, such as violence, without a better grasp of the core causes.

## **2.5 Contribution of community dialogues in peacebuilding**

Community dialogues are one of the most widely used techniques for conflict resolution and change, and they cut across all other techniques. In essence, dialogue is a specific kind of communication that lies at the heart of any relationship (Bercovitch, 2008). Bercovitch says that in many cultures where political, social, and economic transactions are often argumentative and contentious, striving for a culture of dialogue, a different way of relating would be a worthwhile addition to peaceful conflict resolution and productive lives democratic practice.

A conversation in which individuals speak openly and listen professionally and intently is often referred to as community dialogue. The dialogue avoids disparaging attributions based on assumptions about the intentions, meanings, or personality by excluding attack and defence. It is aimed at communities and groups in society that are in desperate need of community discussion, which is an essential component of conflict resolution, social stability, and integration (UNDP, 2013).

Leaders should facilitate community discourse and create social contracts for peaceful coexistence when implementing community dialogue for long-term peace and peacebuilding. Coordinating, leading, and assisting the conception of community peace programs aiming at strengthening social cohesion and integration should also be included in such responsibilities.

This is significant because the community needs a third party to initiate and maintain communication opportunities. As a result, the third party serves as a guarantor of an open and safe place in which the community can engage in dialogue and explore options for establishing a common ground. They also provide analytical and technical support to help community members improve their dispute resolution and transformation abilities.

The community dialogue is based on pulling community members together for in-depth discussions that analyse a specific recognized problem or issues that influence or can disrupt their peaceful relations. The dialogue process or discussions are carried out to determine the fundamental causes of identified difficulties and devise ways/means to eliminate or change them on the path to creating long-term peace (UNDP, 2013).

Peacebuilding agents typically use dialogue to promote collaboration and lessen conflicts. According to Kyselova (2018), participants in dialogues address convenient concerns, reach consensus on tangible outcomes such as agreeing on a path forward to tackle the issue under discussion or asking local governments to pay greater attention to people's concerns. Kyselova went on to say that, communication aids parties in dispute in breaking free from interlocking situations that limit their options for finding a solution to the problem that satisfies both of their requirements. This strategy would allow conflicting parties to reach a gradual consensus without incurring the transactional costs of diving into entangled views (Fisher et al., 1991).

## **2.6 Role of psychosocial healing sessions in peacebuilding**

In the peacebuilding framework, psychosocial healing support is presupposed to be one of the main components necessary for establishing sustainable peace. Peace building go along with security, good governance, justice, rule of law and economic development. However, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) is often side lined in peacebuilding practice by more tangible and macro level activities.

Drawing from the example of Uganda's 20-year civil war, northern Uganda experienced a significant rise in cases of suicide, domestic violence, substance abuse and criminal violence. In as much as the humanitarian and peacebuilding interventions offered noteworthy contributions to the political and economic reconstruction of the country, the psychosocial aspects of recovery were constantly illusory and inadequate with glaring effects to date (Roberts, et al, 2011).

Lambourne and Gitau emphasize that in order to attain sustainable peace in the peacebuilding process, the strategy must encompass both tangible and software aspects that embrace psychosocial angles of peace (Philpott and Powers, 2010). Psychosocial amenities expressly form part of an integral part of a holistic approach to peacebuilding that addresses individual psychological and community relational needs in addition to physical needs (Rokhideh 2017). Psychological trauma caused by exposure to conflict as perpetrator, victim, and person at risk, survivor or witness inflicts an immense burden on individuals, families, communities and societies, often persisting long after the violence ends.

Professional psychosocial support is not accessible to majority of families and communities, leave alone social structures. These gaps compromise the lives of victims besides undermining the peacebuilding processes and societal inter-relationships, as so often experienced in post-conflict scenarios in communities that are divided, eroded trust and dysfunctional societies. Efforts at provision of minimal professional and clinical services should therefore be pivotal in effecting sustainable peace (Abiosseh, et al 2019).

In the case of Rwanda, many Rwandans, including those born after the genocide in 1994, still suffer from trauma because of the genocide. People in communities are still divided along ethnic lines or between perpetrators and survivors, which makes sustainable peace difficult. With the government initiatives in collaboration with its stakeholders, various psychosocial healing programs at a certain level assisted people in reducing their trauma and psychological pain, as well as building resilience, forgiveness, and tolerance to promote social cohesion and peace.

In post genocide societies, almost people who benefited to psychosocial counselling sessions have experienced profound personal change, and they were able to move on with their lives and relationships. People became less isolated, and were more willing to interact with others across society. In terms of attitudinal and behavioural characteristics, such as frequency of interaction with other social groups, comfort with marriage to other groups, and voting for and receiving aid from other groups, social tolerance improved as well. These help to attain peace, security, and all parts of the social tolerance index improved, especially among genocide perpetrators.

## **2.7 Reconciliation as vital component of peacebuilding**

Manzi (2016) points out the uncertainty surrounding the sense of reconciliation in terms of meaning, ingredients, result and need as these perpetually spark arguments, emanating from its nature. Research by Hamber and Grainne (2003) in Northern Ireland was inspired by the fact that the definition and scope of reconciliation was inaccurate and therefore stifled reconciliation exercises.

Assefa (1999) provided the most articulated framework of reconciliation when he outlined and demarcated the essential aspects and components of reconciliation. These include:

- a. An acknowledgement of the responsibility by the perpetrator;
- b. The showing of genuine repentance or remorse by the perpetrator;
- c. The payment where possible of compensation or the demonstration of a symbolic act of reparation by the perpetrator;
- d. The request for forgiveness by the perpetrator;
- e. The granting of mercy, where possible, by the victim;
- f. An on-going process of healing and reconciliation between the victims and perpetrators and/or their representatives.

Reconciliation cannot exclusively be consolidated by a social and political rapprochement between victims and perpetrators. It also requires a deliberate policy of economic distribution of national or communal resources in order to appease the grievances that were committed in the past.

### **2.7.1 Outcome of reconciliation**

The basis of psychology in the reconciliation process mostly consists of inspirations, goals, tenets, attitudes, and emotions that promote the purpose of peace, the new character of peaceful interactions, and positive perspectives of the partners (Yacoov, 2004). Lederach (1997) highlights that modern peacebuilding necessitates being rooted in realities that shape community views and needs that are adaptable to both practical and individual circumstances.

In order to achieve sustainable and enduring peaceful co-existence among warring groups, there has to be transformation on the psyche that infiltrates the communities' architecture that is equitably shared by the majority of the stakeholders (Asmal et al., 1997).

Reconciliation requires a degree of complementarity between the psychological bases of the former adversaries. That is, both parties must go through a similar psychological transformation, and a majority of each party must support peaceful relations. If these modifications are out of balance, reconciliation will be hampered and one of the parties will feel deceived and cheated.

### **2.7.2 Reconciliation as a process in peacebuilding**

Reconciliation is believed to be both a course and a consequence with result of genuine and stable peaceful relations that are achieved through a winding course of reconciliation. The ingredients include psychological changes of motivations, goals, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions, which are reflected in structural changes, which are comparatively quick compared to the psychological ones. They occur through the gradual psychological processes of information processing, persuasion, learning, and the formation of new psychological repertoire (Yaacov, 2004).

The concept of reconciliation can apply to a process as well as an outcome. Genuine, stable, and harmonious relations are the result of a long, multi-year process of reconciliation. It entails psychological shifts in motivations, goals, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions, which are reflected in structural shifts, facilitating the reconciliation process. Although some structural modifications can be planned and accomplished rapidly, psychological changes do not follow the same pattern.

The concept of reconciliation is not only used in reference to an outcome, but also to connote a process. Genuine and stable peaceful relations are achieved through a long process of reconciliation, lasting many years. It encompasses psychological changes of motivations, goals, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions, which are reflected in structural changes; these, in turn, facilitate the process of reconciliation. Although some of the structural changes can be decided and implemented relatively quickly, the psychological changes do not occur in the same way.

These processes take time because the psychological repertory, which was established during the dispute, is fundamental and held with strong conviction. As a result, its transformation, which must include the vast majority of society's members, is a difficult, time-consuming, and multi-faceted process that must overcome numerous impediments.

### **2.7.3 Importance of reconciliation in the peacebuilding Process**

According to Tamai (2017), reconciliation is a significant initiative for abolishing disagreement and abhorrence, which trigger the reappearance of conflict, attaining the consolidation of peace and facilitating the comprehension of sustainable peace. Lederach (1997) summarily underscores the value of reconciliation as facilitating convergence amid acknowledgement of delicate history on the one hand, and the hunt for spelling out durable, all-inclusive future, on the other.

Additionally, truth and mercy meet in reconciliation, when concerns about exposing what happened and letting go in favour of a rebuilt connection are validated and embraced. Reconciliation emphasizes the importance of giving both justice and peacetime and space, where addressing wrongs is held together with the visioning of a shared and connected future.

### **2.7.4 Reconciliation as a necessary dimension in Peacebuilding**

Various practitioners have popularly embraced reconciliation and researchers as they acknowledge its value add to long lasting peace, with hindsight to installation of top-down political settlement. On the hand, attaining resolves to pending issues in a conflict require initiating a bottom-up process for mitigation (Fischer, 2011).

Concisely, all writers are in affirmative that reconciliation takes time. It takes time for reconciliation to become rooted in a society after internal conflict (Brounéus 2003). Overall, the authors on reconciliation conclude that there is no quick fix in reconciliation work. It takes times to be embedded in society torn by conflicts.

Reconciliation is essential for mitigating incidences of retaliation (Fischer, 2011). Peace champions also recognize the fact that renaissance post-war forms a great result of reconciliation and are key for those who especially were engaged in ethno political conflict, overcome with mistrust and memorable broadcast of trauma and grievances.

One of the most difficult challenges is achieving reconciliation because it necessitates cognitive change, a shift in beliefs, ideology, and emotions on all levels, including the elites of society as well as citizens. Reconciliation typically refers to the restoration of friendship and harmony between two or more parties following the resolution of a conflict, but it can also refer to the transformation of hostile and resentful relationships.

While conflict resolution may end a problem, it does not always indicate that it will stabilize or prevent future disputes; on the other hand, reconciliation provides you with that option. As a result, reconciliation is critical since it can help to establish peace ties after a conflict and preserve a stable peace. (Yaacov, 2004).

The conflictive attitude must be converted into a peaceful attitude in order to attain long-term peace (Tal, 2000)). This necessitates reconciliation, which, according to Bar-Tal, entails a psychological shift in attitude following the disagreement. The majority of the population forms new beliefs, motives, goals, and feelings about the conflict, themselves, and the opposing group through this process, which could take decades.

By emphasizing the importance of behaviour over attitude, Darby and MacGinty (2000) concluded that the essential aim of the peace process is to change human behaviour from helpless acceptance of evil crimes to civilized conduct of human relationships. Finally, Lederach (1997) advises that a target of the future is established between former belligerents in order to understand how to work toward a sustainable peace.

According to Assefa (1999), the major distinguishing characteristic amongst all other conflict resolution strategies is the method used in reconciliation. During, mediation, arbitration as well as negotiation and others forums, the revelries defend themselves and accuse each other of being responsible for the grievances of war. For Brounéus (2003), reconciliation is intentional self-reflection and acceptance of responsibility, which necessitates reflection of one's own guilt in a dialogue with the other. Additionally, reconciliation is a long-term process that takes decades, if not centuries, to complete; it requires that peace in society have been established to some level.

## **2.8 Challenges faced by forum for unity and reconciliation in peacebuilding**

Reconciliation, according to Tamai (2017), is based on modifying human insights in order to overcome animosity and suspicion of offenders and former opponents. Bringing about these changes necessitates a significant amount of effort. Furthermore, in order to create long-term peace in a post-conflict society, these individual adjustments must be consolidated and coordinated in order to accomplish group reconciliation. Despite the challenges of obtaining consent to reconcile individuals as well as combining individual reconciliations into community reconciliations, it is critical to promote reconciliation as a vehicle for social change with a view to achieve peacebuilding.

### **2.8.1 Reconciling perpetrators and victims**

Victims need both material and psychological assistance, such as financial reparation and counselling to help them heal from their emotional trauma. Meanwhile, criminals must recognize their wrongdoings and be willing to apologize (Tamai, 2017).

Relief for the victim and restitution for the offender (by confessing to or being punished for one's crime) allow both parties to return to a regular life within society, and can thus be viewed as reconciliation. During the process of reconciliation, its difficulty for reconciliation to immediately take place as it requires perpetrators to admit their role and to repair the damages resulting from conflicts.

### **2.8.2 Overcoming mistrust and hatred**

It is required to promote a process in which one party recognizes the other as a person, knows the other's values, historical perspectives, and motivations, and accepts their existence in order to reconcile two parties that consider one other as enemies. Even if establishing a kind relationship and achieving peaceful cohabitation (in the short term) may be tough, it is vital to form a social relationship of acknowledge for one another's existence by addressing abhorrence and mistrust mentality and feelings (Cohen and Bradford, 2005)

The perception of "us" as victims and "them" as offenders is common in these types of hostile relations, so it is critical to develop both parties' communication skills to the point where they can honestly narrate their own experience of being a victim while also tranquilly listening to the other person's experience of being a victim. Through educational initiatives such as multi-ethnic schools and encounter programs, attempts are made to improve the reconciliation capacity of parties to a conflict as part of the peacebuilding process.

### **2.8.3 Financial challenges**

Some local peace committees' progress such as the forum for unity and reconciliation, are hampered by financial difficulties. Some of these forums have been forced to adjust their structures in order to obtain money from contributors due to declining or insufficient funds to advance their activities.

For example, the Wajir District Peace Committee formed the Wajir Peace and Development Agency as a secretariat. The agency has been designated as a Non-Governmental



Organization (NGO) in order to receive funding from outside sources (Pkalya and Adan, 2006).

Despite Jenner and Ibrahim's (2000, p. 21) argument that "as long as you are dependent on outside finance, the bottom line is that you are in a vulnerable position, as such financing is generally channelled toward facilitative mechanisms". Ideally, for local peace committees to perform assigned responsibilities need to have some facilities used to meet the expectations of the communities they serve.

## **2.9 Referred theories related to the study**

The section will explain the relevance of reconciliation theory and peacebuilding theory, as main theories that will be used in the study.

### **2.9.1 Reconciliation theory**

Lederach (1997, p 30), a notable scholar and practitioner of conflict resolution, defines reconciliation as having both "a focus and a locus." The goal of reconciliation is upon developing new and improved relationships between belligerents. According to Lederach, relationships are both the cause and source of long-term conflict solution. Therefore, more emphasis is to be put on relationships.

As a locus, Lederach further claims that "reconciliation represents a space, a place or location of encounter, where participants to a conflict meet." The past traumas and future hopes must be developed and brought together in this area by debating matters of truth, forgiveness, justice, and peace.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848, (Jürgen, 2004) coined the theory. It is relevant to this study because it helps to understand the role of forum for unity and reconciliation, it focuses on the building of better relationship among Rwandan society torn by long lasting divisionism and negative ideology that resulted to the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994. It is also important to this study because it intend to bring together the victims and perpetrator on the table to discuss the future of the Rwandan society based on the Rwandan culture.

### **2.9.2 Peacebuilding theory**

According to Waldman (2009, p.8), the term post-conflict peacebuilding first appeared in the lexis of conflict resolution by the publication of the United Nations' Agenda for Peace in 1995. It defined post-conflict peacebuilding as "comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures that will tend to consolidate peace and advance some sense of confidence

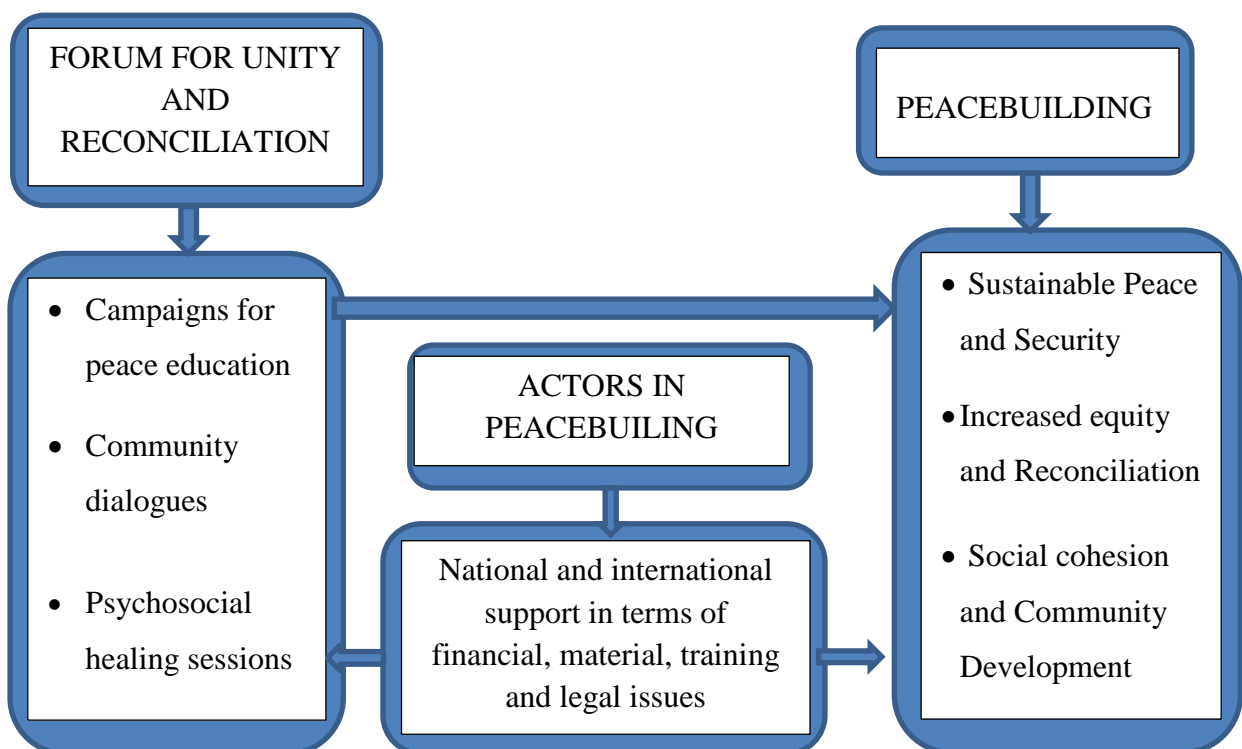
and well-being among people". Peacebuilding as a theory involves a vast range of actions, functions, and positions spanning various sectors and levels.

Lederach (1997) facilitates to a better understanding of the players involved in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Lederach also adds to the concept of a pyramid, with elites, leaders, and decision-makers at the top, social organization leaders in the centre, and at the bottom occupied by community leaders. This helps in identifying the players at all levels and their roles in peacebuilding. The theory's strength comes from its focus on organic peacebuilding rather than to a top-down approach.

Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung developed this theory in 1975, and it is used in this study to better understand and explore the role of the forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding, as well as involvement of various actors who contribute to peacebuilding initiatives in Rwanda, specifically in the Gasabo District.

## 2.10 Conceptual framework

**Figure 3 Conceptual framework**



**Source:** Researcher 2021

## **2.11 Summary**

The present chapter presents the literature review by concentrating on the definitions of key terms as well as reconciliation, peacebuilding, forum for unity and reconciliation and post conflict/ genocide. The chapter also discusses on the theories used in the study as well as reconciliation theory and peacebuilding theory, it also presents the conceptual framework.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This section gives an overview of the research methodology used in this study, which is qualitative. The chapter also introduces the research design, participant selection, data collection methods, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

#### **3.1 Research design**

A research design is the techniques for collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies (Creswell and Plano, 2007). In other words, research design determines how the required data will be collected and analysed, as well as how all of this will be used to answer the research question (Gray, 2014). Research design refers to the structure of research and it is considered as the glue that ties all of the pieces of a research project together. In other words, it is a blueprint for the proposed study (Akhtar, 2016).

This study is exploratory in nature and is based on qualitative approach. Exploratory research is defined by Burns and Groove (2001, p 374) as “research undertaken to obtain new insights, find new ideas, and increase knowledge of the phenomena under study”. Exploratory research, according to Saunders et al. (2009), is undertaken when limited information is available regarding a phenomenon or an issue that has not been precisely identified.

According to Burns and Groove (2001, p 374), exploratory research is defined as “research conducted to gain new insights, discover new ideas and for increasing knowledge of the phenomenon under study”. For Saunders et al. (2009), exploratory research is conducted when little information is known about a phenomenon and a problem that has not been clearly defined. Its goal is not to provide definitive solutions to the research questions, but rather to explore the study at various depths.

Since the study is aimed at exploring the role of the forum for unity and reconciliation in post Genocide peacebuilding Rwanda, particularly in Gasabo District, a qualitative research approach is the suitable one to collect data and to respond to the research questions elaborated in the study. According to Bryman (2012) while explaining qualitative research approach, he said that it covers and focuses on learning and understanding behaviour and

the reasons that direct behaviour and the opinions of adherents of a certain social cluster and how members explain their social world.

Furthermore, Kothari (2004) stressed that qualitative approach is important to study the behaviour and discover the underlying factors, which motivate people to behave in a certain manner. Therefore, this study used qualitative approach because it intends to explore and get deep understanding of the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post Genocide peacebuilding Rwanda.

## **3.2. Selection of participants**

### **3.2.1 Population**

In research, the term population refers to the participants or data items that could be included in the study, depending on the relevant specific situations (Polit & Hungler, 1999). Population is defined by Bhaacherjee (2012, p. 65) as “the total sum of individual instances that are interested in researching”.

In this context, the study population is the leaders of forum for unity and reconciliation at sector level in Gasabo District, the genocide survivors, the convicted genocide perpetrators who benefited services provided by the forum. It includes also the district authorities of Gasabo District and specialist from NURC who supervises the programme of unity and reconciliation in the CoK (City of Kigali).

The main reason that interested the researcher to select this population is that they are the ones who possess relevant information and knowledge about the study and their availability to participate during the collection of the required data.

### **3.2.2 Sampling**

Sampling is defined as the process of selecting persons or sampling units from a sample frame (Martinez, et al., 2016). According to Kamangar and Islami (2013), sampling refers to the process of selecting a representative sample of individuals from the population of interest. Thus, sampling is an important tool for research investigations, because the population of interest is frequently too large for any research project to include as participants (Umair, 2018).

For selecting respondents for the current study, the sample size was chosen by using purposive sampling techniques due to relevance of the study questions and respondents

expected to be involved in the study. According to (Bhaacherjee, 2012,p,22), purposive sampling is defined as “a method of sampling whereby the researcher uses his or her judgement about which to choose and picks only those who possess the relevant information which can meet the requisite objective of the research”. In this context, the researcher preferred to talk with the knowledgeable people who have relevant information related to the research.

About the number of participants, the researcher relied on the concept of saturation referred as the point of reaching or getting the required information from the respondents. It is generally taken to explain that, based on the information that have been collected or analysed, further data collection and or analysis are unnecessary, meaning that the researcher stopped the activity of collecting necessary data after realising that the information was being repeated.

According to Hennink, Hutter and Bailey (2011, p 82) stressed that “the size of qualitative studies is guided by diversity of the information, once there is no further diversity, that means the researcher has reached the point of saturation”

Therefore, in this study, the sample size was 28 participants distributed in five categories including 13 leaders of the forum for unity and reconciliation at sector level, 6 representatives of survivors at sectors level and 6 convicted perpetrators of genocide against the Tutsi, who benefited from services delivered by the forum for unity and reconciliation, 2 leaders at district level, responsible for the coordination of the activities of the forum and 1 specialist of NURC in the CoK. The researcher felt confident with the respondents after being convinced that they are key informants and their information and knowledge are crucial to the study.

### **3.3 Data collection methods**

In this research, primary data were collected using interviews in form of semi-structured interview approach. According to Bluman (2004), primary data is defined as data collected from the field being afresh. The secondary data were collected using existing literatures with different sources such as library (documentary techniques), published scientific works among others.

Vartanian (2010) argues that secondary data involve information that has already been collected and is being considered for reuse for new demands, for which the information was not originally collected.

### **3.3.1 Semi structured interview**

Semi structured interview includes a broader range of collection of instances. It usually refers to a situation in which the interviewer has a set of questions in the form of an interview schedule but can change the order of the questions (Bryman 2012, p,471).

The researcher prepares a list of questions, referred to as an interview guide, but the interviewee has a lot of freedom in how to respond while doing a semi-structured interview. Questions may not be answered in the order listed on the schedule. As the interviewer picks up on items expressed by interviewees, questions not contained in the outline may be asked.

To collect data, the researcher prepared interview guide before embarking on the exercise of interviewing the identified respondents. The researcher conducted the interviews in Kinyarwanda language, as it was the language that majority of the respondents were capable to understand and speak fluently. After closing the interview, the data collected were transcribed in English, as it is the one used by University of Rwanda as academic language.

### **3.3.2 Documentary techniques**

Document can be source of data depending on their types, purpose and medium. According to Geoff Payne and Judy Payne (2004), documentary techniques are procedures used to categorize, investigate, evaluate, and identify the limitations of physical sources, most typically written documents, whether in the private or public domain (personal papers, commercial records, or state archives, communication or legislation).

The research used documentary techniques to collect secondary data from different documents. They were collected basing on the pertinent desk reviews of information from books, articles, journals and other important sources to obtain the needed information related to the study objectives.

## **3.4 Data analysis**

In this research, the primary and secondary data from various sources were analysed and interpreted in relation with the study objectives. During data analysis, qualitative content analysis and qualitative narrative analysis were utilized.

### **3.4.1 Qualitative content analysis**

This is the most used method for analyzing documents qualitatively. It entails looking for underlying themes in the materials being studied, which can be seen in numerous of the studies (Bryman, 2012 p, 557).

Documentary data were analysed using qualitative content with taking out from literatures relevant themes and passages important to understand the role of the forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding. The purpose was to reach a condensed and comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under study.

### **3.4.2 Qualitative narrative analysis**

Qualitative narrative analysis is aimed at understanding how and why people talk about their life as a story or a sequence of stories. This invariably incorporates concerns of identification as well as the narrator-audience interaction (Nigel, 2008).

According to Allen (2017), narrative analysis is a genre of analytic frames whereby researchers interpret stories that are told within the context of research and/or are shared in everyday life.

Narrative analysis was used, as it helps to analyze narrative interviews. By narrative interviews/life stories as qualitative data collection technique, the focus of attention shifts from what actually happened to how people make sense of what happened (Bryman, 2012, p. 586).

In this study, qualitative data collected from the respondents by means of interviews were analyzed using qualitative narrative analysis to understand different activities performed by the forum for unity and reconciliation and its role in peacebuilding efforts with a view to attaining sustainable peace.

### **3.5. Ethical consideration**

Before starting data collection process, the researcher requested permission from University of Rwanda and the leadership of Gasabo District in order to have access to the necessary information for the research. According to Bryman (2012), the researcher must ensure there is no harm to participants, there is informed consent, and there is no invasion of privacy and whether deception is involved.

Therefore, to respect the consideration of ethical values during the research, rules related to confidentiality and privacy of responses were shared with informants at the beginning of every contact. Furthermore, the names of the interviewees were coded in a way that no one apart from the researcher can identify the responses given by informants. The guiding questions used during interviews were from any harm and bias



### **3.6 Study limitation and strategies**

In the process of data collection, specifically for the primary data, the researcher encountered with challenges including COVID-19 restrictions and personal identification as police officer. This could hamper the conduct of the interviews due to background of some respondents; some are the convicted genocide perpetrators others are some leaders of forum who had impression that the researcher was conducting police investigation.

Concerning the COVID-19 restrictions, the researcher encountered with some challenges of reaching respondents to their respective residences because there was a restricted movement and people were not allowed to move anyhow from one place to another. This required the researcher to meet every respondent to his or her place or in nearby centre.

The issue of personal identification as police officer, for some respondents due to their backgrounds, they did not trust the researcher thinking that has a hidden agenda. That concern was well managed. Before starting every interview with the respondents, I used to explain the objectives of the study and its significance, which was in line with academic purpose. Therefore, they provided willingly the information that was needed and the exercise of data collection ended well.

### **3.7 Summary**

This chapter underlined the research methodology by focusing on research design, which is qualitative. Selection of participants was based on purposive sampling techniques and the respondents were classified into five categories of people that were selected as key informants capable of providing relevant information about the study.

Moreover, the chapter described data collection methods that were performed by using interviews and documentary. The study used data analysis methods including qualitative content analysis and qualitative narrative analysis. The ethical considerations were discussed and finally study limitations and strategies used to deal with the issues.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND INTREPRETATION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter highlights presentation of data collected from respondents, the analysis and the interpretations basing on the underlying theories of Reconciliation Theory and Peacebuilding Theory. The data collected were divided into two major parts namely demographic characteristics of the respondents and those related to the objectives of the study. The ones related to the study objectives were gathered into three main themes aimed at understanding the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding in Gasabo District as well as probable challenges that the forum for unity and reconciliation face during the performance of their tasks.

#### 4.1 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Before discussing and presenting the collected data, it is necessary to display the classification of respondents according to gender, age, level of education and their categories. The participants were requested to provide their age, gender, level of education and their categories where are belonging. The information is presented in the tables below.

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender and age**

	<b>Respondent type</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	<b>23</b>	<b>81,1%</b>
	Female	<b>5</b>	<b>17,9%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Age</b>	Between 18-20	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
	Between 21-30	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
	Between 31-35	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
	Between 36-40	<b>1</b>	<b>3.6%</b>
	Between 41-50	<b>15</b>	<b>53.6%</b>
	Above 50	<b>12</b>	<b>42.8%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Researcher 2021**

**Table 1** displays that 81, 1 % (23) of the respondents was male while female respondents were 17.9% (5). The study also shows that 3.6 % (1) is in the age bracket between 36-40; respondents of the age bracket between 41-50 represent 53.6% (15). While respondents of the age above 50 years represent 42.8% (12). This explains that the information collected is not biased as both males and females were selected. The respondents were aged from 36 and 55 years which mean that they are mature enough and capable of providing information related to the study.

**Table 2: Distribution of respondents per level of education**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>PhD</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.5%</b>
<b>Masters</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14.3%</b>
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Diploma/A2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>28.6%</b>
<b>A Level</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>O Level</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14.3%</b>
<b>Primary Education</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14.3%</b>
<b>No Formal Education</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Researcher 2021**

**Table 2** shows that out of a total of 28 respondents, 3.5% (1) is PhD holder, Masters holders are 14.3% (4), diploma holders are 28.6% (8), and O level holders are 14.3% (4). While primary education certificate holders are 14.3%. This indicates that the majority of respondents were educated enough and able to understand and respond to the questions asked to them while other small portion (14.3%) at least has capacity of reading and capable to give appropriate response to the questions asked to them.

**Table 3: Respondent's categories**

<b>Respondents and their categories</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Leaders of forum for unity and reconciliation	<b>13</b>	<b>46.4%</b>
Representatives of genocide survivors	<b>6</b>	<b>21.4%</b>
Representatives of genocide perpetrators	<b>6</b>	<b>21.4%</b>
District authorities	<b>2</b>	<b>7.2%</b>
Specialist of NURC and focal point in the CoK	<b>1</b>	<b>3.6%</b>
Total	<b>28</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3** shows that out of a total of 28 total respondents, 46.4% (13) are leaders of forum for unity and reconciliation, representatives of genocide survivors are 21.4% (6), representatives of genocide perpetrators are 21.4% (6), district authorities are 7.2% (2) and Specialist of NURC and focal point in the CoK represents is 3.6% (1). This indicates that the respondents are from different backgrounds and are capable to provide useful information related to the study.

#### **4.2 Presentation and analysis of the study findings**

This section presents different activities performed by forum for unity and reconciliation in Gasabo District and analyses the contribution and impacts they bring to the community of Gasabo in relation to post genocide peacebuilding efforts. They are classified in three categories including campaigns for peace education, community dialogues and psychosocial healing sessions. In addition, the challenges faced by forum for unity and reconciliation were also discussed and analysed.

##### **4.2.1 Impact of campaigns for peace education in peacebuilding**

According to Fountain (1999) peace education is explained as the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that will empower children, youth, and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to peacefully resolve conflict; and to create conditions conducive to peace, whether on an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national, or international level.

During data collection on the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding, participants in the research shared their understandings through the

interviews about the impact of campaigns for peace education. Analysing the interviews conducted with the purpose to understand impact of campaigns for peace education as one activity among many conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation in relation to peacebuilding, a number of respondents have massively commended the approach.

#### **4.2.1.1 Restore good relation and interaction between parties in conflict**

Campaigns for peace education have been viewed as a tool for imparting the knowledge and skills required for societal transformation and re-establishing relation and interaction between parties in strife.

In the interview a respondent with code NJB, is among the leaders of forum for unity and reconciliation affirmed that:

Campaigns for peace education help to restore good relationship between the parties that were in conflict. During Genocide against the Tutsi, people killed their neighbours other killed their friends and relatives due to negative ideology, this torn apart the good relationship that was connecting Rwandans. After the Genocide, the families of genocide survivors and genocide perpetrators find themselves living together in the same community and they were obliged to live in harmony. Thus, through different campaigns for peace, education conducted by the forum in our community helped those families to overcome the hatred and now people are living in harmony and share the same benefits as provided by the Government of National Unity.

In addition, another respondent with code KTH, from the forum for unity and reconciliation talked about the impact of campaigns for peace education and affirmed that:

After the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, some families having their members who committed Genocide were feeling not safe because of fearing retaliation by genocide survivors. But through campaigns for peace education, the forum managed to bring together community members from different backgrounds and they were sensitized about unity and reconciliation and Ndi Umunyarwanda program which promote the spirit of Rwandanness. This made all community members feel safe and free from fear of being killed or harmed and improved the relationship between genocide survivors and genocide perpetrators to the level they started forming clubs and cooperatives based on unity and reconciliation.

Furthermore, in an interview with respondent, code SNC is among convicted genocide perpetrators who benefited the support from the forum for unity and reconciliation said that:

The campaigns for peace education initiated by the forum in our sector, revived the relationship between genocide survivors and genocide perpetrators that has been

destroyed during the Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994. For myself, peace education campaigns helped me to be free from fear, because I had always in mind that the families, I have offended during Genocide will kill me, but I saw what I was not expecting. Through the campaigns for peace education, we were taught the benefits of living in harmony with the families we have offended during the Genocide, and now we are participating in same generating income activities and in other social events. Subsequently we do not have any problem with them.

The above statement is supported by the assertion made by Kotite (2012, p 13) that peace education can help minimize the likelihood of conflict by altering societal contradictions (structural), improving relationships and interactions (behavioural), and encouraging changes in attitudes (attitudinal) in order to build sustainable peace.

#### **4.2.1.2 Change attitudes and prevent potential conflicts**

Peace education activities encourage information, skills, and attitudes that will assist people in preventing conflict, peacefully resolving conflicts, and creating social conditions conducive to peace. It is critical that opinions regarding conflict and violence be reformed and translated into long-term behavioural change that seeks alternative solutions to armed conflict in order for peacebuilding projects to be sustained.

A respondent with code SNE, he is a genocide survivor and who benefited from the forum for unity and reconciliation explained the importance of campaigns for peace conducted by the forum members. He said during an interview that:

The lessons we have received during campaigns for peace education conducted in our sector, helped to change our mindsets. Before the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, we have been brainwashed through ethnic divisionism ideology taught since our childhood. However, the forum members sensitised us that we have to live together as Rwandans and leave behind what separate us and uphold what unifies us. The campaigns for peace education uprooted the ideology of divisionism related to ethnics and helped us to see ourselves as Rwandans.

The above statement is in complementarity with another statement of respondent with code RTB, categorised among leaders of forum for unity and reconciliation where he commended the impact of campaigns for peace education and said that:

The campaigns for peace education in our sector increased the social relation among the residents. Before the initiation of campaigns for peace education, there were criminal activities related to the genocide ideology that were frequently reported in our sector mainly during commemoration period. Some people were viewing themselves in the lenses of ethnics, but with the increase campaigns for peace

education helped to reduce those activities related to negative ideology and people live in harmony.

Furthermore, another respondent with code MKS, is a genocide survivor, during the interview expressed her views about the impact of campaigns for peace education in peacebuilding. She said that:

During the campaigns for peace education, the forum for unity and reconciliation members teaches us about the programme of Ndi Umunyarwanda which intends to sensitize people to live in harmony. They explain to us how the ideology of divisionism resulted to the genocide committed against Tutsi in 1994. They challenge the young generation to avoid any negative ideology that can result to genocide and participate in building the future of their country. However, the forum has to be active because they still have a huge work to do. For example, some individuals used to display some genocide ideology tendencies during commemoration period though they are not many.

This confirms what was highlighted by Machali, cited in Candra et al. (2019, p 432), that “peace education is based on a non-violence attitude, love, mutual feelings of trust, justice, cooperation, mutual respect and respect for the all living creatures in the world that lead to sustainable peace in community”.

#### **4.2.1.3 Increase knowledge about the history of the country**

Campaigns for peace education improve people's knowledge about the history of the country, skills, and attitudes in order to help them avoid conflict, peacefully settle issues, and build peaceful environments.

During an interview conducted with a respondent with code NDL is among the leaders of forum for unity and reconciliation, he argued that:

The campaign for peace education helps to teach the community about the history of the country with the view to eradicate the genocide ideology, which taught for long time and resulted to the Genocide committed against the Tutsi in 1994. The lessons provided during the campaigns changed the mindsets of the participants to the level whereby hatred was eradicated from the members of conflicting parties and replaced by mutual relationship and build trust among them. Now in our sector no acts related to genocide ideology for the last four years was reported, it shows that really the campaigns for peace education contributed a lot.

The above statement is in complementarity with the one stated by respondent with code HAA, he is among convicted genocide perpetrator who was interviewed during the data collection, when asked about the impact of campaigns for peace education said that:

Campaigns for peace education are important to me because the lessons acquired during the sessions helped me to change my mind and become relieved and started living in harmony with the families, I offended during Genocide committed against the Tutsi in 1994, before the genocide we were taught that the Tutsi are our enemies to fight.

Another respondent with code MRV, talking on the impact of campaigns for peace education said that:

The campaigns for peace education have played important role in promoting unity and reconciliation among Rwandans because it helped them to know their history and to build the spirit of togetherness through Ndi Umunyarwanda programme by renouncing the factors that separate them and promoting the bonds that link them. People realised that the history of Rwanda was distorted in order to separate them and being aware of that, they decided to liberate themselves from the slavery of the bad history and started focusing on the future of the country by participating in activities related to peacebuilding efforts.

This supports the assertion said by Tal and Rosen (2008) that peaceful coexistence necessitates the establishment of new societal peace goals, the creation of an image of the adversary as a human being with equal rights, and the promotion of positive effects and feelings related to peaceful ties with the former adversary. It entails mass mobilization and support, as well as sophisticated strategy, planning, initiatives, and a wide range of other actions, all aimed at persuading society members of the peace process' necessity, utility, value, and feasibility.

Campaigns for peace education create a healing culture to help individuals in a society ripped apart by violence recover from the impact of war and violence on their families, communities, and themselves.

Even though a big number of respondents cherished the impact of the campaigns for peace education, in changing mindsets of the residents of Gasabo District in relation to peacebuilding, there is a respondent who views the forum for unity and reconciliation as a structure which is less known in his sector because its members are not dynamic in conducting campaigns even other activities related to peacebuilding.



This finding is supported by a respondent with code NGC, is a genocide survivor where he affirmed that:

The activities related to campaigns for peace education assumed to be conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation in our sector do not appear anywhere, the ones conducted in relation to peacebuilding cannot be attributed to the forum members. The forum for unity and reconciliation in our sector is not dynamic.

The above statement provided by the respondent shows that the forum for unity and reconciliation's members are not dynamic in conducting campaigns for peace education in the sector where the respondent resides. The fact that they do not operate as required may undermine peacebuilding efforts in the sector and result to long lasting conflicts that may evolve to violence between genocide survivors and genocide perpetrators.

During analysis of the findings in this section, it was observed that the campaigns for peace education that are conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation members are generally very crucial in promoting peace and stability in the sectors where the members of the forum work very hard. The campaigns for peace education were seen as useful tools used by the forum for unity and reconciliation to improve relations and interactions between the Rwandans and to increase the knowledge about the history of Rwanda. They also marked as enablers that help to change the attitudes of some Rwandans and reduced the risks of falling into conflicts.

#### **4.2.2 Contribution of community dialogues in peacebuilding**

In peacebuilding practice, dialogue refers to deliberate, arranged conversation across conflicts lines with a focus on building bridges between different parties by providing safe spaces for direct communication between people from opposing sides. The community dialogues lead to the improved understanding of relationship and nurturing of local ownership. They bring together and ease communication among people and groups with a view to build trust and social interaction between members of dialogue. (CISP, 2017, p 6).

##### **4.2.2.1 Reduce fear between parties and increase confidence in the society**

During community dialogue sessions, the parties in conflict are encouraged to play their role in making the society safe by living in harmony. The forum members as facilitators explain both parties the benefits of telling the truth, ask forgiveness and to give mercy to the. During

the sessions the parties come up with positive solutions that build hope and trust between them, this reduce fear among and increase confidence in the members of the society.

In the interview conducted with a respondent code MKF is from the category of genocide survivors, while explaining how the community dialogues contribute to peacebuilding, she affirmed that:

Through community dialogues, the forum for unity and reconciliation managed to bring together the parties that were in conflict during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and with fruitful discussions during dialogue sessions, we managed to forgive genocide perpetrators who offended us after they asked for forgiveness. Now we are living in the same community without hatred and we share common benefits from cooperatives formed as outcomes of community dialogues. Some families from both sides give cow each other and intermarriages started to be honoured between children born from both sides.

This confirms the literature by Askerov (2010, p 10) that “dialogue helps parties in conflict to liberate themselves from interlocking situations that are dangerous for the possibilities of searching alternatives that allow them to seek a solution to the problem that enables them both to satisfy their needs”.

Additionally, the contribution of community dialogues in peacebuilding was also confirmed by a respondent code HAA. He is among convicted genocide perpetrator reintegrated into the society after serving his sentence in prison. He said:

The members of the forum came to my residence and encouraged me to attend community dialogues; I participated in different sessions with families of genocide survivors. For the first time I was not feeling comfortable and secured but as long as I continued to attend the community dialogues sessions, finally, I became relieved and free of mind, and later I managed to indicate where we buried the bodies of victims of Genocide against the Tutsi. The families of the victims forgave me and now we are living in harmony and I joined a club of volunteers for peace who advocate for unity and reconciliation in our sector.

The above testimonies are in line with the literature by UNDP (2016, p 16), that community dialogue is based on bringing community members together to have deep conversations leading them to analyse a specific identified problem or issues affecting or having the potential to disturb their peaceful coexistence. The dialogue process or conversations are undertaken in view of finding out root causes of identified issues and coming up with ways/means to prevent or transform them along the journey towards sustainable peace.

The contribution of community dialogues have been commended by respondents and they affirmed that through the community dialogues sessions, the forum managed to bring on board genocide survivors and convicted genocide perpetrators and helped them to live in harmony and improved confidence and trust within their communities

#### **4.2.2.2 Promote peaceful coexistence between antagonistic parties**

By the use of community dialogues, the forum for unity and reconciliation managed to reunify the opposing parties by rebuilding the social cohesion that was characterizing Rwandan society and help to promote peaceful coexistence between antagonistic parties. Community dialogues also helped to identify and understand the perceptions of youth born from the families of genocide perpetrators and genocide survivors.

This is supported by a testimony made by a respondent code NDE is among the leaders of the forum during an interview on the contribution of community dialogues in peacebuilding. He said that:

Through community dialogues, the forum for unity and reconciliation managed to achieve a big milestone in building sustainable peace in our sector. For example, when comparing the level, we are today with the previous 10 years ago in unity and reconciliation, before you could find during commemoration period only the families of genocide survivors attending, but today both parties participate massively and they support each other. In addition to this, some genocide perpetrators converted, they facilitate in educating others who still having frustration and remorse. For sure, using community dialogues to resolve some conflicts related to consequences of Genocide helped a lot to end hatred between both parties in our area and promoted peaceful coexistence between antagonistic parties.

Furthermore, during an interview with respondent code MKB, she is a specialist in NURC, working as focal point of the Commission in the CoK where Gasabo District is located. She affirmed that:

Community dialogues conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation facilitated to deal with the problem of misunderstanding and hatred that were used to be reported between families of genocide survivors and genocide perpetrators. Today youth from both sides started to engage in marriages and we observe restoration of good relationship between the two parties.

The above statements from the respondent are in relation with the assertion made by Pentikäinen (2019) that space for community dialogue allows individuals and communities

to share their experiences and ideas for resolving root causes and practical grievances. This helps further to transform relationships and generates a shared vision of a peaceful future.

#### **4.2.2.3 Increase truth telling and reparations of damages**

The fact of bringing both parties to the same table to discuss the future of their relations facilitated to know the truth about what happened during genocide and the convicted genocide perpetrators who finished their sentences managed to reveal and to show the areas where they threw the bodies of Tutsi killed during Genocide

A respondent with code UMP is among the district leaders and is the president of the forum at district level affirmed that:

During community dialogue, people managed to tell the truth about what happened during Genocide, some genocide survivors managed to get information where their loved ones were thrown and the youth from genocide perpetrators came to know truth information about what has been hidden by their parents and their elders. This resulted to positive outcomes where youth born from both sides formed clubs for unity and reconciliation and they collaborate with the forum members to sensitize the rest of the community about unity and reconciliation for sustainable peace.

The forum for unity and reconciliation while bringing together both genocide perpetrators and genocide survivors through community dialogues, helped also to achieve reparations of what have been damaged during Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 and it became the spark of good relation between both parties. Some were forgiven and others, who had been reluctant to pay what they owed, finally managed to respect their obligations.

This is backed by a respondent with code BYB is among the leaders of the forum for unity and reconciliation. During interview, he appreciated the contribution of community dialogues in his sector. He said that:

Through community dialogues, we managed to put together the genocide perpetrators and their families with the families of genocide survivors. We presented them the benefits of living in harmony, we also sensitised the ones who resisted paying what the courts ruled out to recognize their debts and pay what they do. At the same time, we approached the genocide survivors and encouraged them to give forgiveness. As results, these reduced misunderstandings and hatreds that were rampant in our community and the ones who had not capability to pay have been forgiven. Today in our community, people live in harmony and some formed cooperatives that generate incomes that are shared equitably among members and this increased the level of reconciliation between both parties.

This confirms what was said by Pentikäinen (2019, p 209) that “effective reconciliation must include community-based dialogue and jointly develop resolutions that address past grievances. These dialogue efforts are closely linked to other community-based peacebuilding efforts, including reconciliation practices such as restorative peace circles and storytelling and are typically best led by individuals from within these communities”.

As explained by respondents through interviews, the contribution of community dialogues is visible within the community and specifically between the families of genocide perpetrators and families of genocide survivors. Through community dialogues, people managed to know the root causes of the conflicts that led to genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 and established measures that help to build and ensure sustainable peace.

The youth born from families of genocide perpetrators managed to know the truth about what was done by their parents and elders during Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 as it was kept secret from them.

From there, the forum for unity and reconciliation managed to approach them easily and explain to them the history of Rwanda. They were also sensitized to build the sustainable peace basing on Ndi Umunyarwanda programme. Building on what expressed by respondents, the researcher has no doubt to confirm that community dialogues contributed a lot in peacebuilding in Gasabo District.

#### **4.2.3 Role psychosocial healing sessions in peacebuilding**

Psychosocial healing support is an important long-term preventive intervention that can reduce the likelihood of future confrontations between parties who have been at odds. Long-term traumatic and stressful situations, on the other hand, tend to leave an impact on people's inner life that takes a long time to recover. Even if the victim eventually heals, there will always be scars. In order for a country to recover quickly, it is critical to incorporate psychosocial support in post-war humanitarian assistance (Weston, 2001).

Through the interviews conducted about the role of psychosocial healing activities that are conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation in relation to peacebuilding, respondents from different backgrounds appreciated the role played by the forum while helping the parties to recover from traumas and now they live in harmony.

#### **4.2.3.1 Facilitate individual and community healing**

In connection to this, a respondent with code MKF from the category of genocide survivors while responding to the question about the psychosocial healing sessions conducted by the forum members said that:

After the genocide committed against the Tutsi in 1994, we (genocide survivors) were not seeing our future in this country. Some of us were still enduring sufferings caused by the genocide, others having psychological problems because of what they have experienced. By undertaking a number of sessions on psychosocial healing, on my side I healed from fear of being killed by genocide perpetrators that were released after completing their sentences, among them, one killed my relative. When I was seeing him on my way directly the situation of 1994 used to come to my mind and started looking for hideout fearing to be killed by him.

Another respondent with code HAA from the category of convicted genocide perpetrators while talking about the role of psychosocial healing sessions conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation in relation to peacebuilding affirmed that:

The forum for unity and reconciliation members visited me to my home and encouraged me to attend the psychosocial healing session organised in our community. For the first time, I resisted fearing that something wrong may happen to me, but after being aware of what is done during the sessions, I decided to attend and find that it is a very educative sessions and continued to attend, finally I started feeling relieved and secured. Since then, I went to see the family I offended during the Genocide to ask for forgiveness and found that they were ready to forgive me as they had also attended the same sessions. Today, I am feeling safe and participate with others in cooperative where we share same benefits from what we have produced. In addition to that, after graduation, I joined a club of unity and reconciliation and I help others who still have problems like what I had, to change their mindsets and be fully reintegrated in the society.

The convicted genocide perpetrators after completing their sentences in prisons, they come back within their communities and some of them join their families but with shame because of their implications during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. There are ones who decide to remain enclosed in their families. To facilitate them to be fully reintegrated in the society, the members of the forum for unity and reconciliation identify and meet them to their families and encourage them to attend psychosocial healing sessions where they are facilitated to heal the wounds caused by stigma.

During sessions, they meet with the genocide survivors in the presence of forum for unity and reconciliation members. They help them to interact on issues related to the wounds trauma and stigma or remorse caused by the consequences of Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 and come up with common understanding on norms of nonviolence needed to build sustainable peace in the society.

#### **4.2.3.2 Rebuild social trust and enabling social empowerment**

Post -conflict situations create the need to bridge work on psychosocial healing and wider work on reconstruction for peace. The latter includes rebuilding social trust between people and building a sense of community; addressing issues of intolerance; encouraging prosocial values and education for peace; supporting norms of nonviolence and law; rebuilding civil society; and enabling the social empowerment and mobilization needed to construct sustainable peace Generally, (Wessells, 2014).

The above statement support the interview made by a respondent with code MNA where he testified how psychosocial healing sessions conducted by members of forum for unity and reconciliation are helpful in building sustainable peace among community members especially those who experienced psychological harms. He said that:

The psychosocial healing activities that are conducted in line with peacebuilding help to reintegrate into society the genocide perpetrators who completed their sentences. They join their families and some with fear to face retaliation, others with shame because of what they did during genocide; they prefer to remain in families. Once we get information about them, we used to visit and encourage them to attend the sessions about the psychosocial healing where they meet the genocide survivors who endured the sufferings of Genocide. They interact during the sessions, by telling the truth and asking for forgiveness to the genocide survivors, finally it ends up both parties decide to live in harmony and sometimes they form cooperatives that also help to increase mutual relations between them.

In addition to this, another respondent with code GSM, is a leader of forum for unity and reconciliation commended the role of psychosocial healing activities in peacebuilding. During the interview with the researcher, he said that:

The psychosocial healing sessions increased the relationship between genocide survivors and genocide perpetrators. During the sessions, they meet and the offending party narrate what they did against the family victims during Genocide against the Tutsi, when they recognized their wrong deeds and ask for forgiveness to the other party, they are forgiven at the moment, but for others it may take time.

After a series of sessions, some participants become relieved and decide to open new page of life by working together and we saw some families agreed the intermarriage between their children.

This is in conformity with what said by Burnet (2012) that reconciliation between genocide survivors and genocide perpetrators in Rwanda can happen through sharing verbal narratives of atrocities, exchanging non-verbal signs such as assistances and to acknowledge the others' sufferings. In addition, showing solidarity while resolving problems systematically in organic communities in which both parties live together, and also sharing everyday life as well as helping each other in the geographical communities facilitate reconciliation process and rebuild trust and confidence.

On the side of a respondent with code MKB is a focal point of NURC in the CoK talking on the role psychosocial healing sessions organized and conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation. She emphasized that:

The psychosocial healing sessions are vital in reviving the mutual relationship between both parties. Through the sessions, the participants meet together and share their experience related to what happened during the Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 and come up with resolutions that help to build a bright future for their community.

This statement was supplemented by another respondent code GJP is a leader at district level with responsibility of monitoring activities of the forum for unity and reconciliation where he said that:

Through the psychosocial healing sessions, the forum members bring together both parties and interact on issues that divide them as well as the consequences of genocide against the Tutsi, the forum members play role of facilitators. During the sessions, some genocide perpetrators end up while telling the truth and ask for forgiveness and the genocide survivors after getting the truth, they forgive the offending party. As a result, both parties become comforted and some formed cooperatives to generate incomes, also this increase the spirit of togetherness among them.

The above finding confirms what Herman as cited by Weston (2001) argues that the solidarity of a group provides the strongest protection against terror and despair. They further stressed that collaboration is a strongest antidote to traumatic experience. Trauma isolates while the group creates a sense of belongingness.



Trough psychosocial healing sessions, the forum for unity and reconciliation managed to establish a space in which people from different backgrounds, with different psychological problems meet discuss on issues related to the consequences of the Genocide and come up with solutions that lead to sustainable peace. This helped the victims to feel valued and valuable in the community where they live. As result, normal human relationships were formed and the forum for unity and reconciliation continues to facilitate the process of recovery.

#### **4.2.4 Challenges faced by the forum for unity and reconciliation in peacebuilding**

This section presents challenges encountered by forum for unity and reconciliation while performing their duties in peacebuilding. As the respondents stressed, the members of the forum in Gasabo District encounter a number of challenges that can hinder their role in peacebuilding.

The challenges that the forum for unity and reconciliation encounter include lack of necessary means like transport and communication as well as skills to perform the assigned tasks. There is also lack of ownership for the local leadership, lack of harmonization of activities between the forum for unity and reconciliation and local leadership, the existing genocide ideology and the insufficient time for meetings. These have been to some extent barriers for the better implementation of peacebuilding efforts.

##### **4.2.4.1 Lack of necessary means in ensuring peacebuilding efforts**

A respondent with code MVE, is one of the leaders of the forum for unity and reconciliation. During the interview, he stated that:

During the execution of our responsibilities, we need to meet beneficiaries in their communities to speak with them in order to identify problems they face. However, some of the members of the forum do not have facilities like means of communication and transport that could help them to be more effective in their performance. Therefore, lack of the necessary requirements for the forum members hinders the forum to achieve goals in the area of peacebuilding.

Another respondent with code MND, who is among the leaders of the forum, also raised the challenge of lack of necessary means. He indicated that:

During the visits of the beneficiaries to their localities, some members of the forum do not attend because of limited means. Others do not have advanced skills, because they were not well trained to meet the expectations of the population. There is also

lack of education toolkits necessary for teaching the identified clusters of the populations. This reduces the confidence of some members of the forum when we are in front of the public.

#### **4.2.4.2 Lack of ownership and harmonisation between the forum and local leadership**

From the interviews by different respondents, it was observed that there is lack of ownership of the programme of unity and reconciliation by some leaders at sector level. There is also lack of harmonization between the forum members and local leadership. This disconnect undermines the performance of the forum in many ways.

For example, if there is no clear partnership and good collaboration between the two structures, it is obvious that the local authorities cannot provide the facilitation for the forum members. Ideally, there must be a budget allotted for the forum for unity and reconciliation. The absence of the practical coordination causes a major concern between the two bodies.

This is supported by a respondent with code RTD, he is among the leaders of the forum for unity and reconciliation, and he explained that:

The local leaders at sector level do not put more emphasis to the programme of unity and reconciliation and others activities related to peacebuilding efforts. They mainly focus on other governance activities imbedded in their performance contracts manuals and do not give much efforts to the programme of unity and reconciliation and peacebuilding. The lack of ownership on the side of local leadership in peacebuilding efforts delays the implementation that may results to unending conflicts between the members of post genocide society.

#### **4.2.4.3 Limited time for the meetings of the forum**

As far as the insufficient time of meetings is concerned, the respondents mentioned that the members of the forum for unity and reconciliation have different responsibilities. Some of them have other duties and jobs. Therefore, it is difficult to convene for a meeting in which all of them can be available.

Therefore, they do not get enough time to assemble and to discuss or share ideas related to peacebuilding efforts and to meet regularly with their beneficiaries and the community members in general.

One of the respondents with code KTH who is among the forum leaders, confirmed that:

As members of the forum for unity and reconciliation, we do not get enough time to meet our beneficiaries. This is due to the fact that some of us have other

responsibilities and others do not possess financial means to facilitate them in their duties. In addition, COVID-19 pandemic worsened the situation because it is not allowed to assemble many people at the same area. This is a barrier to members of the forum to achieve our goal of building sustainable peace.

Another respondent code MRO is among the category of genocide survivors. She affirmed the following during an interview:

The forum for unity and reconciliation members, do not have enough time to sit and think widely on the activities of the forum. I think that it is because some members have other responsibilities and jobs. Thus, it becomes a challenge to successfully perform their duties to the level required in building peace in our communities.

#### **4.2.4.4 Existing genocide ideology among genocide perpetrators**

Concerning the problem of genocide ideology, which is still observed among some families of genocide perpetrators, during interview, a number of respondents stated that there are families who still operate from abroad. They target the convicted genocide perpetrators who finished their sentences and returned to their families. They continue to intoxicate them with the genocide ideology. Consequently, this becomes a challenge for the forum members to perform the peacebuilding efforts in order to achieve sustainable peace. It is like the forum members build while their detractors destroy.

In the interview with a respondent with code MRO who belongs in the category of genocide survivor, while talking on the challenges faced by the forum. He said that:

While the members of the forum try to reach every angle of the society to teach about unity and reconciliation, there are members of families of genocide perpetrators living outside the country who continually spread the genocide ideology to the rest of their family members living inside the country. Among them, include the ones who finished their sentences and reintegrated in the society. These families of genocide perpetrators living outside undermine the efforts made by the forum in peacebuilding in the country and particularly in Gasabo District.

Another respondent with code UMP is among district a leader, who coordinates the activities of the forum for unity and reconciliation at district level. She also supported the argument with the following statement:

Some members of the families composed by genocide perpetrators who left the country in 1994 and still living outside continue to intoxicate their relatives residing inside the country through dissemination of genocide ideology. This hinders

Rwandans to reach at the same level of understanding of unity and reconciliation programme and peacebuilding efforts.

Besides the challenges already identified, respondents mentioned that there are some genocide perpetrators accused of committing Genocide but not serving their sentences. Some were condemned to imprisonment and others have to pay what they have damaged during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, apparently, some continue to disseminate genocide ideology.

This was testified by some respondents while talking about the challenges faced by the forum for unity and reconciliation while implementing peacebuilding efforts. One of them with code USJ is in category of genocide survivors supported the above statement in the following words. He said that:

There are people who have been sentenced by courts but they are still at large. They continue to undermine the efforts made by the forum for unity and reconciliation in the process of peacebuilding, while discouraging the ones who are willing to participate in implementation government policies including unity and reconciliation programme.

The above statement is also supported by another respondent code NDE is among the leaders of the forum for unity and reconciliation and said that:

The courts have issued the judgements about what the convicted genocide perpetrators have to repair but up to now some have refused to pay what they are obliged to pay and they do not want even to meet the victims they have offended to ask forgiveness; this continues to become a barrier to the peacebuilding process.

As the respondents indicated the forum for unity and reconciliation members face with a number of challenges. Those challenges include lack of necessary means and capacity to perform their duties, lack of ownership for the local leadership, absence of harmonization of activities between forum members and the local leadership, the genocide ideology still disseminated by genocide perpetrators and insufficient time for meetings. All of these challenges hinder them to fully perform their roles and become big challenges for the fulfilment and implementations of peacebuilding efforts.

### **4.3 Interpretation of study findings**

In the previous sections of this chapter, the researcher discussed and analysed the data collected from different categories of the respondents. In this section, the researcher

interpreted the findings by connecting them with the theoretical framework of the study in order to understand the relationship of the theoretical part and the findings about the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda, particularly in Gasabo District.

The findings of the study are related to the Reconciliation Theory in that, the genocide survivors and convicted genocide perpetrators who finished their sentences are brought together with a view to building a new and better relationship between both parties that were in conflict. In the place of encounter, both sides with the help of the forum for unity and reconciliation members interact about the past and consequences of the Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994. They also discuss the issues of truth telling, forgiveness and set long-term mechanisms for building sustainable peace and security of Rwandan society.

In addition, the Reconciliation Theory helped to understand the role of the forum for unity and reconciliation in promoting peacebuilding initiatives that result to sustainable peace. Through psychosocial healing sessions, the genocide survivors recover from the traumas and wounds caused by the Genocide. On the other side, the convicted genocide perpetrators when forgiven, they drop the burden of shame and remorse then they become fully reintegrated in the society and sustainable peace can easily attained because all segments of the society are fully involved in peacebuilding efforts.

In post genocide society like Rwanda, the Genocide committed against the Tutsi in 1994 left a substantial part of the population with serious physical and psychological disabilities. Besides, to these problems related to human capital, the Genocide that lasted 100 days destroyed and reduced further productive capacity of the post genocide country. All of these problems and capability to deal with them were hardened by the losses happened during and after the Genocide.

Therefore, Peacebuilding Theory helped to more understand and identify the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post-genocide peacebuilding as local peace committee and the participation of different actors which contributed in peacebuilding efforts with a view to achieve sustainable peace in Rwanda particularly in Gasabo District. Again, the theory itself put its emphasis on organic peacebuilding as opposed to a top-down approach that justify the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in peacebuilding that focuses at community level.

#### **4.4 Summary**

This chapter presented, discussed and interpreted data collected from five major categories of respondents. These include the leaders of forum for unity and reconciliation at sector level, the convicted genocide perpetrators who finished their sentences and reintegrated to the society, the genocide survivors, and leaders at district level as well as the focal point of NURC in the CoK Kigali where Gasabo District located.

Three main activities conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation were used as the main themes in data collection and data analysis namely: explore the impact of campaigns for peace education, analyse the contribution of community dialogues and examine the role of psychosocial healing sessions. The data collected were analysed, interpreted, and found out that they are in relation with the guiding theories of reconciliation and peacebuilding used in the study.

In addition to these, the researcher wanted to know the challenges faced by the forum for unity and reconciliation members that prevent them to achieve fully their role in peacebuilding process. The respondents presented a number of challenges including lack of necessary means and capacity, lack of ownership for the local leadership, absence of harmonization of activities between forum members and the local leadership, insufficient time for meetings and lastly the existing genocide ideology.

All of these challenges hamper the forum for unity and reconciliation members to achieve extremely their role in peacebuilding efforts in the country.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings of the study on the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda, particularly in Gasabo District. The general conclusion of the entire research was made and some recommendations that can contribute to improve the performance of the discussed forum and the area, Gasabo District were suggested.

#### **5.1 General conclusion**

This study explored the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda, particularly in Gasabo District. To successfully understand the research project, the study was guided by the following three objectives. One, to explore the impact of campaigns for peace education for peacebuilding in Gasabo District. Two, to analyse the contribution of community dialogues conducted in relation to peacebuilding. Three, to examine the role of psychosocial healing sessions carried out by the forum for unity and reconciliation in Gasabo District. In addition, the researcher also examined the challenges that the forum for unity and reconciliation members face while performing peacebuilding efforts in Gasabo District.

In this study, data were collected by means of interviews whereby the respondents having relevant information to the study were interviewed. Among them are leaders of the forum for unity and reconciliation at sector level, genocide perpetrators and genocide survivors who benefited from the forum for unity and reconciliation sessions, district leaders who have responsibility to supervise the forum for unity and reconciliation, and the focal point of NURC in the CoK where Gasabo District is located.

With regard to the first objective, the researcher explored the impact of campaigns for peace education conducted by the forum members in relation to peacebuilding in Gasabo District. The study found out that the forum for unity and reconciliation plays an important role in post genocide peacebuilding in Gasabo District. It does so by using campaigns for peace education.

The campaigns for peace education were seen as valuable tools used to improve relations and interactions between Rwandans. It was also seen as useful tool to improve social cohesion in the country torn up by the negative ideology that led to the Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994. The campaigns for peace education were also marked as enablers that help to change the attitudes of some Rwandans and reduce the risks of falling into conflicts.

Furthermore, the study also analysed the contribution of community dialogues conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation in relation to peacebuilding. The findings established that the forum for unity and reconciliation while using community dialogues in peacebuilding efforts managed to achieve a big milestone in helping Rwandans especially in Gasabo District to live in harmony and work together for their common good or national interest.

In addition, the forum for unity and reconciliation by supporting and facilitating dialogues between convicted genocide perpetrators and genocide survivors including family members on both sides reduced fear in both sides. Community dialogues were seen as of precious value to the peaceful resolution of deep-seated differences. These creative dialogues promoted peaceful coexistence among antagonistic parties. This shows that the forum for unity and reconciliation plays a big role in peacebuilding efforts in Gasabo District. Therefore, these community dialogues are considered as a major component for conflict prevention and social cohesion mechanism, leading to sustainable peace.

Moreover, in order to understand deeply the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding in Gasabo District, the researcher examined the impact of psychosocial healing sessions carried out by the structure. The study found out that the forum for unity and reconciliation by visiting their beneficiaries in their residences managed to identify the people who needed most the psychosocial support. Such people are living with trauma or other psychological problems resulting from the consequences of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

Both genocide survivors and genocide perpetrators were encouraged to attend psychosocial healing sessions. At the end of these sessions, some participants got healed or were helped to manage better their traumas caused by the genocide against the Tutsi. On the other hand, the convicted genocide perpetrators who participated in the sessions recovered from stigma due to their implication during the genocide against the Tutsi. This helps the forum members to rebuild social trust and sense of healing community. Problems such as



intolerance were addressed. This also increased interaction and enabling the social empowerment needed to construct sustainable peace among the residents of Gasabo District.

Concerning the challenges faced by the forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding in Gasabo District, the study found out that the forum has encountered a number of challenges that hinder its role in peacebuilding efforts. The study established that there is lack of necessary means such as funds for transportation as well as means of communication. The forum lacks skills or enough training needed to perform effectively the assigned tasks.

In addition, there is lack of ownership by local leadership to plan for activities related to peacebuilding and not considering them among priorities. This is reflected in the lack of harmonization of activities between the forum for unity and reconciliation and local leadership. There is also the existing genocide ideology, which is still being disseminated by genocide perpetrators, mainly who left the country. In addition, the forum has no sufficient time for necessary meetings to address issues raised by community members. All these challenges can hamper the role of this forum in promoting and enhancing peacebuilding in Gasabo District.

Based on the analysis of the interviewed respondents, there is no doubt that these challenges hinder at a certain extent the role and contribution of the forum in peacebuilding efforts in Gasabo District. If these challenges persist, the forum for unity and reconciliation's role in peacebuilding efforts will be further restricted. Hence, the need to formulate recommendations.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Grounded on the study findings and challenges that were observed during analysis of the data collected from the reliable respondents, the study recommends the following actions to be taken by the concerned key players such as: the NURC, the leadership of Gasabo District and the forum for unity and reconciliation.

### **5.2.1 To National Unity and Reconciliation Commission**

The NURC leadership, to plan and conduct workshops on quarterly or semiannually basis to improve the capacity of forum for unity and reconciliation members as well as the local leadership and other stakeholders involved in the promotion of peacebuilding initiatives and

support the clubs for unity and reconciliation and others mechanisms established to fight against genocide ideology.

### **5.2.2 To Gasabo District**

The District authorities, to ensure that activities related peacebuilding are incorporated in every year sector's performance contract and are assigned budget and the mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation facilitating the reparations and restitution of what have been damaged during the genocide against the Tutsi are put in place.

### **5.2.3 To the forum for unity and reconciliation leadership**

The leaders forum at all level, to plan and conduct workshops basing on practical experiences related to unity and reconciliation as well as peacebuilding concept at least two times per year in order to build the capacity and the spirit of volunteerism of forum for unity and reconciliation members and promote good relationship with other stakeholders or partners in the field of peacebuilding.

Considering the challenges that the forum for unity and reconciliation face during implementation of activities, and the recommendations proposed to the above mentioned key players, operating in the area of peacebuilding in Gasabo District, it is recommended to the above mentioned players to establish a joint team committee that monitors and evaluates the implementation of recommendations proposed to each player and provides technical advice on how peacebuilding can optimally be achieved in Gasabo District.

## **5.3 Suggestion for further researches**

In this study, it was observed that there is limited literature about the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in peacebuilding. Therefore, further studies need to be conducted on the forum for unity and reconciliation in other districts of the country to get more information about it from different context.

In addition, this study has identified challenges that the forum for unity and reconciliation faces in performing peacebuilding efforts. However, the study did not manage to understand the role of the forum in prevention of genocide ideology in Rwandan. Therefore, further researches are needed to build this gap and to understand why people are still disseminating genocide ideology after almost five years while the forum has been campaigning for unity, peacebuilding and reconciliation.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: A letter of facilitation for data collection



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**Appendix 2: Letter of introduction to respondents data collection**

My name is SSP Emmanuel HITAYEZU (Cell phone: 0788572676 email: emmabert2008@gmail.com). I am a Master student from the University of Rwanda (UR), at National Police College campus in Musanze. I am currently conducting a research entitled: Understanding the role of Forum for Unity and Reconciliation in Post Genocide Peacebuilding Rwanda: Case of Gasabo District, as a partial fulfilment of the award of Master of Arts (MA) in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation. This interview intends to collect data/information and you are among the persons I preferred to interview. The information that you will provide will assist me to understand the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda and specifically in Gasabo District.

I assure you that the information you provide will be treated in strict confidentiality and that your names/identification will not appear anywhere while reporting the findings. If you feel uncomfortable, you may refuse to answer any question, end or withdraw from the interview at any time, and this will not have any negative consequence on you.

I thank you in advance for your acceptance to participate in this study.

**Participant's Consent Declaration**

I understand that participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty. I understand that I may discontinue participation at any time without penalty. I declare that, I am above 18 years of age and I have given my consent.

And ..... I agree to audio taping. ....I do not agree to audio taping.

Participant's Name and Signature: .....

Cell phone

Date: .....

**Investigator's Declaration**

I have explained and defined in details the research procedures in which the interviewee has consented to participate.

Signature of student investigator and the date.....

### Appendix 3: Guiding questions

#### Section A. Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent

1. Sex: Male (Gabo).....Female (Gore) .....
2. Age: 18-20..... 21-30..... 31-35 .....36-40 .....41-50..... 50 and above.....
3. Educational level:
  - a. No Formal Education.....
  - b. Primary Education.....
  - c. O Level.....
  - d. A Level.....
  - e. Diploma.....
  - f. Bachelor 's degree.....
  - g. Masters....
  - h. PhD.....
  - i. Others specify.....
4. Position in Leadership (akazi ukora) .....

#### Section B. Guiding questions for interview

Q1. What activities do you think members of the forum for unity and reconciliation perform to contribute to the post genocide peacebuilding in Gasabo District?

Ni ibihe bikorwa abagize ihuriro ry'ubumwe n'ubwiyunge bakora mu Karere ka Gasabo bigamije kubanisha neza abanyarwanda no kubaka amahoro arambye?

R1/Answer.....  
...

Q2. What is the impact of campaigns for peace education conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation in relation to peacebuilding in Gasabo District?

Ni uwuhe musaruro mubona ubukangurambaga ku nyigisho zigamije amahoro zitangwa n'abagize Ihuriro ry'ubumwe n'Ubwiyunge zatanga mu kubaka amahoro arambye mu Karere ka Gasabo?

R2/ Answer  
.....

Q3. Do you think the campaigns for peace education conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation are relevant in peacebuilding in Gasabo District? Yes or No? if yes why and how? If no explain

Mubona ubukangurambaga n'ibiganiro ku nyigisho zigamije amahoro zitangwa n'abagize Ihuriro ry'Ubumwe n'Ubwiye ari ingirakamaro mu kubaka amahoro arambye muri Gasabo? Yego cyangwa Oya. Sobanura.

R3/Answer.....

...

Qn 4. How do community dialogues undertaken by the forum for unity and reconciliation in Gasabo district contribute to peacebuilding in post genocide Rwanda ?

Ni gute ibiganiro bigamije kubanisha neza abanyarwanda biyoborwa n'abagize Ihuriro ry'Ubumwe n'Ubwiye bigira uruhare mu kubaka amahoro arambye mu Karere ka Gasabo?

R4/

Answer.....

Q5. What do you think have changed in your community as a result of community dialogues conducted by the forum for unity and reconciliation for peacebuilding in Gasabo District?

Ni ibiki mubona cyahindutse mu muryango nyarwanda bitewe n'ibiganiro bigamije kubanisha neza abanyarwanda biyoborwa n'abagize ihuriro ry'Ubumwe n'Ubwiye hagamijwe kubaka amahoro arambye mu Karere kanyu ka Gasabo?

R5/ Answer

.....

Q6. What is the role of psychosocial healing activities carried out by the forum for unity and reconciliation for peacebuilding in Gasabo?

Ni uruhe ruhare ibikorwa by'isanamitima bikorwa n'abagize ihuriro ry'Ubumwe n'Ubwiye byagezeho mu kubaka amahoro arambye?

R6/ Answer

.....

Q7. What changes do you observe to the beneficiaries as a result of psychosocial healing activities conducted by forum for unity and reconciliation in relation to peacebuilding?

Ni izihe impinduka ubona ku bagenerwabikorwa bahawe ubufasha bw'isanamitima butanzwe n'abagize ihuriro ry'Ubumwe n'Ubwiyunge mu kubaka amahoro arambye mu Karere ka Gasabo

R7/ Answer

.....

Q8. What are the challenges faced by the members of the forum for unity and reconciliation while performing their duties related to peacebuilding in Gasabo?

Mwatubwira mbogamizi abagize ihuriro ry'ubumwe n'ubwiyunge bahura nazo mu kubanisha abanyarwanda hagamijwe kubaka amahoro mu Karere ka Gsabo?

R8/ Answer

.....

Q9. Do members of the forum for unity and reconciliation have adequate skills to perform their duties in ensuring peacebuilding in Gasabo District? Yes/No and explain

Ese abagize Ihuriro ry'Ubumwe n'Ubwiyunge ubona bafite ubumenyi bukwiriye bubafasha gukora neza inshingano zabo bijyanye no kubaka amahoro arambye? Mu Karere ka Gasabo? Yego/Oya, Sobanura.

R9/ Answer

.....

Q10. What do you think should be done to ensure adequate functioning of the forum for unity and reconciliation in peacebuilding in Gasabo District? Mubona hakorwa iki kugira ngo Ihuriro ry'Ubumwe n'Ubwiyunge ribashe gukora neza ibikorwa byo kubaka amahoro arambye mu Karere ka Gsabo?

R10/ Answer

.....

## Appendix 4: Originality report

### Understanding the role of forum for unity and reconciliation in post genocide peacebuilding Rwanda: Case of Gasabo District

#### ORIGINALITY REPORT

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