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Table of Content

INTRODUCTION	4
1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTS	6
1.1 CONCEPTS	6
1.2 THEORIES OF GENDER EMPOWERMENT	9
1.3 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS: EFFECTS OF GENDER EMPOWERMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN POST WAR SETTINGS.....	10
1.4 THEORIES OF CHANGE ON GENDER EQUALITY AND GENDER DEVELOPMENT	12
1.4.1. <i>Different programming approaches</i>	12
1.4.2 <i>Problem</i>	13
1.4.3 <i>Barriers</i>	13
1.4.4 <i>Strategies</i>	13
1.4.5 <i>Interventions</i>	14
1.4.6 <i>Outputs</i>	14
1.4.7 <i>Outcomes</i>	15
1.4.8 <i>Implications for an effective gender empowerment and development programming</i>	15
1.5 LESSONS LEARNED FROM GENDER EMPOWERMENT IN PEACEFUL COUNTRIES	16
2. RESEARCH QUESTION, HYPOTHESES AND METHODOLOGY	16
2.1 RESEARCH QUESTION, HYPOTHESES	16
2.2 METHOD.....	17
2.2.1 <i>Selection of the cases</i>	18
2.2.2 <i>Measurements and international indicators of gender empowerment</i>	19
3. CASE STUDY'S.....	20
3.1 CASE STUDY: BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA.....	20
3.1.1 <i>Gender Dynamics before the conflict</i>	23
3.1.2 <i>Gender Dynamics in the conflict</i>	25
3.1.3 <i>Gender Empowerment in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>	30
3.1.4 <i>Analysis Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>	41
3.2 CASE: STUDY GUATEMALA.....	46
3.2.1 <i>Gender Dynamics before the conflict</i>	48
3.2.2 <i>Gender Dynamics in the conflict</i>	51
3.2.3 <i>Gender Empowerment in post-conflict Guatemala</i>	56
3.2.4 <i>Analysis Guatemala</i>	66
3.3 CASE: STUDY RWANDA.....	70
3.3.1 <i>Gender Dynamics before the conflict</i>	72

3.3.2 Gender Dynamics in the conflict.....	74
3.3.3 Gender Empowerment in post-conflict Rwanda.....	78
3.3.4 Analysis Rwanda	90
4. FINAL ANALYSIS.....	96
4.1 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AND SIMILARITIES REGARDING GENDER DYNAMICS IN THE CASE STUDIES	96
4.2 DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE BARRIERS	98
4.3 DIFFERENCES IN THE INTERVENTIONS, OUTCOMES AND PROGRAMMING APPROACHES	99
4.4 RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESES.....	100
5. CONCLUSION.....	101
5.1 LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS.....	102
5.2 PERSONAL STATEMENT OF THE AUTHOR	103
6. REFERENCES.....	105
ABSTRACT ENGLISH	112
ABSTRACT DEUTSCH	113

Introduction

The end of a conflict often means the beginning of the involvement of international and non-governmental organizations, as well as the implementation of international programs intended to promote, gender empowerment and development in post-conflict regions. Since the 1990s, it has become increasingly clear how gender dynamics play a significant role in the way that state conflicts occur (Eifler and Seifert, 2009). Gender-based violence and sexualized violence have historically been used as weapons of war. What was not clear until recently is the way that gender inequality can in fact feed a conflict and make it more likely. Women and men may, depending on their position in the gender hierarchy and the social and cultural order, become targets of genocide, rape, trafficking, and sexual slavery (Mazurana et al., 2005). Additionally, women can suffer forced impregnation or abortion (Mazurana et al., 2005). Despite the fact that women, alongside men, are engaged in, and endure great suffering during conflicts, women have traditionally been excluded from participating in peace talks and in the decision-making process on the national or international level (Mazurana et al., 2005). Often, the necessity to implement gender equality and/or women's empowerment policies is not acknowledged and is neglected by the local governments. However, international organizations and domestic NGOs have realized that bringing women into the process of post conflict reconstruction as well as increasing their standing in society are critical steps for achieving enduring peace and stability.

Various studies have shown the positive effect of gender development on inter- and intrastate conflicts (Caprioli, 2000; Gleditsch et al., 2011; Hudson et al., 2009; Melander, 2005; Reiter, 2015). The first attempts to promote gender empowerment in peace talks and development in post-conflict regions were done by women's and human rights advocates. These groups made gender issues an international topic of discussion, leading to intergovernmental and governmental interest (Mazurana et al., 2005). As a result, the term gender empowerment started to gain importance in the context of armed conflict (Mazurana et al., 2005). The wide extent of brutal sexual violence and systematic rape in BiH and Rwanda grabbed the world's attention. Sexual violence quickly became officially recognized internationally as a weapon of war and led to the adoption of UNSCR 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security" by the United Nations Security Council (Eifler and Seifert, 2009). UNSCR 1325 set out to protect women in war zones and to help their empowerment after a war.

In post-war countries international organizations saw an opportunity to introduce new gender empowerment programs or to restore already existing ones, in order to support further

development of the countries. This was true in the cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Guatemala, and Rwanda that all suffered under heavy conflicts during the 1990s. This thesis will explore whether the efforts to promote gender empowerment and development by respective governments, domestic NGOs and international organizations, showed results in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina, Guatemala and Rwanda, and under which conditions those efforts were most successful.

This thesis is divided into four sections. The first section focuses on the theoretical framework and concepts in this field. In this section I will elaborate on the *Theory of change on gender equality & women's and girl's empowerment* from DFID PPA Learning Partnership Gender Group used in this thesis. The theory of DFID is backed up by empirical research. It covers the whole empowerment process, from the barriers that prevent gender equality to the outcomes of a successful program. In section two I will explain the research question, hypotheses and method. In the third section, I present case studies and the role of gender dynamics before, during and after the conflict and then analyze each case study according to the theoretical framework discussed in section one. This thesis focuses its analysis on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda and Guatemala because they all experienced war that included a high level of human rights violations, sexual abuse and genocide. Furthermore, all of these conflicts ended at roughly the same time, toward the end of the 1990s. This provides an opportunity to compare the countries in the same temporal context. The indices used to measure the success of gender empowerment are the Gender Parity Index (GPI), the Gender Gap Index (GGI) and the Gender Inequality Index (GII) because they best capture differences in inequality independent from the overall development of the country, thus making the results more comparable. The GPI measures the access to education for men and women, the GGI is focused on life expectancy, education, economy and politics and the GII is focused on reproductive health, empowerment and labor market participation. The final section of the thesis compares and analyzes all three case studies and addresses the research question. It also explains why the empowerment efforts in Rwanda can be considered a success, while those in BiH only a partial success and those in Guatemala a failure. The thesis concludes that the most important conditions for successful gender development are: (1) the government has an intrinsic motivation for gender development and empowerment, (2) it has enough agency and is able to act, (3) it closely cooperates with international organizations and domestic NGOs, (4) it takes a gender transformative development approach, (5) there is not too much inequality within the society in general, (6) the existence of grass roots interventions that change social norms in a bottom up process, (7) the participation of men in the development

process and (8) a long-term approach to gender development.

I chose this topic for my master thesis because I am from Bosnian and Herzegovina and I grew up after the conflict, in a broken society. I knew that many horrible things have happened and that the international community failed to protect the human rights in the country. I just didn't know how bad it was. Writing this work was like coming to term with my past. I never truly allowed myself to occupy my mind with the horrible details of what our people did to each other. I didn't want to because I thought I couldn't handle the feeling. And it was true, writing that work brought me to my personal limits. But in the end, I am very glad I did it. I broke my silence and I hope many more will break it. The only way to overcome trauma is to face and process it. I was mad at myself that I didn't know the things I learned through this work, that I didn't research them before. That I avoided facing the past. It is only now that I truly understand why the older generations were never able to talk about their experiences, because they were just so horrific and must have destroyed any trust in other human beings. The only way for them to keep on going is to close their eyes to the possibility of that ever happening again.

1. Theoretical Framework and concepts

In the following I will elaborate on the term gender empowerment and the international attention it received since the 1990s. For the theory and the empirical findings of gender empowerment I will mainly draw on the work of Gizelis (2009), Caprioli (2000; 2003) and (Handrahan, 2004) who are concerned with the effects of gender empowerment and development in post-conflict involvement.

The *theory of change on gender equality & women's and girl's empowerment* from the DFID PPA Learning Partnership Gender Group (DFID, 2015) will be used in order to analyze the conditions under which programs to promote gender empowerment and development in post-conflict regions were successful. In this chapter I will explain its main ideas and coherences.

1.1 Concepts

The aim of this thesis is to assess how international organizations, NGOs and the government improved gender empowerment and development in post-conflict BiH, Guatemala, and Rwanda and under which conditions they were most successful. This assumes that gender empowerment and development in post-conflict regions is something worth striving for. This critical hypothesis is based upon theoretical and empirical insights into the impact of the

empowerment of women on societal structures. Before going into that, it is important to explain the meaning of gender empowerment and its role in post-conflict peace building and development.

Gender empowerment

For the purpose of this thesis, I will use the term “gender” to denote socially constructed differences between men and women as well as boys and girls. As Mazurana et al. (2005) explain in their book “Gender, conflict and peacekeeping”, which topic-wise fits best to the current thesis, “[...] gender is about the social role of men, women, boys and girls and the relationship between and among them. These roles are in turn formed by cultural, social, economic, and political conditions, expectations, and obligations within the family, community, and nation” (Mazurana et al., 2005, p. 13).

Empowerment is a term currently used in very different fields, areas and contexts and by many different international organizations. Commonly, empowerment is about “challenging oppression and inequality” (Oxaal and Baden, 1997, p. 2). The term was found as early as 1960 in contexts such as education, social work, psychology, and in radical politics and communist development groups (Oxaal and Baden, 1997). The term is very present in feminist work and developmental organizations, gaining traction in the mid-1990s (Oxaal and Baden, 1997). International organizations add different nuances when defining or talking about empowerment, such as:

“Empowerment involves challenging the forms of oppression which compel millions of people to play a part in their society on terms which are inequitable, or in ways which deny their human rights” (Oxford Committee for Famine Relief et al., 1995, p. 9).

Following the Human Development Report 1995, empowerment refers more to the participation of the people in decision-making processes: “Development must be by people, not only for them. People must participate fully in the decisions and processes that shape their lives” (UNDP, 1995, p. 12).

By the end of the 1990s, after the bloody wars and genocides in the discussed countries had ended, the United Nations stated that investing in women’s capabilities and empowering them to exercise their choices is not only valuable in itself, but is also the surest way to contribute to economic growth and overall development (United Nations, 1995).

The feministic approach towards empowerment “[...] is not about replacing one form of empowerment with another: Women’s empowerment should lead to the liberation of men from false value systems and ideologies of oppression. It should lead to a situation where

everyone can become a whole being regardless of gender, and use their fullest potential to construct a more humane society for all” (Akhtar 1992 quoted in Batliwala 1994, p. 131).

According to Oxaal and Baden, empowerment can be seen as the ability to make choices, but also being involved in decision-making processes and being able to shape what choices are being offered (Oxaal and Baden, 1997). How Oxaal and Baden define empowerment in that context will be applied as the leading definition of empowerment in the case studies in this thesis.

Post-conflict

As the various concepts of post-conflict all closely resemble each other, the following definition by Handrahan, which fits best to the topic of the thesis will be used: Post-conflict “[...] refers to a period when predominantly male combatants have ceased to engage in official war. Because conflict is still perceived through male paradigms by both international and national community leaders - by and large men - the ‘formal’ period of fighting/conflict is what the international development community focuses on” (Handrahan, 2004, p. 429).

International recognition of gender issues since the 1990s

For international organizations and local governments, it was a long way to recognize the importance of gender empowerment in post conflict reconstruction on an international level. Before the 1990s only few actors were trying to promote gender empowerment in war destroyed countries and to incorporate the issues in post conflict reconstruction.

NGOs like the Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) helped coordinate strategies at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 and the UN International Conference on Population and Development ICPD in Cairo in 1994 (Jaquette and Summerfield, 2006). One of the most important conferences concerning gender empowerment was the UN Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, held in 1993, where it was stated that the “[...] conflict in Bosnia made it easier for the international community to accept that rape was a weapon of war” (Jaquette and Summerfield, 2006, p. 33). It was also the first real step “[...] towards accepting woman’s rights as human rights” (Jaquette and Summerfield, 2006, p. 33). In this period, the General Assembly unanimously adopted a declaration named Violence Against Women, and The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) began to treat violence against women as an “emerging issue” (Jaquette and Summerfield, 2006, p. 33).

These programs culminated in the UN Convention for the Elimination of All Kinds of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). CEDAW promoted Gender Mainstreaming as a programmatic tool for all international processes of post-conflict reconstructions. One of the most important resolutions regarding this topic is the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (Eifler and Seifert, 2009). A breakthrough for gender empowerment and development was the adoption of UNSCR 1325 on 31.10.2000, by the UN Security Council (Eifler and Seifert, 2009). UNSCR 1325 is a resolution about Women, Peace and Security. The adoption of this resolution was the first of its kind, as Cohn et al. describe, “[...] the first time the Security Council has devoted an entire session to debate women’s experiences in conflict and post-conflict” (Cohn et al., 2004, p. 130). Women’s organizations had pressured very hard for the adoption of the UNSCR resolution, because “[...] in recent wars, civilian populations constituted up to 85% of the victims and the rape of women is increasingly used as a weapon in such a conflict, and now recognized as such in international law” (Eifler and Seifert, 2009, p. 50). Up to then, international development agencies had routinely ignored gender and women’s issues, when peace building and development programs were designed and implemented in developing post-conflict programs (Handrahan, 2004). Resolution 1325 was adopted because of the pressure put on the international community by women’s organizations and regional and international NGOs in post-conflict reconstructions.

UNSCR 1325 being adopted was an achievement with the potential to protect women in war zones and to help women’s empowerment after a war. The inclusion of women in all aspects of democratization and peace-building was the key principal of the UNSCR resolution (Eifler and Seifert, 2009). Resolution 1325 emphasizes the importance of women’s involvement and their role in peace-building processes after the conflict. It also focuses on the importance of the implementation of women’s rights and empowering a woman’s role in conflict resolution and further conflict prevention. While the main goal of the resolution was to protect women and girls from gender-based violence and to protect their rights, it was additionally a breakthrough for women and gender rights in conflicts and post-conflict regions and the first one whereby gender issues became a priority on the International Organization agenda.

1.2 Theories of Gender Empowerment

Biological determinism and social constructivism are the two leading theories used to understand why there are such power disparities between genders in society. Biological determinists argue that the physiological differences between the sexes are the basis of the social roles. The main difference being the natural reproductive capacity, which results in

different interests and behaviors between the sexes. Following that argumentation, most of the behavior is based on instinct. Therefore, the empowerment of women in various areas of life, would alter the form and output of these areas, rather than women's nature, which is biologically determined. Social constructivism, in contrast, supposes that gender differences are not the same as sex differences and that gender differences are learned and socially constructed rather than biologically determined. Following this theory, the empowerment of women would not necessarily lead to a different form and output of areas women are empowered in, because empowering women would change the very nature of the female gender (Caprioli, 2000). However only, and there I must disagree with Caprioli, if society were freed from gender stereotypes. As long as gender stereotypes still exist (and they do), women would be more likely to act upon values related to the female gender, which are in general more peaceful, caring and relenting than male values (Ford and Lowery, 1986). As will be illuminated below, there is sound evidence that the empowerment of women will in fact alter the outcome of social, political and economic structures women are empowered in.

1.3 Empirical findings: Effects of gender Empowerment and Development in post war settings

Now that a concept of gender empowerment is established, the most prominent empirical findings concerning gender empowerment and development in post-conflict regions will be presented and embedded in the established theoretical framework. Ever since UN Resolution 1325, gender empowerment and development is considered to be an important aim in peacebuilding. Since the 1990s, an ever-growing base of empirical research in favour of gender empowerment and development has been established and continues to grow. Most importantly, there is strong evidence, that gender equality in social, political and economic areas seems to lead to a pacifying effect on international state behaviour (Caprioli, 2000; Caprioli and Boyer, 2001; Tessler and Warriner, 1997). More precisely, Caprioli (2000) could show, that a state which has twice the number of years of female suffrage, will be almost five times as likely to resolve international dispute without military violence. A five percent increase in the proportion of women in parliament makes a state almost five times as likely to do so. If the fertility rate, which is negatively correlated with women's empowerment, decreases by one-third, the state will be about five times more likely to settle a dispute without a military intervention. The same correlation is true with a five percent increase of women in the labour force (Caprioli, 2000). In a second study, Caprioli (2005) found a significant negative correlation between gender empowerment and intrastate conflict. These

findings could be confirmed by a number of other studies (Gleditsch et al., 2011; Hudson et al., 2009; Melander, 2005; Reiter, 2015).

In sum, there seems to be strong evidence that gender empowerment in social, political and economic areas has a pacifying effect both on inter-state and intra-state behaviour, resulting in a more peaceful state, less prone to relapse into violence. Moving closer to the peacebuilding process, Gizelis (2009) showed that post-conflict peace building under the auspices of the UN is generally more effective in societies where women already have greater levels of empowerment. Gizelis looked at variations in levels of cooperation and conflict during the UN peacebuilding missions in Sierra Leone and Liberia, which showed, that a higher social status of women pre-conflict increased the likelihood of cooperation by the local communities with peacebuilding policies and activities (Gizelis, 2011). Anderson and Swiss (2014) found, that if civil wars end with a peace accord, the respective countries adopted legislative gender quotas faster. If the peace accord contained specific women's rights provisions, the adoption was even quicker.

Women ironically tend to become more empowered during a war than they were pre-war. Handrahan (2004) argues that this occurs since women must fulfil many functions traditionally done by men, while the men are fighting. After the official war is over and men return from fighting, gender roles tend to return to "normal" and women must give up many of their newly gained competencies. Moreover, women are often left out of development plans altogether.

Once peacebuilding units move into a country, aside from the positive factors, these troops can potentially worsen the negative impact on the gender empowerment and development post-conflict. Quite often, sexual exploitation and abuse of local women is a big problem within UN peacekeeping missions, which is not only a violation of human rights, but also massively undermines the promotion of gender equality and empowerment in the host countries (Karim and Beardsley, 2016). Karim and Beardsley (2016) argue that including more women peacekeepers and personnel from countries with high levels of gender equality is associated with lower levels of sexual exploitation and abuse, and therefore is very beneficial to peacebuilding and gender empowerment and development. This leads us to one of the core questions of the current thesis: What conditions can the government, NGOs and international organizations provide to ensure the success of gender empowerment and development.

1.4 Theories of change on gender equality and gender development

There are quite a number of theories on how to promote social change towards gender equality, gender development and gender mainstreaming. Most of them stem from NGOs working in gender development and are based on their experience in the field, like the theories of Derbyshire et al. (2015); UNDP (2014) or Van Eerdewijk and Brouwers (2014).

In the current thesis the *theory of change on gender equality & women's and girl's empowerment* from the DFID PPA Learning Partnership Gender Group published in 2015 will be used. It has been developed to “guide organisations in the development of their own theories of change and to help practitioners consider how to address gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment within their programmes” (DFID, 2015, p. 2).

In contrast to many other theories, the DFID's theory is based not only on internal research and experience but is also backed up by external research. To show the empirical and scientific foundation of their theory, DFID published an accompanying evidence paper (Smee, 2015), backing up their theory and findings with other research from the field.

1.4.1. Different programming approaches

There are different rationales and aims for gender development programs, some promising less and some more effects. Smee (2015) proposes a gender programming continuum which was adapted from UNFPA (2013). The continuum consists of four categories which “indicate the degree to which programmes address – or fail to address – gender-related norms” (UNFPA, 2013, p. 5). A *gender-exploitative* approach runs the risk of reinforcing gender inequality in order to reach health and demographic goals. This would be the case for instrumentalist programmes, which use gender development to achieve other developmental goals and not as an end in itself. Establishing a female quota in economics and politics is often done for reasons of economic growth, forgetting to address the underlying social norms that create and sustain the exclusion of women, and therefore reinforcing existing gender norms and gender inequality (Smee, 2015). A *gender-neutral* approach doesn't differentiate between the needs of men and women and therefore maintains the existing inequalities. *Gender-sensitive* approaches recognise the differences and specific needs, based on the social construction of gender roles, but are not trying to change or influence them. For the creation of real and long-lasting change, interventions need to be *gender-transformative*. *Gender-transformative* approaches seek to change institutional practices and social norms that create and reinforce gender inequalities (UNFPA, 2013). According to Smee (2015), the

effectiveness of gender transformative programming is supported by the pathways research program, which found that it is the most effective program in the long run. “Similarly, a recent review for DFID into the evidence to support various interventions targeting VAWG concluded that multi-component gender transformative approaches are more effective than interventions which simply focus on individual attitude and behaviour change without addressing broader discriminatory social norms” (Smee, 2015, p. 5).

1.4.2 Problem

A theory of social change always starts with a condition which needs to be changed, here called a problem, which in the current case is of course gender inequality. DFID define the problem as follows: “Gender inequality, exercised through individuals, communities and societies, violate women’s and girls’ human rights, constrains their choices and agency and negatively impacts on their ability to participate in, contribute to and benefit from development” (DFID, 2015, p. 3). According to DFID (2015) gender still is one of the greatest causes of inequality worldwide.

1.4.3 Barriers

In order to achieve change towards gender equality and development, the barriers preventing equality need to be identified. According to DFID (2015), barriers can be (1) within policies and laws, which can be “discriminatory, gender blind or unresponsive to different needs of women and men”; (2) within institutions, which can be “gender blind or discriminatory, lack expertise, political will or resources, and have weak accountability mechanisms”; (3) “inadequate services to address gender equality and women’s empowerment”; (4) within civil society and women’s rights organizations which can be “overburdened and under-resourced”; (5) that “women and girls lack sufficient autonomy and agency”; (6) dominant social norms “(values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours and practices) [that] support male dominance, condone and perpetuate unequal power relations between women and men, undermining women’s social, political and economic rights” (DFID, 2015, p. 3).

1.4.4 Strategies

In order to tackle these barriers, DFID adopts two major strategies. A *mainstreamed* strategy consisting of the integration of gender analysis in all development planning and implementation, and a *targeted* strategy aiming at “stand alone” programs which solely focus

on gender equality and development. However, only the combination of both strategies will lead to significant and lasting results: “Women’s projects on their own are limited in their ability to bring about fundamental change for women. Complementary efforts are needed to influence the structure and functioning of development organisations and to seek to ensure that all development spending takes women’s rights and gender equality into account” (Derbyshire, 2012, p. 419).

1.4.5 Interventions

Interventions are the core instruments in creating change. They “need to tackle the continuum of inequality in both the private and public spheres through both formal and informal mechanisms” (DFID, 2015, p. 12).

Therefore, according to DFID, the actual interventions must be done on more and different levels: Interventions on the *societal level* (the public realm of power) try to influence formal institutions, laws and policies. Interventions which build political will and legal and institutional capacity, as well as interventions which establish gender responsive policies and services need to be used. On the *community level* (the community realm of power), the focus of the intervention should be on ending discriminatory practices, tackling harmful social norms, promoting equal decision-making and supporting local civil society and local women’s organisations. On the *household level* (the private realm of power), interventions should promote equal decision-making power and the division of household roles and responsibilities. On the *individual level* (the intimate realm of power), interventions need to empower women to claim their rights, by enhancing the women’s self-confidence, knowledge and self-awareness (DFID, 2015). It is important to note, that change is seldom confined to one level. Interventions might target particular levels, or might have a wider effect. There is strong evidence for the fact that multilevel, holistic interventions which target more than one level are most effective in bringing about change (Fulu et al., 2015; Taylor and Perezniето, 2014).

1.4.6 Outputs

If done effectively, the interventions will ideally produce outputs. Different interventions will produce different outputs and, like mentioned above, the results of one intervention can easily spread to more than one level. On the *societal level*, successful interventions would produce outcomes such as gender development and equality as an explicit aim of the government,

which would be followed through by effective policies and budgets, as well as laws recognising and responding to gender development and equality. Another output of successful intervention on both *the societal* as well as the *community level*, is the capacity for women, women's rights defenders, and women's rights organizations to "organise, facilitate, change and respond to backlash" (DFID, 2015, p. 3). On the *community level* there will be a change in social norms, which now "promote and protect the concept and practice of gender equality" (DFID, 2015, p. 3). On the *household* and *individual level*, women will have support by relatives to access and exercise their rights and will have the personal ability to seek and claim their rights.

1.4.7 Outcomes

According to DFID (2015), the outputs of the intervention will eventually lead to outcomes; for example gender development being an explicit aim of the government will lead to more equitable and non-discriminatory structures. Empowering women's rights defenders and changing social norms will lead to more balanced gender power relations, which for example might show in an increase in women working in paid jobs. Empowering women on the household and individual level will lead to increased agency and autonomy for women.

1.4.8 Implications for an effective gender empowerment and development programming

In their evidence paper, DFID suggest multiple Dos and Don'ts in gender empowerment and development processes:

(1) A process aiming at multiple levels (individual, household, community and societal) will be most effective. (2) Empowering, women's collective actions and working with - and learning from women's rights organizations is vital. (3) A long-term approach is necessary to ensure lasting changes: "Five years should be the minimum period in order for programmes to deliver longer lasting effects on gender inequality and a project length of ten years would enable more sustainable interventions and the development of a knowledge base about processes of change" (Smee, 2015, p. 7). (4) It is essential to identify and prevent any risk to women which might occur, especially in the early stages of empowerment programmes. The empowerment of women can activate fundamentalist forces, which might violently target women which step out of their gender roles. (5) The participation of men in women's development processes is very important, in order to incorporate men in the process and prevent reluctance and violence.

1.5 Lessons learned from Gender Empowerment in peaceful countries

In an analysis of the Gender Mainstreaming efforts firstly declared in the Beijing Platform for Action prioritised gender mainstreaming in 1995, Mikkelsen et al. (2002) list the following strategies which have been proven to be successful for implementing gender empowerment: (1) Increased participation and access to resources contribute to practical gender needs. (2) Visible and specific gender equality goals contribute to strategic gender needs. (3) The possibility of positive changes is increased when there is flexible program design and development, with goals and targets being implemented during the life of the program. (4) Ownership of gender equality by the host institution is important. (5) Participatory approaches and dialogue are needed.

In their review of 85 evaluations undertaken by bilateral and multilateral agencies from 1999 to 2002 Hunt and Brouwers (2003) could narrow down the most effective strategies for addressing gender equality issues. Successful partnerships had (1) developed a shared vision and explicit consensus on gender equality objectives, (2) involved stakeholders from civil society in dialogue on objectives and activities, (3) made long- term commitments to partners and activities, and (4) assessed and strengthened partner capacity for gender responsiveness and participatory analysis, planning and implementation. Regarding the successful implementation of gender empowerment, the following combination of strategies has proven to be effective: (1) Support of women's organisations to work towards gender equality, (2) Strengthen women's leadership capacity using participatory strategies, (3) Target women, (4) Work with men to promote equality for women (Hunt and Brouwers, 2003). Although these results of gender empowerment programs within peaceful countries cannot be transferred par for par to programs in post-conflict regions, they still might contain some important clues towards conditions under which post-conflict empowerment and development programs can be successful.

2. Research Question, Hypotheses and Methodology

2.1 Research Question, Hypotheses

The principal interest of this thesis lies in finding and explaining connections between the engagement of the government, NGOs and international organizations and the successful improvement of gender empowerment and development in post-conflict regions using the examples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Guatemala and Rwanda. The proposed research

question will be formulated as followed:

How did the government, NGOs and international organizations improve gender empowerment and development in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina, Guatemala and Rwanda? Under which conditions were they most successful?

In the research question, I assume that the efforts made to improve gender development and empowerment were successful. However, that is not self-evident. Therefore, the first hypothesis is:

H1: The efforts made to improve gender empowerment and development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Guatemala and Rwanda were successful.

As Gizelis (2009; 2011) could show, post-conflict peace building is generally better in societies in which women already have greater levels of empowerment and in which women had a higher status pre-conflict. Therefore, the second hypothesis suggests:

H2: The conditions of gender equality pre-conflict had an influence on the successful improvement of gender empowerment and development post-conflict. More concrete, less gender inequality pre-conflict should have resulted in better improvement of gender empowerment and development.

According to DFID (2015) and Hunt and Brouwers (2003), one of the most important strategies in discussing and implementing gender empowerment, is to connect with the local community and include women in the development process. That leads us to the last hypothesis:

H3: Close cooperation with the domestic actors is important for a successful implementation of gender empowerment and development.

2.2 Method

The thesis consists of three different case studies, which are structured into four parts. The first part will refer to the historical context; focus on and take a look at the gender relations and social structures of each country before the conflict broke out. Considering access to

education, access to same rights, political power, and general positions of men and women in the society right before the conflict. The second part will give insights into the conflicts, how they developed, how they ended and the gender dynamics during the conflict. Further, the different roles that men and women had in the conflict and their decision-making powers will be explored. The third part will focus on the happenings after the conflict and how the conflict affected the society and the gender dynamics.

The last part will focus on the role of the government, domestic NGOs and international organizations promoting gender empowerment and development. It will also analyze the change or lack thereof in gender relations since the end of the conflict and look for links between international actors and gender empowerment and development in post-conflict regions. This will be done by analyzing the outcomes of the gender development programs based on a theory of change, as well as on quantitative measures of gender equality. The focus will be on the changes in the labor market, on the access to education, the ability to participate or make decisions of high responsibility and the legal rights of women and men.

I will examine each of the individual cases in depth and within its particular context. Every country will represent one case study. Each case is different; I do not aim to arrive at general conclusions from these few cases. Nevertheless, examining three different cases may show that events can work out differently and what important differences there may be. In the conclusion the three single case studies will be compared and a general conclusion will be drawn concerning the conditions under which the empowerment efforts have been most successful.

2.2.1 Selection of the cases

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Guatemala and Rwanda were chosen because all three were affected by violent wars, after which international actors assisted in the attempt to bring stability and peace to the countries and their respective regions. These countries share even more similarities: In all three cases, the conflicts ended in the 1990s, human rights were severely violated and the crimes against the civil populations were some of the most memorable regarding violence in the 1990s. The wars did not all start at the same time, however they ended at almost the same time, therefore, the international assistance that they were given, happened roughly in the same time, which provides a unique opportunity to compare the countries under some very similar circumstances. The conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina took place between 1992-1995, Rwanda's conflict took place between 1990-1994 and Guatemala's conflict, the longest, started in the 1960s and ended in 1996. All three conflicts

were categorized as armed conflicts by International Organization. By the end of the 1990s all three conflicts ended, leaving the countries devastated, broken, destroyed and their populations exhausted, scared and hopeless.

Even though all three cases have different historical backgrounds, a positive or negative development can be tracked concentrating on educational systems, political structures, work positions and the rights men and women have gained.

The final similarity is, that all three countries were assisted by international organizations on their way to rebuilding themselves and in bringing stability to the respective regions. The international actors were promoting programs, which included gender empowerment and development. Among others, UN agencies were deeply involved in the democratization efforts in the three countries (Jaquette and Summerfield, 2006).

All three countries were assisted by the United Nations Peacekeeping operations. The United Nations since 1990 has used “both military and civilian agencies to respond to countries affected by wars and crises” (Mazurana et al., 2005, p. 13) and was trying to “integrate a number of human rights, humanitarian, development, and human security perspective” (Mazurana et al., 2005, p. 13). In addition, all three countries were considered developing countries or countries in a transition phase after the end of the conflict.

2.2.2 Measurements and international indicators of gender empowerment

The success of gender empowerment in different countries can be measured in various ways. According to Caprioli, measures of gender equality are determined by “[...] evaluating women’s social, political, and economic equality in relationship to that of men” (Caprioli, 2003, p. 57). According to Moser (2007), there are three main measures for gender empowerment: The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), which is part of United Nations Development Program, the Gender Development Index (GDI) created in 1995 as part of the Human Development Report, and the Gender Parity Index (GPI), which was released by UNESCO in 1990. Each of these scales focus on a different area. The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) measures gender equality based on economic income, number of high-paying positions with economic power, parliamentary positions and political power. The Gender Development Index (GDI) measures gender inequalities in three dimensions, which are life expectancy, education, and income. The Gender Parity-Index (GPI) measures the relevant access to education of males and females (Moser, 2007, p. 26). While these are useful tools to evaluate conditions of equality, both, the GDI and GEM need to be used with caution according to Moser:

“[...] they are useful in their capacity to identify gender gaps in developing countries, rather than an overall picture of growth or education. However, they are limited in many ways. One concern is that the indicators are too broad to reflect the multiple dimensions of gender equality. A way to offset this might be to use the GEM and GDI in combination with measures of additional dimensions of equality, such as personal security and dignity, women's leisure time and gender balances in decision-making” (Moser, 2007, p. 38).

A way to achieve that is through the Gender Inequality Index (GII). The Gender Inequality Index (GII), established by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), takes into account the reproductive health (maternal mortality ratio and adolescent fertility rate), empowerment (seats in parliament and higher education attainment levels) and labor market participation (participation in the workforce). It is supposed to better capture gender gaps than the previously established measures of gender equality by the UNDP, like the GDI and the GEM, and is less dependent on the overall development of the country. Therefore, even less developed countries can have a good rating, if gender inequality is low (United Nation Development Programme, 2016). Another index used to measure gender empowerment in post-conflict regions is the Gender Gap Index (GGI) developed by the World Economic Forums. The GGI consists of four areas: health (life expectancy), education (access to basic and higher education), economy (economic participation and opportunity) and politics (representation in decision-making structures). Political empowerment in the GGI is measured in terms of “[...] number of female ministers, share of seats in parliament, women holding senior legislative and managerial positions, number of years a female has been head of state” (Moser, 2007, p. 39).

Because of their higher validity compared to traditional indices, GPI, GGI and GII will be used in the analysis.

3. Case Study's

3.1 Case Study: Bosnia and Herzegovina

Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is a small country with a rich, long and bloody history. The most recent conflict in BiH happened at the beginning of the 1990s, and is considered one of the cruelest conflicts in European history since the end of the Second World War (Rohde, 2012). Although BiH is a country located in Southeast Europe, this has not prevented human

rights and particularly women's rights violations in their most grotesque nature. The war in BiH not only caused physical violence and mental suffering. It also caused a massive refugee movement, destroyed local communities and social networks, and divided the population (Walsh, 2000). To this day, everyday life is challenging and further developments in the economy are still very slow because of the country's division. Due to the horrible atrocities of the war, BiH received the attention of international actors, who later emphasized gender and women's empowerment in post-conflict reconstruction for the future effective development of the country.

A Brief History: Ottoman Period, Austro-Hungarian Period and Tito's Yugoslavia

In its history, BiH has been ruled by many different state regimes. It is described by scholars as the place where east and west met, a crossroad of different religions, cultures and ethnic groups (Helms, 2008). The country was for centuries a land where different civilizations, armies and great empires have met (Helms, 2008). This has had an impact on the people living in BiH and divided them into roughly three groups. Those that accepted Catholicism under the rule of the Catholic Holy Roman Empire are now known as Bosnian Croats, the ones that converted to Orthodox Christianity under the rule of the Eastern Orthodox Byzantine Empire became known as Bosnian Serbs and those, that took Islam as their religion under the Muslim Ottoman Empire, became known as Bosnian Muslims or Bosniaks (Rohde, 2012, p. XII). BiH was a part of the Ottoman Empire from 1463 until 1878, then later part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy from 1878 until 1914, then it joined the Kingdom of Yugoslavia from 1914 until 1941 and after the Second World War, it became part of socialistic Tito's Yugoslavia (Malcolm, 2005). When BiH was under Ottoman rule, the country was constantly in the middle of wars and there was never peace on the territory (Malcolm, 2005). Almost every war in the Balkan territories in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, took place on BiH land, leaving it completely destroyed (Malcolm, 2005). As a result BiH never had a chance to fully recover (Malcolm, 2005). The Ottomans ruled it for more than 400 years and their ruling ended after multiple rebellions (Taylor, 1980). After the end of the Ottoman ruling, BiH was awarded to Austria-Hungary at the Congress in Berlin in 1878 (Torsti, 2003). In the beginning, BiH was administrated by the Austria-Hungarian Empire and in 1908 was annexed (Taylor, 1980). The beginnings of World War One started in Sarajevo, the country's capital, when the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated in June 1914 (Torsti, 2003). The assassin was Gavrilo Princip (Taylor, 1980), a member of a Serbian Secret Society that was against the Monarchy. This led Austria-Hungary

to accuse Serbia of tolerating the movement against the monarchy, which later evolved into the First World War (Torsti, 2003). Bosnian and Herzegovinian people served as soldiers for the Austro-Hungarian regime under poor conditions, dying of disease or being killed on a daily basis. Further they were without proper equipment, far from home fighting wars for the monarchy (Torsti, 2003).

After the fall of Austria-Hungary in 1918, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was formed (consisting of former countries in the Balkans that were part of Austria-Hungary, including BiH). In the Second World War, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia tried to remain neutral, but it was not successful in its attempt (Torsti, 2003). When the King signed a Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy under the pressure of Germany, Yugoslavs had a plan to stage a military coup and establish a new government. When Hitler discovered the plan, he was outraged and in reaction ordered a military invasion (Torsti, 2003). Hitler's army destroyed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in a very short period of time (Torsti, 2003). After the Second World War, in 1945, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia fell apart and the new Federal Socialist Republic was formed. Joseph Broz, better known to his people as Tito, became the head of a new Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia that was created out of six republics (BiH, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Serbia) (Malcolm, 2005). The aim of Tito was to build a new country where former enemies (not all the countries were fighting on the same sides in the First and Second World Wars) would be united as one, a new nation living for "peace and prosperity" (Bringa, 1995, p. 23). His policy was about "brotherhood and unity" (Bringa, 1995, p. 23). At the beginning of his rule, his way to promote his policies was often considered brutal and he was even compared to Stalin (Malcolm, 2005, p. 193).

In Yugoslavia, BiH was the third largest of the six republics in both land mass and population (Walsh, 2000). BiH had 4.3 million people in April 1992, 44 percent were Muslims, 31 percent Serbs, 17 percent Croats and 8 percent identified themselves as "Yugoslav" (Rohde, 2012). In BiH, religion and nationality were commingled. In Tito's time, all three ethnicities were mixed in both urban as well as rural societies, despite their ethnic identifications (Walsh, 2000). BiH was the country with the most religiously mixed marriages (Kaufman and Williams, 2004). Due to the industrialization, 62 percent of the BiH population was living in urban areas (Walsh, 2000). Economically, BiH was ranked fourth among the six republics (Walsh, 2000).

Tito's death in 1980 led to the rise of a new Serbian nationalism (Rohde, 2012). From this moment onward, struggles and tensions started in the Balkans (Walsh, 2000). Later, these tensions would evolve into a war (Rohde, 2012).

3.1.1 Gender Dynamics before the conflict

In Bosnia and Herzegovina the three different constitutional people were living together and shared the same culture, tradition and language while religion was the one thing that was different between them (Rohde, 2012). “Bosnia’s Muslims, Serbs and Croats are racially identical. All three groups are white Eastern European Slavs” (Rohde, 2012, p. XI). Yugoslavia means “land of the South Slavs” (Rohde, 2012, p. XI) in Slavic languages. The three ethnicities are only recognized by their first or last name (Rohde, 2012). All Balkan countries, regardless of the main religion, have in common, that social structures are patriarchal (Salzman, 1998). In the countryside, patriarchal social structures are almost a rule, however in the cities both patriarchal as well as matriarchal social structures are represented (Simić, 1999). For example, in the Balkan countries, it was a tradition that the new born child automatically takes the name of the father, so the family name could only be passed through male family members (Ramet, 1999a). The South Slavs are all very similar when it comes to social structures in the family (Simić, 1999). The men and the fathers are there to protect the families and the women and mothers are there to give love, devotion and to provide for their children the best way they can (Simić, 1999). The women can and could work outside the family, but still “[...] wives and mothers continue to manage the family arena, setting and maintaining the moral tone of the home [...]" (Simić, 1999, p. 27). Mothers had a very strong connection with their children and big influence on them (Simić, 1999). Their control and influence on their children was present even when the children would leave the family house (Simić, 1999). In South Slavic family structures mothers provided “[...] a perfect conceptual counterpart to the image of the aggressive and heroic male” (Simić, 1999, p. 26).

Considering all the different regimes BiH had been under, from dynastic monarchy to constitutional monarchy to fascistic occupation to communistic one-party rule and to nationalism, the only ruling power that addressed gender issues and adopted gender equality was under Tito’s Yugoslavia (Ramet, 1999b). BiH (and all the other ex-Yugoslavian countries), while part of Yugoslavia, went through positive changes regarding gender equality. The society in the time of Tito’s Yugoslavia was patriarchal, still the women and girls had equal rights “in all spheres of state economic and social life” (Ramet, 1999a, p. 94). In pre-war (prior to 1991) BiH, education was free and obligatory to the eighth grade for both girls and boys (Walsh, 2000). In the socialist system, the importance of both girls and boys attending school and having equal rights in education was very much emphasized (Walsh, 2000). Primary and secondary education schools were equally attended by girls and boys. At

the university level, there were more female students enrolled full-time than male with 51 percent (Walsh, 2000). Nevertheless, the school system was criticized, when a study was published in 1979, indicating that the school textbooks for the third-grade were mainly dominated by male main characters. In this study, there were 73 percent male depicted persons in the schoolbooks (Ramet, 1999a) and in these books, very different values were described for males than for females (Ramet, 1999a):

“Males were encouraged to be strong, courageous, warriorlike, and creative, with little encouragement to males to be good (future) fathers or to care about their looks. Females, on the other hand, were portrayed as maternal, beautiful, and indecisive, thereby giving encouragement to women to be weak objects of male conquest” (Ramet, 1999a, p. 104)

It was contradictory, that the government was emphasizing the importance of the same education for both girls and boys but at the same time it was shaping and giving different roles through education to males and females. This study reflected the Yugoslavian stereotypes of women and men. Men needed to be masculine and strong protectors, women needed to be feminine and weak (Walsh, 2001a). The stereotypes were hard on men as well as on women. For example, if a man broke out of the masculine norms he would be considered as “henpecked” or effeminate (Walsh, 2001a).

However, women and men were entitled to have the same salary for the same work and women were enjoying a “special protection in the labor relationship” (Ramet, 1999a, p. 94). The state was protecting specifically the welfare of mothers and children (Ramet, 1999a). This was done by “[...] establishing of maternity hospitals, children’s homes and day nurseries, and by ensuring the right to paid leave before and after confinement” (Ramet, 1999a, p. 94). In 1991, working women made up 35.9 percent of the working force in BiH (Walsh, 2000). Further, women’s rights such as abortion were allowed in pre-war conditions, and men and women could choose how many children they would have (Ramet, 1999a). Abortion was legal under certain conditions since the early 1960s which changed in 1974, and abortion was allowed by request of a woman up to ten weeks into pregnancy (Ramet, 1999a). During the 1970’s and onward, women were active in politics, but were underrepresented in leadership positions (Ramet, 1999a). There were 24.1 percent of women in the Assembly of the Republic of BiH in 1986 and 17.3 percent were representatives of municipal assemblies (Walsh, 2000, p. 10). These numbers were criticized by a number of Bosnian women insofar, that the elected women gained their positions through connections and that the “relatively high rates of women’s participation did not reflect commitment to visibility of women in politics” (Walsh, 2000, p. 10). Further, 29.2 percent of the members of the League of

Communists of Yugoslavia in 1986 were female and 19.5 percent were in the Central Committee or Provincial Committee (Ramet, 1999a). Even though women were given the same rights to an education, take positions in offices and vote, the reality was that women were discriminated against in Yugoslavia when it came to decision-making positions and top paid jobs, which is considered to be a form of hidden discrimination (Kaufman and Williams, 2004).

3.1.2 Gender Dynamics in the conflict

The conflict

After Tito died, the unity of all ethnicities living in peace started to crumble (Walsh, 2000). Simultaneously, Serbian nationalism was growing stronger and the country's economy was declining steadily (Walsh, 2000). The Serbian nationalist leader Slobodan Milosevic, was using the myth of the Serb victimization from the time of the Ottomans, during the Tito years and onward after Tito's death (Kaufman and Williams, 2004). He was propagating Serbian nationalism through state owned television and radio stations to gain state control and to build a greater Serbia (Kaufman and Williams, 2004; Salzman, 1998). Stories were presented about what happened to the Serbian nation during the Ottoman period (Serbians suffered a great deal under the Ottoman Empire and were controlled by them for many years) (Rohde, 2012). These stories stoked the fire of nationalism by putting fear in people (Kaufman and Williams, 2004; Salzman, 1998).

As the Serbian neo-nationalism and the economic crisis grew, Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence from Yugoslavia in June 1991 (Walsh, 2000). In reaction to these declarations, Serbia used military force against Croatia and Slovenia. The conflict in Slovenia lasted 10 days and the conflict in Croatia lasted until January 1992 (Walsh, 2000, p. 1). In March 1992, BiH held a referendum for separation which was approved by a two-thirds majority (Walsh, 2000). The European Union recognized BiH's independence on April 6th of the same year. On that day, Bosnian Serb nationalists started the Bosnian war with the siege of Sarajevo, which lasted for four years and went down in history as the longest occupation of a capital in Europe that survived aggression (Walsh, 2000). Further, Serbian troops and ultranationalist paramilitary groups moved onto the territory of BiH (Rohde, 2012). The aim of their mission was an ethnic cleansing of everyone except Serbian Orthodox people (especially Bosnian Muslims) (Walsh, 2000) - a process "[...] whereby towns were "purified" of the other ethnic groups through forced eviction and execution" (Walsh, 2000, p. 1).

At the beginning of the war, Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats fought a united defense against Bosnian Serbs (coming from BiH) and Serbian (coming from Serbia) aggressors (Walsh, 2000). In July 1992, Bosnian Croats turned against Bosnian Muslims and formed a Croatian Community of Herzeg-Bosna (Walsh, 2000). They started forcing the Bosnian Muslims out of the cities and villages, where both groups lived together (Rohde, 2012). In that time, the Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and the Serbian President Milosevic, were making plans to divide BiH between them in order to build a “Greater Croatia” and “Greater Serbia” (Rohde, 2012). Consequently, the Bosnian Muslims (Bosniacs), were trapped between two powerful armies (Rohde, 2012). In 1993, the relationship between Bosnian Croats and Bosniacs became completely hostile, leaving BiH with a war in which everybody fought against everybody. From the south, Bosnian Muslims were attacked by Bosnian Croats, from the east by Bosnian Serbs. The war spread in all regions of the country. Thanks to mediation of international organizations the conflict between Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats could be resolved, and it came to an end in 1994 (after almost a year of fighting) (Walsh, 2000). Although that conflict ended, Bosnian Serbs continued to fight against both groups and they continued their ethnic cleansing all over BiH. Part of the ethnic cleansing was killing all the men and boys that were not Orthodox Serbians or to send them into concentration camps and then kill them. In addition, systematic rape of women became a very important and powerful weapon of ethnical cleansing (Walsh, 2000).

“Rape became a central feature in the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as a systematic strategy or war against women. Mass rape committed by Serb military and paramilitary men was used as a conscious instrument with the purpose of accelerating ethnic cleansing, the destruction of culture, and genocide against the Muslim people of Bosnia” (Papic, 1999, p. 155).

On 11 July in 1995, ethnic cleansing reached its boiling point (Rohde, 2012). It occurred when Bosnian Serb forces, under the control of General Ratko Mladic came into the small town of Srebrenica (Rohde, 2012). Srebrenica was serving as an “isolated enclave”, that hosted thousands of Bosnian Muslims forced to flee their homes, because of the attacks by Serb forces during the war (Simic´, 2009). Serb forces gathered all the Muslim men and boys that lived or were hiding in Srebrenica, as well as from villages and small towns surrounding Srebrenica, and started a mass execution (Rohde, 2012). On 11 July 1995 Serb forces executed more than 8.000 men and boys (Simic´, 2009) and spread their human remains all over east Bosnia (where Srebrenica is located). Muslim women were raped, and children slaughtered (Simic´, 2009). Before the Serbs came into Srebrenica, it was demanded by the UN Security Council (SC) in 1993, that all parties should treat Srebrenica as a safe zone. The

UN peacekeeping mission (UNMBiH) was responsible for the safety of the civilians (Simić, 2009). The international communities promised to give protection to the civilians in that area (Rohde, 2012) and they were abandoned by the international community (Simić, 2009). Today, the Srebrenica massacre is considered the largest mass murder in Europe since the Second World War and “[...] the first case of genocide legally established by the international courts in Europe” (Simić, 2009, p. 274).

The ethnic cleansing continued throughout the country until 1995, when aggressors were experiencing strong resistance and were forced to the negotiation table. In November 1995, this led to all three sides meeting and reaching an agreement. On December 14, 1995 the General Framework Agreement, better known as the Dayton Peace Accord was signed (Walsh, 2000, p. 2). The Dayton Peace Accords (DPA) were supposed to create one state of BiH that was to consist of two entities and one district: the Federation of BiH (FBiH), Republika Srpska (RS) and Brčko District (Aitchison, 2007), whereby the Federation of BiH where the Bosniac and Croats were living, should consist of 52 percent of the territory, and the Republika Srpska, where the majority of Bosnian Serbs were living of the remaining 48 percent of the territory (Walsh, 2000).

The strategy of ethnic cleansing and systematic rape caused horrible demographic, social, psychological and physical horror as well as chaos (Walsh, 2000, p. 2). More than half of the population was displaced or missing and one million became refugees (Walsh, 2000). Approximately 250,000 people died in the war and another 18,000 remained missing, the majority of them were (Muslim Bosnian) men (Walsh, 2000). Furthermore, 200,000 people were wounded, 13,000 of whom sustained permanent disabilities (Walsh, 2000). Of this number 50,000 were children (Walsh, 2000). Even after the war ended, it still has an impact on the society, from landmines, which continue to take civilian lives, to post-traumatic disorders and missing family members (Walsh, 2000).

Gender dynamics in the conflict

The war in BiH got the attention of international actors in 1992 and 1993, because of the horrors and human rights violations and wide spread sexual violence happening in the country (Jones, 1994). The gender dynamics in the war in BiH changed the entire perspective regarding rape and violence against women in general (Skjelsbæk, 2006).

At the beginning of the war women were almost completely excluded from political life in BiH. The absence of female decision makers can partly be explained by the “[...] fact that militarist masculinity is made hyper-visible and even more dominate in wartime, while

femininity is linked to home and motherhood – private and less visible sphere”(Aganović et al., 2015, p. 18). The women’s role in the war was seen as being wives, daughter and mothers and not politicians. Politics and war was considered a male job (Aganović et al., 2015). Despite having different positions in the war, the suffering of both men and women in the war was enormous.

Each side (Bosniacs, Croats and Serbs) made assaults in the war, but the greatest assaults were by Serbs against Muslim women, however, Catholic Croat women were targeted as well (Jones, 1994; Salzman, 1998; Skjelsbæk, 2001).

According to Salzman (1998) in order to understand the gender dynamics in BiH it is important to understand Serbian patriarchal nationalistic ideology, that had a very strong influence on Bosnian Serbs and Croatian Serbs. In Serbian ideology, Bosnian Muslim and Bosnian Catholic women represented the mothers of the enemies, the creators of the nation. By raping these women, they believed they would destroy the blood line and their community of a certain ethnic group (Jones, 1994). The Serbian government and military (Salzman, 1998) believed that ethnic group could be destroyed if women were raped, later impregnated and then forced to give birth. As a result, the newborn child would then carry their blood. For them, the ethnicity was passed from the biological father and not the biological mother. It was not important if the mother is orthodox Serbian or not, since as long as the father was a Serbian man the baby would be considered as Serbian (Salzman, 1998). This way of thinking can be traced back to the traditional patriarchal Serbian society, where women are reduced to their capability to give birth, and in that way fulfill the overall goal of Serbian nationalism to make the Serbian nation bigger (Salzman, 1998).

The nationalistic leaders were encouraging the impregnation of non-Serbian women in order to establish an ethnically clean region (Kaufman and Williams, 2004). Even the head of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Pavle was delivering a Christmas message in 1994 that a “White Plague” was spreading in Serbia, because of the low rate of birth and that it was a sin against the Serbian nation. He was calling on all Serbian women to give birth to as many children as possible (Salzman, 1998). He went even so far as to suggest that “Serbian women must heed the battle call and respond by offering their bodies as incubators, preferably to male children” (Salzman, 1998, p. 352). He was also criticizing Serbian women for not bearing enough children and for having high rates of abortions (Salzman, 1998).

Gender was nationalized and gendered nationalism was shaping the state’s identity through the body of women, because women were seen as the biological carrier and cultural

reproducer of the nation (Björkdahl, 2012). This way of thinking led to the building of mass raping camps of women of all ages (Skjelsbæk, 2001).

“What seems to be unprecedented about the rapes of Muslim women in Bosnia (and, to a lesser extent, the Croat women also) is that there is a clear political purpose behind the practice. The rapes in Bosnia are not only a standard tactic of war, they are an organized and systematic attempt to cleanse (to move, resettle, exile) the Muslim population from certain territories Serbs want to conquer in order to establish a Greater Serbia (Jones, 1994). The eyewitness accounts and reports state that women are raped everywhere and at all times, and victims are of all ages, from 6 to 80. They are also deliberately impregnated in great numbers...held captive and released only after abortion becomes impossible. Thus, they will “give birth to little Chetniks”, the women are told” (Drakulic, 1992, p. 271).

The rapes were also used to humiliate and to break the other side. The mass raping of women was done in public and often in front of their male family members, who were forced to watch before being executed (Jones, 1994). The Serbian army was very well organized when it came to systematic rape of the women in the conflict (Jones, 1994). They built rape camps and concentration camps to achieve their beliefs of purifying the race from non-Serbs (Skjelsbæk, 2001). The plan to build rape camps was already established in late August 1991 (Skjelsbæk, 2001). Further, the existence of these camps is evidence of how premeditated their actions were and how intensively they analyzed their victims.

„[...] that it was the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) Psychological Operations Department that had made the following observation about Muslim behavior — ‘Their morale, desire for battle, and will could be crushed more easily by raping women, especially minors and even children’“(Salzman, 1998, p. 356).

During the war, there were several death camps and six rape camps registered all over BiH (Skjelsbæk, 2001). The aggressors were Serb personnel from the Yugoslavian Army, Chetniks (ultra-nationalists), irregular Serb soldiers (Skjelsbæk, 2001) and people with power (officers, policemen, military staff, parliamentarians) (Jones, 1994). However, civilians were also participating in these horrible acts of human rights violation (Skjelsbæk, 2001). Additionally, the soldiers were passing the message among themselves, that if they would rape women they would fight better (Jones, 1994). “Rape also plays an important part in bolstering the morale and sense of power of occupation forces” (Jones, 1994, p. 118)

By the end of the war more than 50,000 women and children were reported to be raped. The real figures are even higher, because many of the women did not report the crimes that were inflicted on them (Jones, 1994). The number of rape impregnated Croat and Muslim women

reported by the Bosnian government was estimated at 35,000 (Salzman, 1998).

Nevertheless, in BiH there were a few women commanders and female brigades that participated in the war. They were performing “[...] important roles in military operations, particularly in medical care, transportation, communications, and intelligence” (Kumar, 2001, p. 6). Their motives to participate in the war were not different from the ones that the men had (Kumar, 2001). One Serbian all women unit was formed in 1993, it was named “The Maidens of Kosovo” (Kestic, 1999, p. 189). There were also female fighters and all women units formed in Croatia and the Muslim dominated Bosnian armies (Kestic, 1999). On all sides, there were female soldiers that were actively participating in the war, it was not an unnatural phenomenon (Kestic, 1999).

There were also female nationalist leaders that were strongly supporting ethnic cleansing, one of those was the infamous Bosnian-Serb Biljana Plavsic (Kestic, 1999). Before becoming a member of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS), her profession was as a Professor of Biology (Aganović et al., 2015). She made the statement that ethnical cleansing of non- Serbs is a “natural phenomenon” (Mann, 2005). She called Muslim Bosnians genetically deformed (Shatzmiller, 2002) and stated that Serbian Bosnians cannot live and coexist next to them, (Serbs) (Aganović et al., 2015). She later became the first and only female elected President (of Republica Srpska in 1996) to hold this leading position (Aganović et al., 2015).

Like women who were soldiers, men were also victims of war and sexual violence (Skjelsbæk, 2001). There were reported cases where men were raped or held hostage in concentration camps (Skjelsbæk, 2001). The practice to rape men in the war was not only an act of sexual violence. It was also a way to demonstrate the power of the army and that its ethnicity and religious makeup and political affiliation is above every other (Skjelsbæk, 2001). Those who managed to survive the torture were traumatized and difficult time socializing in their communities (Jones, 1994). Nevertheless, the overall decision-making power in the war was held by men (Aganović et al., 2015).

3.1.3 Gender Empowerment in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina

Gender dynamics after the conflict

When the peace agreement was signed, BiH was introduced to a decade of post-conflict reconstruction (Björkdahl, 2012). The country was left in literal devastation at every level, economically, socially and on the community level (Walsh, 2001a).

The results of the systematic ethnic cleansing, rape and widespread fighting had a huge impact on demographics (Walsh, 2000). Approximately half of the BiH population was displaced (Walsh, 2000), most of which were children and women (Walsh, 2000). For both men and women, displacement was traumatic, not just because of the war horrors, but also because of the loss of community networks and relationships. For rural women to lose their homes meant to lose their social lives. Home (*kuca*) was considered the “center of any individual’s social environment” (Bringa, 1995, p. 86). To lose their home meant to lose “both a moral and social anchor” (Walsh, 2000, p. 3). Men on the other hand built their social lives outside the house (Walsh, 2000). When the war ended it was very hard for rural men and women to find a way to earn a living, because they did not have the professional skills that they needed in post war BiH (Walsh, 2000). It was particularly devastating for rural women to find their way back to normal life. One of the reasons was that their houses were destroyed or they were scared to go back, because of the continuing tensions in the country. Additionally, a lack of jobs in rural areas forced women and men to move to the cities, where more work opportunities existed. Unfortunately, rural women were facing problems finding jobs in urban areas because of the lack of education and the high competition with urban women (Walsh, 2000). However, for some rural women, the move to the cities also opened new opportunities and meant a break from rural patriarchal structures (Walsh, 2000).

The war and the displacement had an impact on the sex ratio and age structure. More men than women were killed in the war (Walsh, 2000) and as a result, women made up between 52 percent and 60 percent of the total population after the war (Walsh, 2000). Furthermore, between 16 to 20 percent of households were headed by women (Walsh, 2000). The imbalance in the population was still growing partially due to the landmines. Most of the victims of landmine explosions were men that practiced field related tasks (Walsh, 2000).

In addition, after the war women were struggling with sexually transmitted diseases and the number of abortions tripled during the war and shortly after the war, because of the sexual violence (Walsh, 2000). Because of missing husbands, women had to take on more responsibilities after the war. Further, having lost their livelihood, a growing number of women were forced to work as prostitutes (Kumar, 2001). The population was traumatized by the realities of the war. Mental problems such as psychological trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder and depression affected both men and women. Post-traumatic stress disorder affected people of all ages and the effects were most visible in vulnerable groups such as children, young persons, elderly, demobilized soldiers and displaced people (Walsh, 2000).

BiH was not only torn apart as a country, but there was also mistrust between men and women (Kumar, 2001). According to national and international women's organizations, it was very important to address the gender issues in post-conflict reconstruction including the peace accord (Irvine, 2013). Unfortunately, the Dayton Peace Accord did not address specific needs of women and girls (Irvine, 2013): The "[...] gender aspects of the conflict or post-conflict periods were never discussed" (Mazurana et al., 2005, p. 2). The Dayton Peace Accord was very "gender neutral" (Irvine, 2013, p. 25). Furthermore the Dayton Peace Accord (DPA) was the first major peace agreement after the adoption of the Platform for Action (PFA) at the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing. Women's activist and other activists were hoping, that the Dayton Peace Accord (DPA) would include the well promoted and publicized Platform for Action (PFA), however this did not come to pass (Irvine, 2013). The gender issues of post-conflict reconstruction in BiH were left out, which was a very big disappointment for all who fought to make the Platform for Action (PFA) happen and for those hoping that some kind of change regarding gender issues would emerge after the peace accord (Irvine, 2013). The absence of such issues was considered a major shortcoming of the accords by domestic NGOs (Irvine, 2013).

The female participation in the first post-war elections were devastating. Just 2.3 percent of female MPs were elected to the House of Representatives in BiH, 2.4 percent in the National Assembly of RS and 5 percent in the House of Representatives of FBiH (Aganović et al., 2015).

Bosnian and Herzegovinian Government and gender empowerment

After the conflict, the BiH government was trying to piece together parts of the country left broken from the war and to operate in a divided country. The communication between the three different parties was very difficult and negotiations regarding almost any topic needed monitoring from international organizations. Regarding gender equality and the promotion of gender dynamics, the government was implementing mostly the regulations that were promoted by international actors and national actors such as women's movements and NGOs (Björkdahl, 2012).

The international organizations were very active in assisting the BiH government in peace processes and reconstruction which included "[...] institution-building, governance, holding of regular democratic elections, security sector reform, judicial reforms, and refugee return" (Björkdahl, 2012, p. 294). Furthermore, international policy-making processes were promising to empower women in the post-conflict period and encouraging them to participate

and raise their voices in the civil society, as well as in politics and regarding the economy (Pupavac, 2005). Unfortunately, women were not involved in peace negotiations and were largely absent from political decision-making processes (Björkdahl, 2012). When the Dayton Peace Agreement was signed, there were only two women present as translators, and not one woman from the region was present as a negotiator at the discussion table (Aganović et al., 2015). Despite the Dayton Peace Accord being gender neutral, the BiH government did implement international and national regulations regarding gender issues in post-conflict regions. In 1995, the CEDAW (UN Convention on Eliminating all forms of Discrimination Against Women) and ECHR (European Convention on Human Rights) became a part of the BiH legal system (Aganović et al., 2015). The UNSCR 1325 resolution was passed in 2000 (Aganović et al., 2015), thanks to pressure coming from women's and international organizations. The implementation of the UNSCR 1325 resolution was even considered by a male parliamentary representative a golden age for women's engagement in BiH (Irvine, 2013). After the implementation of UNSCR 1325, gender mechanisms were established at all levels of BiH government (Irvine, 2013).

The Gender quota was introduced in BiH's provisional election regulation in 1998, and incorporated into the national election law in 2001 (Jenichen, 2009). The Gender quota was regulated on the state level as follows:

"The quota obliges political parties to ensure that at least one third of candidates nominated for elections must be of the less represented sex, normally women. Further, the candidates must be ranked in a certain order on the party lists in order to avoid that candidates of the less represented sex are relegated to lower positions in the list, thus decreasing their opportunity to be elected" (Jenichen, 2009, p. 98).

Nevertheless the Gender quota was criticized by most BiH political parties for being an "undemocratic instrument" (Jenichen, 2009, p. 103).

The BiH government introduced new laws and regulations regarding gender issues in post-conflict reconstruction. One of the most important laws passed by the BiH government was the Law on Gender Equality in 2003 which was amended in 2009 (Pupavac, 2005).

"The Law on Gender Equality guarantees gender equality to everyone in all spheres of society, including, but not limited to, education, economy, employment and labor, social and health protection, sport, culture, public life and the media" (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2013).

According to the Law on Gender Equality there should be an equal representation of men and women at all governmental levels in BiH (state, entity, cantonal and municipal levels)

(Pupavac, 2005). The Article 15 of the Law on Gender Equality regulates the principals of equal gender representation in public life (Pupavac, 2005).

“State and local authority bodies, corporate management bodies, political parties and other non-profit organizations shall ensure and promote equal representation on the basis of gender in management and the decision-making process...[T]he percentage of the sexes in government bodies at all levels, including the judiciary, legislature and executive, as well as all other public services, committees, boards, and bodies representing the state at the international level, shall as a rule reflect the equal gender representation (emphasis added)” (*Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2003*).

In the Law on Gender Equality it is also regulated that all forms of discrimination (direct or indirect) on the ground of gender and sexual orientation are prohibited (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2013). Additionally the Law regulates that harassment, sexual harassment, gender-based violence, victimization and discrimination in language are prohibited (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2013).

The BiH government (with assistance of international organizations) also established gender institutions such as the Gender Center and Gender Equality Agency (Aganović et al., 2015). The Gender Equality Agency was established at state level and Gender Centers at entity level. The role of the Gender Equality Agency and Gender Centers was to ensure the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2013). They receive requests and complaints from citizens that report the violations of the Law on Gender Equality. To achieve their goals, they need to do so by “[...] introducing measures for achieving gender equality, adopting new or amending existing laws, implementing the BiH Gender Action Plan, collecting data, keeping records and analyzing and presenting statistical data classified according to gender” (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2013).

In 2015, the BiH government passed the Labor Law that prohibits “[...] discrimination on the basis of marital status, family obligations and pregnancy such as overtime work for pregnant women, mothers of children younger than 3 years of age and specifying that at the beginning of their employment workers cannot be asked for information on their family/marital status or pregnancy” (UN Women, n.d.).

The BiH government was working closely with international organizations shortly before the end of the conflict, and their work continued after the conflict. Gender empowerment and development by the international organizations had an impact on the number of female political representatives and on the BiH government. Women from BiH were strongly present

in the work of international and national NGOs. They were seen as victims, survivors and mediators after the war by the international organizations, and therefore given a voice by including women in international organizations work and projects (Björkdahl, 2012).

The BiH government was forced and challenged because of the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality, to change political and cultural views regarding the marginalization of women (Pupavac, 2005)

Gender empowerment by domestic NGOs

In BiH there were no domestic NGOs existing before the conflict. There were clubs for activities and associations of disabled people, but no organizations that would tackle inequality issues (Walsh, 2001b). There was, however, a large women's association linked to the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. In other Yugoslavian countries such as Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia, there were some feminist organizations, but in BiH none were present (Walsh, 2001b). After the war, NGOs and women's organizations started to form. They became active in addressing problems in BiH society (Walsh, 2001b).

The work of women's organizations and their influence was considered important by the international organizations, because the vast majority of refugees and displaced persons were women who needed assistance when finding their literal and figurative places in the post war society (Helms, 2010). International Organization considered women to be a "driving force towards reconciliation" (Helms, 2003, p. 20) and gender empowerment in post-conflict reconstruction of BiH (Helms, 2003). It was primarily women who built NGOs and were working toward a dialogue between the conflicting sides. For men, it was much harder to work with each other because too much had happened, pride also played a role. Also, men had a much harder time ignoring "ethnic, linguistic, or religious barriers" (Helms, 2003, p. 20). Therefore, women's organizations became the bridges for post-conflict reconstruction (Irvine, 2013).

Domestic NGOs pushed subjects, such as gender equality to the political discussion level (Helms, 2010). Furthermore, women's organizations and women politicians were setting the agenda for the gender quota and for its draft to be transformed into law (Jenichen, 2009). Together with international organizations they were promoting political change and were pressuring the government to implement UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security (Irvine, 2013). Women's NGOs were organizing grassroots campaigns and building strong regional networks (Irvine, 2013). International organizations, like the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), supported local women's initiatives and organizations that were pushing

the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (Irvine, 2013). The support was mostly in financial aid (Irvine, 2013). When UNSCR 1325 was finally adopted by the BiH government, it gave “newly established regional women’s organizations a toll to pressure the public, political parties and national governments into including more women in politics and policy-making through gender quotas, gender equity legislation and gender agencies” (Irvine, 2013, p. 26). The adoption of UNSCR 1325 opened new opportunities for women in BiH (Irvine, 2013).

BiH women’s rights activists were taking actions against the issues of underrepresentation, that would later become a USAID-funded project called “There Are More of Us, Let’s Vote” (Walsh, 2000). “Bospo” and “Bosfam” were NGOs that were developed out of international agencies such as “The Danish Refugee Council and Oxfam” (Walsh, 2001b, p. 166) and were giving financial support to women. Domestic organizations such as “Vidra” were addressing specific needs of women in post-conflict periods such as “income generation” (Walsh, 2001b, p. 166). Other organizations were concentrating on improving legal rights in post-conflict BiH, such as the Center for Legal Aid for Women (Walsh, 2001b). Additionally, organizations such as “Zena Zenema ” (Women for Women) and “Udruzenje Zena” (United Women) were “founded specifically to challenge and improve the position and status of women in society” (Walsh, 2001b, p. 166). Furthermore women’s organization “Zene Zenama” “[...] led the effort to monitor international as well as national implementation of UNSCR 1325” (Irvine, 2013, p. 27). Local NGOs like “Medica Zenica” treated and helped female rape survivors (Walsh, 2000). Women’s organizations from all over the country were working together, had achieved multiethnic cooperation and built trusting relationships and friendships (Helms, 2003).

Women’s rights activists and women’s NGOs were organizing “roundtable discussions, advocacy campaigns, media spot, free legal aid to women, and the production of educational materials on rights issues” (Walsh, 2001a, p. 168). Further, they were giving (from the donations of various international organizations) microcredits to displaced women and female-headed households (Walsh, 2001a). Microcredits programs were considered a success and they empowered women, by giving them new opportunities to make their own income (Kumar, 2001). Some microcredits developed into “[...] communal lending services, creating local businesses. The most important result of microcredit programs was much-needed relief to the vulnerable female population in rapidly changing environments. Many illiterate and inexperienced women started their own businesses [...]”(Kumar, 2001, p. 21).

According to Walsh (2001a) NGOs and women’s organizations in BiH had a wide role in promoting gender equality and regulations in all the sectors:

“The activities of women’s organizations fall into the broad categories of democracy and human rights, microcredit and income generation, education and training, and psychosocial support and health. Despite common assumptions that women’s organizations are more likely to be welfarist/humanitarian, more organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina were found to have an exclusive emphasis on democracy/human rights (eleven) than on a humanitarian mandate (eight, including those within the psychosocial and microcredit categories). Most, however, are a mixture of these components, reflecting the specific donor objectives and demands of emerging civil society” (Walsh, 2001a, p. 168).

Women’s organizations and other NGOs had equal gender ratios, that unfortunately failed to transfer to a greater political level and representation (Pupavac, 2005). However, women’s organizations and domestic NGOs did not just address women’s issues and women’s rights, they also addressed problems of men and other issues in the society (Walsh, 2001b). Additionally women’s organizations were criticizing the BiH government that it was not doing enough to include women in the decision-making processes and were pressuring the state parties to take their agenda seriously (Jenichen, 2009).

According to the International Council for Voluntary Organizations directory, in 1999 there were 284 NGO’s in Bosnia. From these “112 included “women” in the sectorial areas in which they worked, although only 56 mentioned women’s issues in their mission statement” (Walsh, 2001a, p. 167).

Gender Empowerment by international organizations

In BiH, gender issues and gender equality were also encouraged by international actors (Pupavac, 2005). Gender empowerment was a standard tool in international peace building in post-conflict regions and BiH was no exception (Björkdahl, 2012). International actors were promoting “voter education, gender quotas, media training” (Pupavac, 2005, p. 391) and emphasizing the political role of women’s organizations in numerous initiatives (Pupavac, 2005). It was difficult for the international organizations to provide assistance in BiH after the war, because the country was divided. This meant that when the international actors were promoting and helping to implement gender empowerment programs, they needed to do so in all three parts on the same institutional levels. For example, gender and gender equality projects that were supported by the Finnish government needed to operate through both the Gender Centre of the Federation of BiH (FBiH) and the Gender Centre of Republika Srpska (RS) so that they could have an effect (Pupavac, 2005).

International organizations such as the UNDP (United Nations Development Program), UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund), OHCHR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights), UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) and ILO (International Labor Organization) were funding gender empowerment related projects under the UN Gender Group (Pupavac, 2005). The UN Gender Group was working closely with the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, the Entity Gender Centers and the local NGOs after the conflict with the aim to establish a gender agency on a state-level (Pupavac, 2005). In addition, their goals were to build "[...] gender awareness campaigns and the training of trainers (judges, teachers, NGO officials) and other areas of capacity-building activities addressing gender equality and the elimination of gender-based violence" (Pupavac, 2005, p. 392).

The UNDP was one of the leading organizations (in cooperation with the other above mentioned international actors) that was promoting, developing and supporting local projects that were focusing on the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH. In the first two years after the war, the UNDP gave financial aid of \$400,000 (Pupavac, 2005). Further, UNDP and other international organizations were emphasizing, that their own organizations are in turn incorporating gender equality to have a gender balance within their own employees, by doing so they wanted to set an example to others (Pupavac, 2005).

Another important international actor working in BiH was The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The introduction of the Gender quota was the merit of OSCE. OSCE's Provisional Electoral Commission (PEC) changed the electoral rules and required that 30 percent of the candidates on the candidate lists should be female (Pupavac, 2005; Jenichen 2009). PEC was supervising the entire process of the election. The change in electoral rules had a positive impact on further elections of female MP's (Pupavac, 2005). Similar initiatives were trying to empower the role and importance of parliamentary women. Further programs such as the Stability Pact Gender Task Force in BiH had the aim to promote "[...] public awareness of women's political participation in elections and political processes in general; reform existing electoral systems and legislation...to promote women's political participation; [and] establish governmental institutions to promote gender equality" (Pupavac, 2005, p. 393).

Another active international organizations in BiH was the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) that was functioning as lead agency coordinating humanitarian aid during and after the war (Walsh, 2001b).

International organizations were taking the issue of gender empowerment and gender equality

very seriously and applying pressure on the local governments by building different initiative programs and organizations. Following this, a Gender Coordination Group was built “to pursue gender empowerment more systematically” (Pupavac, 2005, p. 391). The Gender Coordination Group was chaired by OHR (Office of the High Representative) together with representatives from the OSCE, the International Human Rights Law Group, OHCHR (Office of the High Commission for Human Rights) and other international organizations (Pupavac, 2005). Its task was to implement the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and to integrate gender equality and gender empowerment in all social and political arenas, such as the national legislation, the public sector and into various programs and projects (Pupavac, 2005).

As seen, international organizations were advocating gender issues and women’s empowerment on the political level, by promoting the participation of women in politics, but were also concentrating on empowering women in the economic sector. This was done by giving microcredits or making investments in NGOs that had an equal number of male and female members, women’s rights organizations and female households (Pupavac, 2005). The microcredits were given to “[...] women borrowers, among whom displaced women and female-headed households are the primary target groups. Loans range between 1,000 and 5,000 deutsche marks and are provided on a solidarity-group basis, whereby each group member is jointly and severally liable for the repayment of each loan in the group” (Walsh, 2001b, p. 168).

International organizations were also giving assistance to local NGOs for particular projects in cash grants or were providing training (Walsh, 2001b). The biggest institution for funding women’s projects was the Bosnian Women’s Initiative [BWI] “[...] which provided grants for, among other things, a partial salary subsidy. These grants are largely geared toward covering equipment or production costs” (Walsh, 2001b, p. 174). The BWI was offering women the opportunity to participate in the economic reconstruction of BiH and was empowering them to become leaders as well as decision-makers (Helms, 2003).

In addition, there were also actors such as Kvinna till Kvinna (KtK) from Sweden (Helms, 2003) that were supporting “[...] small number[s] of women’s organizations with the general aim of increasing women’s voices in society and their awareness of women’s rights” (Walsh, 2001b, p. 174). Furthermore, the Delphi International/Star Project was giving grants between “[...] 5,000 and 60,000 deutsche marks to advocacy-related organizations while also supporting broader projects, such as workshops, conferences, and training sessions [...]” (Walsh, 2001b, p. 174). European Donors such as the European Union’s Phare project were

also funding some women's organizations and the USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) was providing grants as well (Walsh, 2001b). Naturally, it was considered that many domestic NGOs and women's organizations would collapse if there was no support of international organizations (Pupavac, 2005).

International organizations were increasing awareness about gender empowerment and gender issues to the public in BiH, by financially and strategically supporting local organizations. The international actors, their programs, organizations and initiatives, shaped the gender politics in BiH.

Conclusion

In addressing gender empowerment and development in BiH, international organizations cannot be ignored. The effort that they made in post-conflict BiH was immense and resulted in the emergence of domestic NGOs. They were able to create awareness in the society that gender issues exist, that they can be tackled and successfully resolved. It became clear that the silence of many rape victims was not normal and that with the help of local NGOs, societal disparities could be addressed. International organization discovered that women are the bridge when it comes to reconciliation and future development in the country. It was decided that it is easier to work with women on solving the mutual problems than with men, because of the social structure of the BiH society. For many women, the work of international organizations opened new opportunities in training, learning new skills and getting jobs as well as building careers. Even women coming from rural areas could (unfortunately not in large numbers) find jobs or a way to be empowered in what they do. Donations were given to gender development programs and to women's rights organizations.

Through findings of studies, advocacy campaigns and advocating for participation of women in politics, international organization improved the lives of many women in BiH. In and after the war they were, together with domestic women's rights organizations, key players addressing women's empowerment and gender issues in BiH. International organizations were assisting local women's organizations and were pushing their agenda into the political debate, although only a few women's rights organizations managed to succeed. Some success is better than no success, and it is questionable if the laws such as the Law on Gender Equality would have been implemented if there was no pressure, assistance and aid from international organizations and domestic NGOs. In BiH, it can be considered a success that laws regarding gender issues were addressed and later implemented on the state level, considering the division in the government and ignorance between the ruling parties. Even

though the Law on Gender Equality and gender quotas were criticized as not being democratic and perhaps only empowering women that already had influence, education and strong connections in the government, it cannot be ignored that these laws, regulations and similar programs had a impact and improved gender equality.

Analysis of the post-conflict gender development

The different gender development strategies used in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Guatemala, and Rwanda will be analyzed using the theory of change on gender equality & women's and girls' empowerment of DFID. First, the problem will be summarized, then, the barriers will be evaluated and classified according to the theory. Next, the interventions done will be associated with the different types of interventions suggested by the theory and the strategy used will be estimated. After that, the type of programming approach will be defined. In the end, the outputs will be compared to the preceding analysis and a conclusion regarding the success of the program will be formed. Finally, the programs of the three countries will be compared and the conditions under which gender development has been successful will be determined.

3.1.4 Analysis Bosnia and Herzegovina

Because of the high gender equality pre-war, BiH was struggling to get back to the level of gender equality it had during the Yugoslavian times. Additionally BiH had to deal with the newly risen gender issues in post-conflict reconstruction. Overall, the gender development efforts were successful but still have room for improvements. Especially the social roles attributed to the different genders need to be further targeted.

Barriers

Before the start of the gender development efforts in BiH, barriers preventing gender equality were only evident in some categories of the development theory of change on gender equality & women's and girls' empowerment of DFID. Before the conflict, social structures have been mostly patriarchal. Within the category of *policies and laws*, because of the socialism of Yugoslavia, women and men officially had the same rights. Women were guaranteed equal pay, equal education, equal healthcare and mothers enjoyed special social benefits.

However, there were barriers within the *civil society* and *social norms*, as traditional and patriarchal gender roles were allocated to men and women, viewing men as the strong and

active part and women as the weak and reactive. These gender roles showed in the gender ratio in decision-making roles, which heavily favored men.

Because of the good education and equal rights, women had *good autonomy and agency*.

During the war, the patriarchal and conservative gender roles were major factors leading to the politically driven mass rape of women and girls, aiming to humiliate and eradicate the opposing side. These horrible crimes enforced the existing gender roles and rendered women even more passive and helpless than before, leaving them displaced, with psychological and physical trauma, guilt and social exclusion.

After the war, women were forced to take on more responsibilities, because many of their male relatives died or went missing. Because of the rise of post-conflict prostitution, many women continued to be exposed to traumatic sexual experiences and suffered from re-traumatization.

Interventions

In accordance to the case study, the interventions will be divided into interventions done by the government, by NGOs and by international organizations.

By the government

Because of the threefold division of the BiH government following the Dayton peace agreement, and the great tensions between these entities, their decision-making ability was very limited. The government of BiH was relying heavily on monitoring by international organizations. Therefore, BiH was following the lead of international organizations regarding the implementation of gender empowerment and development programs, rather than planning interventions themselves.

By NGOs

During the era of Yugoslavia, BiH had no domestic NGOs. This changed dramatically after the war. The precarious situation of the traumatized women and the mostly female refugees, returning with their children to a totally devastated country, spawned many women's rights groups aiming to help these women return to a functioning life on an *individual and household level*. They were providing education and training, psychosocial and health support, legal aid, microcredits and income generation.

They were also doing interventions on the *community level* by initiating grassroots campaigns and building strong regional networks in order to enable women to make their voices heard. These same NGOs were intervening at the *societal level* as well, by demanding the implementation of gender equality into the new state of BiH. They were fighting for the implementation of the gender quota and the implementation of UNSCR 1325, hoping to enable more women to work in decision-making positions.

To conclude, NGOs and women's rights organizations proved to be important in promoting gender empowerment and development, and advance their political implementation.

By international organizations

International organizations were mainly working on the *community level* and the *societal level*. They provided financial and logistical support to NGOs and institutions like the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees and the Entity Gender Centers. Financially, as well as logistically. The support especially aimed for long lasting gender empowerment programs and the implementation of a gender agency on a state level.

At the *community level*, they initiated campaigns on gender awareness, trained facilitators and raised public awareness of the need for gender equality. By incorporating gender dynamics and gender equality into their own organizations, they lead by example. International organizations had a vital role in making the divided BiH government able to act by mediating between the estranged fronts and leading the way to the implementation of gender development and empowerment on a state level.

Outputs

Looking at the outputs, the gender development efforts in BiH reached some promising results. On the *societal level*, most of the crucial conditions according to the development theory of change on gender equality & women's and girls' empowerment of DFID were fulfilled:

Through the lead of international organizations, gender empowerment and development became an explicit aim of the government. The BiH government introduced a gender quota and the Law on Gender Equality; The UNSCR 132 was implemented and gender mechanisms were established at all levels of the government and a Gender Equality Agency was established.

On the *community level* the capacity for women to organize themselves was created through the emergence of many local NGOs and women's rights groups.

On the *household and individual level*, women continued to be better educated than men, enabling them to support each other and seek and claim their rights. However, this was not always true for rural areas, where the patriarchal structures often could not be broken, and social norms remained mostly unchanged. In addition, women were empowered on an individual level by many women's rights organizations working in Bosnia after the war and helping them return to a normal life.

Outcomes

It is not easy to measure the outcomes of gender development, as there are different definitions of successful gender empowerment, the outcomes are on different levels and different interventions take shorter or longer to show outcomes. I will therefore use some well-established and recognized measures, which were described previously. The Gender Inequality Index (GII), the Global Gender Gap (GGI) and the Gender Parity Index (GPI). The value of the GII ranges between 0 and 1, 0 translates to 0% inequality, 1 to 100% inequality. For the GGI, the highest possible score is 1.0 and translates to no gender gap at all and the lowest is 0. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) released by UNESCO, measures the ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education. If the score is below 1, boys are favored, if it is above 1, girls are favored. Unlike Rwanda and Guatemala, there is not so much gender equality data available before 2010 in BiH. The data since 2010 shows overall improvement in gender equality.

According to UNDP the GII improved from 0.239 in 2010 (the first time it was measured for BiH) to 0.158 (rank 34) in 2015 (United Nation Development Programme, 2016). The (GGI) featuring BiH for the first time in 2016 was 0.685, ranking it 83rd worldwide (World Economic Forum, 2016b).

BiH has not been included in the GPI thus far. However, there is data available from the agency of statistics regarding the ratio of female to male pupils in education. Therefore, it is possible to calculate the GPI for BiH within that time period. The female to male ratio in primary education stayed at 0.95 from 2010 to 2014. Secondary education improved from 0.98 in 2010 to 1.0 in 2014. The ratio in higher education stayed about the same: 1.26 in 2010 versus 1.25 in 2014. The ratio for masters degrees improved from 1.09 in 2010 to 1.47 in 2014 (Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2015). In 1998, just 2% of those elected to the House of Representatives were women. The situation improved, and in 2014 23,8% of

those elected were women. However, there continues to be a large gap between the representation of men and women on the political level. The leading jobs and the decision-making positions are still held by men.

In 2014, a man was elected as the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of BiH. Seven men and just two women were elected for the position of ministers. In the period between 2014 and 2018 no women deputy ministers were elected (Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2015).

There seems to be an overall improvement in gender equality in BiH. Especially in education, BiH has made substantial progress. In spite of these advances, the social roles of the genders haven't changed that much, leading to fewer women in decision-making positions.

Strategies

The development strategies in BiH, seem to have been a good mix between targeted and mainstreamed strategies. There were many women's rights organizations providing specific empowerment programs targeted at gender development. On the societal level, gender empowerment and development were imbedded in the new state of BiH. The driving forces have been the international organizations and local NGOs, rather than the government.

Programming approaches

The programming approach was more *gender-sensitive* approach than it was gender-transformative. It recognized the differences and specific needs of the different genders, based on the social constructions of gender roles, but did not try to change those social constructions. Though many gender inequalities improved, the patriarchal social norms remained largely unchanged. This is for example visible in the disbalance of men and women in decision-making positions.

Research questions and hypothesis

The gender empowerment efforts made in BiH were partly successful in empowering women, but failed to change the underlying social norms under the following conditions:

- (1) The government recognized the importance of gender development only because of the interventions by women's organizations, domestic NGOs and international organizations
- (2) Underlying social norms were not targeted

- (3) The overall approach was a gender-sensitive approach
- (4) Men were only partially incorporated in the development process
- (5) A long-term approach to gender development could be achieved

Hypothesis 1 can be accepted: The efforts made to improve gender empowerment and development in BiH were successful. However, if the government had been more active in their effort, greater improvements could have been achieved.

Hypothesis 2 can be accepted. The situation of women's rights pre-conflict was in most cases very good and subsequently did improve post-conflict.

Hypothesis 3 is can be accepted. By not connecting enough, especially with the rural population, the patriarchal social norms could not be changed sufficing.

3.2 Case: Study Guatemala

Introduction

Guatemala suffered the longest lasting uninterrupted war of all the Latin America countries in the twentieth century (Garrard-Burnett, 2001; Poppema, 2009). The conflict lasted for thirty-six years (Garrard-Burnett, 2001). The case study of Guatemala concentrates, like the case study of BiH, on the gender dynamics before the conflict, during the conflict and after the conflict, as well as on the gender empowerment and development programs after the conflict. As will be seen, the war in Guatemala is a case where highly volatile gender dynamics were visible during the long-lasting conflict. Guatemalan society is divided into two groups. On the one side are the indigenous Maya people, while on the other side are the non-indigenous Ladino. In the Guatemalan war both groups suffered and no one was safe. This conflict was especially hard on the Mayan women.

A Brief History: Pre-colonial, colonial era and independence

Guatemala has more than five centuries of colonial history, during which violence and exploitation of the country's indigenous majority, as well as the poor Ladinos, was inflicted in the interest of increasing the Ladino elites' wealth and interests (Crosby and Lykes, 2011).

"The exploitation of indigenous people has been part and parcel of the societal make-up of Guatemala since colonial times. The expropriation of communally held land combined with

forced seasonal labor for indigenous people has led to vast concentrations of land ownership and a highly unequal agricultural economic system” (Poppema, 2009, p. 385).

The Spanish colonized the country in the 16th century. They built farmhouses, which were ruled by western, christian landlords and the indigenous people were used as slaves (Crosby and Lykes, 2011). While enslaved, indigenous peoples were forced to change their ways of living as their access and rights to land and productive labor was taken from them. This forced many indigenous people to create new patterns of seasonal migration to neighboring countries such as Mexico. Those Mayans’ who weren’t so lucky had year round slave labor conditions for them and their families (Crosby and Lykes, 2011).

In 1825, Guatemala gained its independence from the Spanish Kingdom without any fight. However, the independence from Spain didn’t put an end to the suppression and discrimination of the indigenous people because as in many regions of the world, “[...] an internal form of colonization continued along the same lines of exploitation” (Poppema, 2009, p. 385). The unequal distribution of land between the Mayan population and the Ladinos never ended and the tensions after the independency grew stronger (Poppema, 2009).

Following the country’s independence, many military dictators ruled the country in the nineteenth and early twentieth century (Marcus, 1996). This being considered, not much has changed since gaining the independency of Guatemala for local indigenous Maya until the chain of military dictatorships ended in 1944 when in 1945 Juan Jose Arevalo was elected as President of Guatemala (Marcus, 1996). Arevalo was the first democratically elected leader in Guatemala (Poppema, 2009). Things got more complicated for the rich Ladinos and landlords when the new democratically elected government started ruling the country. Their policies made changes in benefits for the indigenous people and the poor Ladinos, by advocating for better education, for labor protection and equal land distribution (Marcus, 1996). During Arevalo’s presidency between 1945 and 1951, the government introduced several reforms. These reforms were social and agrarian reforms that were gradually implemented.

The most important one was the “land reform” (Marcus, 1996, p. 112). The idea was to distribute the land in a more equal way, so that all people, in particular poor farmers, could use it to grow crops and live off of it; an additional motivation was to cut the forced labor and create more equality (Marcus, 1996). This attempt to nationalize land was very welcomed by the local indigenous peasants and poor Ladinos. The new reform led to the formation of local agrarian committees and local indigenous peasants were included in the decision-making processes and positions (Sanford, 2003). It was considered a big step forward for

independence and a step towards equality for the indigenous Mayas and the poor Ladinos (Sanford, 2003).

“These peasants, like other Maya peasants throughout the county, experienced a significant and memorable shift in public space and political action. The redistribution of the land to Q’eqchi’ communities and the end to forced labor was remembered by community elders and passed on through the community’s traditions of oral history” (Sanford, 2003, p. 57).

The new land reform had a major impact not only on the indigenous people and poor Ladinos, but also on the rich landlords and US owned companies, which saw in the new land regulations multitudes of disadvantages for them and their businesses (Marcus, 1996). US-owned corporations did not welcome the land reform, especially the company United Fruit. For United Fruit, the land reform meant that they weren’t able to use the land on which their companies stood in the same way as before the reform (Marcus, 1996). By the last half of the twentieth century, due to those with power wanting cheap land and labor, the Mayan and indigenous people were subjected to “extreme brutality” (Poppema, 2009, p. 385). Unfortunately for the Maya population and the poor Ladinos, the reform did not last long and it came to an end in 1957, when Jacobo Arbenz was overthrown with the help of the United States government (Sanford, 2003). The attempt to nationalize US businesses led to the CIA-backed coup of the Arevalo government (Marcus, 1996). “The military coup was a violent response to a moderate land reform that was aimed at redressing highly unequal land distribution” (Poppema, 2009, p. 385).

The military coup ended the presidency of Jacobo Arbenz and with him the ten-year (1944 - 1954) period of democratic ruling (Poppema, 2009). The Jacobo Arbenz government was branded by the US as communistic (Poppema, 2009). The end of the Arbenz government meant for the indigenous people and poor Ladinos a return to unequal land distribution, no rights, poverty and hard working conditions (Poppema, 2009). As a result of the inequality, six years after the CIA-backed military coup, Guatemala was led into a conflict that started in 1960 and lasted until the middle of the 1990s (Poppema, 2009). It took place between the United Guerilla Forces (the opposition of the Guatemalan Government) and the Guatemalan Government (Poppema, 2009).

3.2.1 Gender Dynamics before the conflict

Since its colonization, Guatemala was a country with gendered and sexualized structural racism. This radicalized gender violence extended into the 20th century. During the thirty-six

years of war, the female targeted violence gained its highest peak between early 1980 until its end in 1996 (Crosby and Lykes, 2011).

In the colonial period (but also thereafter), the perception of the Maya people was divided within Liberal and Conservative Ladinos. Liberal Ladinos considered the division between the indigenous Mayas and the Ladinos as “cultural rather than biological” (Reeves, 2006, p. 10).

“Mayan “failure” to conform to “modernity” had little to do with biology, and everything to do their implacable resistance to change, and stubborn determination to retain their distinctive culture and identity” (Reeves, 2006, p. 9).

On the other side, the indigenous Maya population in Guatemala was considered by Conservative Ladinos as a “distant class of citizens” (Reeves, 2006, p. 9), because according to them, the indigenous Maya had limited intellect (Reeves, 2006). Regardless of the rational, Mayan people were treated unequally by both liberal as well as conservative Ladinos in the society (Reeves, 2006). Due to this discrimination, “acculturated” (Reeves, 2006, p. 10) indigenous Maya had to “become ladinos” (Reeves, 2006, p. 10) in order to enter the political body. Becoming acculturated meant to adapt to western culture and its way of living (Reeves, 2006) which was mostly imposed on the male Mayans because they had to be more in the public environment and interact with the Ladinos than Mayan women. This acculturation was a challenge to both parties, and it was not just the Ladinos that were not welcoming the Mayas, it was also the Mayas that did not want to mix with the Ladinos. Like a famous sentence from an indigenous man, which became an unwritten rule in the Guatemalan society put it: “Ladinos with Ladinos, Indians with Indians” (Reeves, 2006, p. 10). Indigenous people were traditionally only marrying members of their own communities (Marcus, 1996) and they would get married at young age (Garrard-Burnett, 2001).

One thing that is seen in both groups, indigenous and non-indigenous, is that the Guatemalan society was built on a caste hierarchy and was very patriarchal (Garrard-Burnett, 2001). For example, it was a common practice in Guatemala, that in the countryside the female children were not registered at birth and it was considered to be something shameful when a daughter was born and not a son (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). Based on these examples it is clear that women and men, starting from birth, were not treated the same way and did not enjoy the same rights (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). Further, because many females were not registered at birth, they were automatically excluded from the public sector as adults (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). Since there is very little written about the position and the role of the women in Guatemala either from the Maya or Ladino side, this can be taken as an indicator of the

importance or rather non-importance of their role in society (Reeves, 2006). On the contrary, Guatemalan men and their social status were described and mentioned in reports, books and journals (Reeves, 2006). Religious brotherhoods, councils of elders, and the “kinship networks” (Garrard-Burnett, 2001, p. 71) that consisted only of men, were described. Clearly, the decision-making power and social identity in Guatemalan society was carried by the male members of the society (Garrard-Burnett, 2001). In both Ladino and Mayan groups, women were below men in the hierarchical order and had less rights than men (Marcus, 1996). Another similarity is that in both communities the men were active in the public and the women in the private sector. In Guatemala, women traditionally had no land rights (Marcus, 1996). It was a common practice that the name of the man was on the registration documents and not the woman’s and not that of a wife or a daughter (Marcus, 1996). Regarding education, 40 percent of the population was illiterate and from this, 60 percent were illiterate women (Marcus, 1996). The difference between the Mayan and Ladino women was that 71.9 percent of the Mayan women were illiterate and 24.6 percent of Ladino women. In rural areas the difference may have been even bigger (Marcus, 1996).

“Overall, girls constitute 45.3 percent of the school population and boys, 54.7 percent but by age 16 girls constitute 36.7 percent of school population and boys 63.3 percent” (Marcus, 1996, p. 119).

In rural areas many girls didn’t attend school, on one side the war was a clear barrier to education, but on the other side, parents didn’t see the necessity that girls need to attend schools (Weiss and Yudelman, 2001). When it came to speaking Spanish (the language used by the Ladino community), Mayan men were capable of speaking on a basic level, however Maya women hardly spoke any Spanish (Marcus, 1996). This was because Mayan men, through their work outside of the family and community, had more contact with the Ladinos, which the Mayan women did not (Marcus, 1996). Further, in the farming communities in Guatemala the gender dynamics were divided in a traditional way. Which meant, that the men were responsible for growing food and collecting firewood and the women were responsible for the preparation of the food and for completing domestic tasks (Marcus, 1996). Women also contributed to the household income, by selling woven cloths in their communities or to visitors. They were also responsible for selling crops, food and small livestock at local markets (Marcus, 1996). Women gained equal rights to vote and to stand in office under Guatemala’s constitution in 1985 (Marcus, 1996). This didn’t improve the position of the women in the political sphere. For example after gaining equal rights, six out of 166 deputies to the national Congress were women, and there were no female mayors in Guatemala. Men

still dominated all public positions (Marcus, 1996). Women's lives in Guatemala in most cases consisted of taking care of their families, husband and household (Marcus, 1996).

3.2.2 Gender Dynamics in the conflict

The Conflict

The conflict in Guatemala lasted three decades and during this period “[...] the human suffering was enormous” (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 204). It was between United Guerrillas Forces (URNG) and the Guatemalan government. The heart of the conflict was considered to lie in the issues of race and class, but also in uneven land and power distribution, as the elite Ladino minority ruled the state (Marcus, 1996). The indigenous Maya and poor Ladino majority were excluded from any kind of power and social and economic development (Marcus, 1996, p. 109). After the overthrow of the democratic Arbenz government a new chain of dictatorships started (Poppema, 2009).

The first general, who came to power after the Arbenz government, was general Carlos Castillo. With him, Guatemala became a military dictatorship; the land reform passed by Arbenz was removed as well as “[...] all forms of democratic participation while retaining power through fraudulent elections and internal warfare” (Poppema, 2009, p. 385).

During this period, the Mayans' and the poor Ladinos' frustration towards the regime was growing stronger. The first guerrilla army (that was against the dictatorship), the so called Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes (FAR- the Rebel Armed Forces) was formed in 1962, but was defeated shortly after its formation by the Guatemalan government (Marcus, 1996). In the period between 1954 and 1985, Guatemala was ruled by several different generals, who suppressed the demands for economic and political reforms (Marcus, 1996). The government was using force and violence to overpower the people and any attempt for change in the political system was answered with an even harsher use of violence. One of the generals, infamous for his brutality, was General Lucas Garcia. He ruled the country between 1978 until 1982, until he was forcibly removed from power (Marcus, 1996). The transition from his ruling to his predecessor between 1981 and 1983 is considered to be the most violent period and where most of the human rights violations were inflicted by the ruling power. By the end of General Lucas Garcia governance, violence and state control had increased and escalated (Marcus, 1996).

“Demands for political and economic reform were kept in check by a campaign of state-sponsored violence, including the use of army-linked death squads [...]“ (Marcus, 1996, p. 110).

As the result of the government's suppression, growing poverty and landlessness, a new, armed opposition was built in the 1970s and 1980s consisting of three different groups, el Ejercito Guerrillero de los Pobres (EGP - the Guerrilla Army of the Poor); la Organizacion Revolucionaria del Pueblo en Armas (OPRA - the Revolutionary Organisation of the People in Arms); and el Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo (PGT - the Communist Party of Guatemala) (Marcus, 1996). Later in 1982 these three groups formed Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemala (URNG), better known as United Guerrillas Forces (Marcus, 1996). The URNG were fighting for new land reform as well as social and economic equality between indigenous people and Ladinos (Marcus, 1996). The United Guerrilla Forces were supported by the middle-class and poor Ladinos, but also by the Maya communities. In March 1982, the year of the official formation of the United Guerrilla Forces (URNG), General Rios Montt came to power in a coup. He claimed that his mandate was sent from God and that his mission was to fight the terror in the highlands and to destroy the guerrillas (Marcus, 1996). As a result of his campaign ideology, 440 indigenous villages were destroyed and 50-75,000 people killed, the majority civilians, because they were believed to be followers of the guerrillas (Sanford, 2003).

The truth was that the majority of the indigenous population was sympathetic to the guerrillas, but they were still trying to maintain neutrality. Unfortunately, this did not help the indigenous people and they were considered to be part of guerrilla formations by the ruling powers and the conflict continued until the beginning of the 1990s (Marcus, 1996).

Further, General Rios Montt introduced so called PACs, which stood for Self-Defense Patrols, with the purpose of “protecting the civilians” against the guerrilla attacks and gaining control in the areas in which they had no influence or power (Marcus, 1996). PAC was a brutal program that had a huge impact on the social cohesion (Marcus, 1996). During the time of the PAC programs, people were forcibly collected from their villages (those that didn't want to join were killed or went missing). They went through army re-education programs and then were moved back to the villages in order to infiltrate the guerrilla network (Marcus, 1996). In addition to forced military service, war and violence, Guatemalan society was also struggling under the ultimate law in unequal land divisions (Marcus, 1996).

“According to a 1982 USAID study, 78.3 percent of farms were less than 3.5 hectares and occupied 10.5 per cent of the land area. Less than one percent of farms were over 2500 hectares, but these accounted for 21.7 percent of the land area” (Marcus, 1996, p. 110).

General Rios Montt’s rule came to an end in 1983 and another general promising to return Guatemala to civilian rule took power. This was just another promise (since the military form continued to rule over the country) (Marcus, 1996). Guatemala was again caught in the chain of changing dictators until the end of the 1980s. There were several attempts to come to a peaceful solution in the beginning of the 1990s but they all failed until the Guatemalan government elections in 1995. The new administration of President Alvaro Arzu signed a peace agreement integrating the guerrilla troops into the URNG (Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity) on December 29, 1997 (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). The peace was built with the guerrilla movement agreeing to disarm their troops within a period of two months in three phases. The successful process of disarming guerrilla troops began on March 3, 1997 and ended in August of the same year (Luciak and Olmos, 2005).

By the end of the war, more than 200,000 Guatemalans had been killed or went missing, hundreds of villages were destroyed and 1.5 million people were forced to leave their homes, becoming refugees (mostly women and children) in neighboring countries such as Mexico (Luciak and Olmos, 2005; Sanford, 2003). According to Guatemala’s Comision para el Esclarecimiento Historico (Commission for Historical Clarification) during the almost forty years of civil war, the military committed 626 massacres and was responsible for 93 percent of the human rights abuses and for the political murder of 200.000 people. The commission was blaming the guerrillas for 3 percent of the violation and thirty-two massacres in the war (Grandin, 2005). About 83 percent of the victims were identified as Maya (Sanford, 2003). There is no complete consensus on the numbers since not all victims could be found, making the numbers estimates rather than exact numbers (Marcus, 1996).

Gender dynamics in the conflict

During this long period of conflict in Guatemala more men than women died due to the war. This can be traced back to more men being recruited to guerrilla forces than women, but this doesn’t change the fact that both women and men suffered under the oppression and violence of the war (Marcus, 1996).

The government’s PAC program had an impact on the gender dynamic in the war, because only men were being recruited into the program, leaving women alone. The participation in PAC in general was voluntary, except for the indigenous men between 18-60 of age, for them,

a 2 year military service was mandatory (those that refused were shot dead or went missing) (Marcus, 1996). There they underwent “[...] humiliating initiation ceremonies and being socialized into violence and a strong *macho* ethic. This included visiting sex workers as a demonstration of male virility and sexuality and forcing women to wash and cook for them, strengthening assumptions men may already have about women as providers of sex, food and clean clothes” (Marcus, 1996, p. 115). The Guatemala Government estimated, that 20 percent of rural men were serving in the Guatemalan army (Marcus, 1996).

During their time serving in PAC men’s perspective regarding women changed, affecting the whole society in a very negative way. Women became the subjects of horrible violence, abuse and victims of human rights violations (Marini and Gragnolati, 2003). The Mayan women in particular suffered the most from gender based sexual violence in the long-lasting Guatemalan war (Crosby and Lykes, 2011). Soldiers in many areas gang raped women of all ages and killed the husbands of the married ones. The army was so violent, that in some communities it was difficult to find women between the age of 11 to 15 that have not been sexually abused by the army (Marcus, 1996). Women were seen as the ones who were going to give birth to the future army of guerrillas and future rebels (Crosby and Lykes, 2011).

“In some instances, women have been specifically attacked as the ‘mother of guerrillas [...]’” (Marcus, 1996, p. 112). The mass rapes of Mayan women during the war were mostly committed before massacres in indigenous villages (Crosby and Lykes, 2011). The violence done to Mayan women was beyond horrifying “[...] pregnant women have had their wombs slit open before they were killed, and women and girls have been raped, often before being murdered” (Marcus, 1996, p. 112).

Similar to what happened in BiH, gender based sexual violence was used as a weapon of war (Crosby and Lykes, 2011). The rape had an effect on the Guatemalan society and the gender dynamics, because many women were feeling ashamed for what was done to them and were not able to find their way back into society. Their suffering was silent, they were very much ashamed and felt guilty of what happen to them in the war and did not seek help. The soldiers were very much aware of the mentality of Mayan women and were using it against them “as a specific weapon of war against Mayan women” (Garrard-Burnett, 2001, p. 69). In 1980 kidnapping, torture and sexual violence was a common strategy of the military (Garrard-Burnett, 2001).

“By invading their homes, their bodies, and their work, the military was able to demonstrate that it fully dominated even the most intimate spheres of the women’s world” (Garrard-Burnett, 2001, p. 69).

Considering that the war lasted almost for four decades, many of the women that were left widows, never re-married. Some other young women also didn't marry because of their horrible experiences in the war (Marcus, 1996). Women, that were left alone in the war needed to take on the male jobs in addition to their already existing traditional female jobs in order to support their families which resulted in them doing double tasks/double days, often resulting in nutritional deficits (Marcus, 1996).

In addition, women that were in refugee camps in other neighboring countries were also breaking traditional gender dynamics. There were no men to provide for their income, so they were responsible for finding jobs and taking care of families (Marcus, 1996). In the refugee camps, with the support of international and domestic organizations, they were able to learn Spanish and other working skills. Also, some women were working in factories in the countries in which they were refugees as a means of providing income for themselves and their children (Marini and Gragnolati, 2003). However, these working women were mostly being exploited and were earning the minimum pay or half the pay that men would get for the same job and the same working hours (Marcus, 1996).

Although in the minority, there were also women that participated in the conflict. Women were mostly joining the URNG (Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity) for the same reasons men did, namely that the situation in Guatemala needed to change. Further, they wanted safety because they experienced losing close family members (Luciak, 2001). Another big factor was being born into a family, which supported guerrillas and the fight against discrimination (Luciak, 2001). The female participation in the URNG (Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity) started in the 1960s, because that was also the time when the first guerilla troops were being formed. Nevertheless, the participation of the women was more concentrated in urban areas (Luciak, 2001). The lack of women at the beginning of the conflict was even addressed by the URNG leader Juan Jose Hurtado as a disadvantage (Luciak, 2001). Despite this comment, the situation did not change much in the 1970s, and only a small amount of women were involved.

“For example, Yvon Le Bot has emphasized that the initial group that started the EGP guerrilla front in 1972 consisted of fifteen men and not a single woman. Indeed, “Comandante Lola” (Alba Estela Maldonado), the most senior female URNG commander at the time of demobilization, recounts that when she joined the EGP in 1974 she found only two women among her group” (Luciak, 2001, p. 27).

From 1978 to 1980 women started joining the URNG in bigger numbers, but that still didn't change the fact that “[...] at no time did women constitute more than 25 percent of the

memberships” (Luciak, 2001, p. 27). When the female combatants of URNG were in the war and fighting side by side with male combatants, there were no traditional gender dynamics visible. There was no such a thing as men’s work or women’s work, men and women were equal in the war efforts (Marcus, 1996). Despite women also being soldiers or even commanders the decision-making power in the war was male dominated.

3.2.3 Gender Empowerment in post-conflict Guatemala

Gender dynamics after the conflict

After the 30-year long conflict, the country was left in ruins. The beginning of peace was a new period that the Guatemalan society needed to adjust to by reorganizing and starting its economic and social structures from scratch. At the beginning of the peace negotiations, gender issues were ignored, but with help of female officials, their supporters, domestic women’s organizations and assistance from international organizations gender issues received the attention that was needed in the peace accords (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). They were emphasizing the importance of implementing gender issues in the peace agreement (Luciak and Olmos, 2005).

Women in the conflict experienced abuse, sexual violence and genocide, but also some of them experienced independency and a break from traditional gender dynamics. In combat, women experienced gender equality and freedom. They could make their own decisions, an experience they didn’t have before the war (Luciak, 2001). After the conflict it was very difficult for those women to go back to the traditional gender roles that were set by society and many did not want to assume those traditional roles again. Women needed to go from being independent and being treated equally, to serving men and taking care of family (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). They were mostly excluded from building the new government and establishing new political parties (Marcus, 1996). However, some of female combatants became legal members of the emerging party (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). Unfortunately for the majority of the female combatants, there was no other choice left than to go back to their previous gender positions (Luciak and Olmos, 2005).

“Once women were back in the kitchen, they were given the responsibility of ensuring the daily survival of their families while their partners competed, mostly in vain, for one of the few available jobs. Regardless of the private sphere of the household, women had fewer opportunities than men to actively participate in party activities” (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 210).

Further 50,000 women, mostly young mothers were left as widows (Marini and Gragnolati, 2003) and in some situations Mayan widows lost their places in local “hierarchies of kinship” or their community (Garrard-Burnett, 2001, p. 71). After the conflict many households were female-headed (Marini and Gragnolati, 2003). However, it was estimated that 57% of all female-headed-households did not have access to their land, because the men could own property (the law before the conflict) and females were excluded (Marini and Gragnolati, 2003). They were facing “complicated issues of patrilineal land ownership and exacerbated legal difficulties tied to women’s rightful ownership of titles to land” (Garrard-Burnett, 2001, p. 71). Further, women whose husbands went missing and were not registered as dead had even bigger problems to gain the title to their husbands’ land (Garrard-Burnett, 2001).

In addition, the custom of female children not being registered at birth also continued after the conflict and resulted in a lack of birth certificates that later excluded women from “fully exercising their political rights” (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 210). Women were faced with social norms and conditions that were discriminatory towards them (Weiss and Yudelman, 2001).

Women who managed to escape Guatemala during the war, and who gained new working skills during their exile, were very much disappointed when they came back to Guatemala. Their newly learned skills found no use (Marini and Gragnolati, 2003). The learning process was interrupted by adapting to the new environment putting these women back where they were before the war started (Marini and Gragnolati, 2003).

Men that took leading political positions were very much focused on power (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). The focus was to gain power in the time of the building of the new government and new parties, it was all about who will be on the top of the state and how to try to keep the war from bursting out again. Gender issues were no priority, which can also be traced back to the fact that previous Guatemalan governments and the guerrilla movements did not have any knowledge, or felt the need to see the importance of gender dynamics (Luciak and Olmos, 2005).

The ordinary men from both rural and urban areas were competing for the little jobs that were available at that time and were often forced to move to other cities in their search (Marini and Gragnolati, 2003). Also, the fact that so many men were killed during the war, created a demographic imbalance in Guatemalan society (Kumar, 2001). Some villages and cities were called “cities of women” after the conflict (Garrard-Burnett, 2001, p. 71), because of the lack of men. Women that were at a marriageable age, were not able to find suitable husbands (Kumar, 2001). Another problem that Guatemalan society was facing, was that the husbands

that returned home from fighting for the military service or guerrillas, were suffering from trauma and had a difficult time adapting again into family life (Marini and Gagnolati, 2003). The trauma led men to consume high amounts of alcohol (50 percent of former soldiers became full-time alcoholics) that resulted in violence towards the families and their women (Marini and Gagnolati, 2003). Domestic violence became a very big issue in post-conflict Guatemala (Marini and Gagnolati, 2003).

Another problem many women, as well as men were facing, was the psychological trauma of the violence they experienced in the war. These women were isolating themselves from everyday life or grew aggressive towards their children, passing the violence on to the next generations (Garrard-Burnett, 2001).

According to the World Bank, women and girls were facing collective disadvantage in the post-conflict Guatemalan society, by being excluded in politics, land and education (Marini and Gagnolati, 2003).

Guatemalan Government and gender empowerment

After the conflict a new government was forming, and new political parties were being built. At the beginning of reconstruction, as mentioned above, gender rights were given little to no attention. As the government was becoming more stable, pressure was rising from the side of women's organizations and international communities. They were requiring that the gender issues should be taken seriously, should be addressed in the peace accords and taken in consideration in the process of establishing the new government (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). As a result, the Guatemalan government, with the assistance of international organizations, made numerous important changes for the benefits of women's rights and addressed the importance of the gender issues in the peace accord (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). Some of the most important accords that were implemented by the Guatemalan government (Garrard-Burnett, 2001) regarding rights, protection and status of the women are addressed in:

- Agreement on the identity and the rights of indigenous people;
- Agreement on socioeconomic issues and the agrarian reform;
- Agreement for the Resettlement of Population Displaced by Armed Conflict;
- Agreement on [the] strengthening of civil power and the rule of the military in a democratic society;
- Global agreement on human rights (Garrard-Burnett, 2001, p. 75).

Among these agreements the “Agreement on the identity and the rights of indigenous people” was considered to be one of the most important achievements of the URNG leadership (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). Under the agreement any kind of discrimination against indigenous people was not allowed and it also gave special protection within the society to the indigenous women (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). It criminalized the sexual harassment of indigenous women and takes on the responsibility to combat “the discrimination against women in agrarian reform” (Marini and Gragnolati, 2003, p.77).

“Agreement on socioeconomic issues and the agrarian reform” is considered to be a very important point in the peace accords (Garrard-Burnett, 2001). This agreement included: “Equality of opportunities and conditions, promoting women’s access to study, training, credit, land, productive and technological resources” (Garrard-Burnett, 2001, p. 75). Further it insures the participation of women in economic and social development of Guatemala (Garrard-Burnett, 2001, p. 75), and also recognizes the responsibility of the state to eliminate all forms of discriminations against women. This agreement also addresses the “[...] undervalued contribution of women in all aspects of economic and social activity, particularly their work in favor of improving the community” (Garrard-Burnett, 2001, p. 75).

Additionally in the “Agreement for the Resettlement of Populations Displaced by the Armed Confrontation” parties agreed to especially emphasize “the protection of the families headed by women, as well as the widows and orphans who have been most affected” (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 206).

The “Agreement on [the] strengthening of civil power and the rule of the military in a democratic society” addresses the importance of “strengthening women’s organizations in rural and urban settings; equality of opportunity and conditions, promoting women’s access to study, training, credit ” (Garrard-Burnett, 2001, p. 75)

Finally, in the “Global agreement on human rights” the Guatemalan government “committed itself to eliminating all forms of discrimination, factual or legal, against woman” (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 206), but also to incorporate and ensure women’s rights to participate in decision-making processes (Garrard-Burnett, 2001).

The government introduced positive discrimination measures not only for the benefit of increasing women’s participation in politics, but also to encourage and favor women’s participation in decision-making processes (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). The idea was that empowering women in such participation would also strengthen the civil society (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 6).

In summary, the Guatemalan Government in the peace accords committed itself to recognize equal rights for men and women at the working place, home, in political as well as social environments. Further, it committed to give the same opportunities and possibilities to men and women, regarding taking loans, right of owning land or other productive and technological resources (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 207). That husbands and wives have equal right to land ownership (Garrard-Burnett, 2001).

Furthermore the Guatemalan Government was also trying to promote women's rights by building women's offices such as Oficina Nacional de la Mujer (ONAM-the National Office for Women). However these offices and lack of action were strongly criticized by the women's organization as being ineffective and that women would not have any benefits from them (Marcus, 1996). The international organization UNICEF stated, that these programs were not effective and that they didn't have a clear guideline for their implementation in the society or an actual purpose (Luciak and Olmos, 2005).

The Guatemalan Government did address gender issues' and women's rights in their peace agreement and it was considered very unique because gender equality and women's rights were broadly addressed (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). Many people were hoping for a change that would come with the peace agreement, but unfortunately almost none of this accordance could be executed in practice. The regulations were very broad and did not have a clear line where, how and under which strategies they should be implemented into Guatemalan society (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). The peace accord represented a "good legal, political and economic framework" (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 207), but it didn't include the correct guidelines how to implement it (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). The Guatemalan Government failed to transform the laws into practice and most of the agreements in the peace accord stayed on the formal level (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). It can be traced back to lack of organization, participation and motivation from the Guatemalan government (Luciak and Olmos, 2005).

Gender empowerment by domestic NGOs

When it comes to promoting gender empowerment by the NGOs, a lot of work was done by the local women's NGOs and their effort to propagate the gender issues. These women were coming from different social backgrounds, some of them were even ex-soldiers, as well as women from urban and rural areas. Some of the most vocal women in the beginning of the peace negotiations, which were focused on the integration of gender equality, were coming from the URNG female officials (Luciak and Olmos, 2005).

“A few high-ranking female URNG officials, supported by a vocal women’s movement, managed to put gender equality on the agenda of the peace negotiations. For example, Luz Mendez, a member of the URNG’s commission negotiating the peace accords, emphasized the importance of incorporating women’s rights into the agreements” (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, pp. 205–206).

One of the main goals of the women’s movements in the peace process was the demilitarization of the Guatemalan society and the retrieval of female refugees (Marcus, 1996). This was because they were hoping “[...] that the resulting reconstitution of state and society will enable women to maintain gains they have made by organizing in exile and will create space for other, emergent feminist demands” (Marcus, 1996, p. 109). These women’s organizations were also involved in the negotiations and the arrangements of returning Guatemalan refugees from Mexico back to Guatemala.

Women’s NGOs were being established all over the country and they were the driving force that was fighting for change in Guatemalan society in all the different areas from economical, political participation to assistance and help in the return of refugees. They did their best to cover all the areas in which women needed help. One of the most prominent organizations was Mama Maquin. This organization was established even before the international organization entered Guatemala. Its job was to ensure that women’s needs were fulfilled in their return process and that women were represented within the committees that oversaw the return process (Marcus, 1996). Mama Maquin was also responsible for organizing “[...] development projects for women in the camps, particularly literacy classes and economic projects” (Marcus, 1996, p. 113). Mama Maquin had a major impact on the Guatemalan society, which resulted in women being elected to the Permanent Commission and to the leadership of the return groups since 1992. Throughout the 1990s their members were constantly increasing. In 1994, Mama Maquin counted “[...] 7000 members in 85 different camps in southern Mexico” (Marcus, 1996, p. 113). Mama Maquin considered itself part of a broader economic, social and political Guatemalan struggle, that worked with the returners in Guatemala, as well as those still living in the refugee camps in neighboring countries. From Mama Maquin later emerged two subgroups, the Madre Tierra (Mother Earth) and Ixmucane (female god, creator of mankind) (Kumar, 2001).

“The three promoted women’s rights to be heard, to be educated, to organize, and to participate in the community” (Kumar, 2001, p. 87).

The Ixmucane organization was very strongly advocating and campaigning for men and women to have joint titles to land and that widows and single women can gain land titles as

well (Marcus, 1996). Mama Maqin together with Kak'chin Konojel and Mujeres Maya Ixil (two other independent NGO's) were promoting gender issues and equal rights for both men and women, and empowering women in social and political sectors (Kumar, 2001). They worked closely with international organizations and were pushing the government to consider and include gender issues in the peace negotiations (Kumar, 2001). In addition to this, the Civil Society Assembly (ASC) also played a very important role in promoting gender issues and women's rights in the peace accords. The most vocal group of the ASC was the Women's Sector. As the result of their efforts, women's rights were specifically addressed in four out of seven substantial agreements between July 1991 and September 1996 (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 206).

Another important women's organization that was established shortly after the time the biggest violence was spread (1981-1983), was the Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo (GAM- the Mutual Support Group). It consisted mainly of indigenous wives and mothers of deceased male family members. Its goal was to set up a truth commission that would investigate, how their family members were murdered or where they disappeared. Further, they were promoting awareness of broader peace and human rights issues. During the conflict, they were fighting for the end of the forced recruitment of young men in the army. After the war, they continued fighting for human rights and bringing justice to their communities. Sadly, during the conflict, military and security forces targeted the organization. Because of its growing influence, Rosario Godoy, one of the leaders of the organization was killed in 1985 together with her younger brother and her infant child in a murder supposed to look like a car accident. Later, it was revealed that both Rosario and her child were tortured, and she was raped (Marcus, 1996). CONAVIGUA (Co-ordinadora Nacional de les Viudas Guatemaltecas/The National Coordination Committee of Guatemalan Widows), one of the largest women's organization, that started as a Mayan widow support group now consists of both Mayan and Ladino members nationwide (Garrard-Burnett, 2001). It focused on finding lost relatives and giving support to widows and orphans which were in horrible economical situations after the war (Marcus, 1996). Other women's rights organizations included the Conejo de Comunidades Etnicas Runumel Junam (CERJ, Council of Ethnic Communities 'Runumel Junam') and the Committee for Peasant Unity (CUC) (Marcus, 1996). All of these organizations were seeking and demanding "[...] equality for indigenous people and ladinos, respect for indigenous culture, demilitarisation, investigation of human rights abuses and social and economic reforms, including greater gender equality" (Marcus, 1996, p. 115).

During and after the conflict women's organizations were very vocal in raising awareness of gender issues, fighting for human rights and bringing to justice those who took their loved ones. Women's organizations were fighting for the equality of all women and men, no matter if they were indigenous or Ladinos.

Gender empowerment by international organizations

international organizations played an important role in ending the conflict and leading the country to the peace agreement. The UN played the role of a mediator and was acting as a monitor in the peace process. The UN was also helping refugees in the refugee camps since 1984 and continued to do so after the conflict by helping them return to their societies (Marcus, 1996).

When the United Nations decided to engage in a peace mission in Guatemala, great hopes were rising in the country - a motivation for change after so many years of conflict. The negotiations for signing the peace agreement were first monitored by the Catholic Church and then by the UN mission called MINUGUA (Poppema, 2009). The first peace negotiations were held outside of the country and hosted by The Civil Society Assembly (ASC). The Coalition of Maya People's Organizations in Guatemala (COPMAGUA) that consisted of over 200 groups were participating in the decision-making process for the first time (Poppema, 2009). From this moment until the final peace negotiation was signed, 13 different agreements were discussed, that never become binding. The reason was, that the URNG and Guatemalan Government couldn't come to a mutual conclusion to ratify them (Poppema, 2009). The agreements were considered enthusiastic programs for "[...] development, cultural pluralism, human rights, participation and the commitment to fully democratize the Guatemalan state, and as an important step in the construction of a multiethnic, pluricultural and multilingual nation" (Poppema, 2009, p. 388). The international organizations and their influence was not just important for bringing indigenous and non-indigenous people together, they also played an important role in addressing gender issues in the country (Luciak and Olmos, 2005).

"For example, discussions on the Socioeconomic and Agrarian Accord coincided with the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. The fact that gender issues were on the forefront internationally, made it easier to incorporate provisions favoring women's rights into this accord" (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 207).

One of the most important passages of the peace agreement, showing the integration reads as follows:

“Recognizing the insufficiently appreciated contribution of women in all spheres of economic and social activity, particularly their work in favor of improving the community, the (signatory) parties recognize the necessity to strengthen women’s participation in economic and social development on terms of equality. To this end the Government commits itself to take the specific economic and social situation of women into account in the strategies, plans and development programs and to train civil servants in the analysis and planning based on this perspective“ (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 207).

One of the most prominent international organizations in and after the war was UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), its role was “legalizing the status of and providing assistance to refugees” (Marcus, 1996, p. 124). It was promoting gender equality by giving financial support to women’s organizations that were focused on gender training as well as other forms of training that would help women and men returning from refugee camps back to their country and daily lives (Kumar, 2001). UNHCR was supporting and promoting the work of the Mama Maquin organization with their programs regarding the promotion of women’s participation in public, funding their economical needs with the help of credits (Marcus, 1996). Additionally they were organizing “[...] spaces in which women could meet and discuss issues of importance to them” (Kumar, 2001, p. 87). International organizations like UNHCR helped “[...] local and nongovernmental organizations, and volunteers provided humanitarian assistance, skill training and professional attention for the refugees” (Kumar, 2001, p. 91). With their support, women “[...] learned a wide range of new skills, including literacy, Spanish language (in the case of the Guatemalans), and productive trades. They engaged for the first time in community activities, and worked collectively” (Kumar, 2001, p. 91). Further, the UNHCR, together with Madre Tierra (Mother Earth) and Ixmucane, encouraged women’s rights to be mainstreamed, women to be educated and organized the understanding of women’s rights on the community level to raise the awareness that women can make use of their rights (Weiss and Yudelman, 2001).

Despite the efforts, the influence of international organizations didn't reach further than that. It was up to Guatemalan society to live up to the written agreement, which included all the good ideas of political, legal and economic frameworks. Unfortunately, there was a lack of motivation, political will, resources and a high level of corruption preventing the fulfillment of the peace agreement (Luciak and Olmos, 2005).

Conclusion

When talking about Guatemala and the development of gender empowerment one needs to understand that gender empowerment and equality was not the main priority in the country after it was left devastated and in ruins after 36 long years of war. The war had a crushing effect on politics, the economy and society. According to the World Bank, Guatemala was one of the poorest countries in Latin America after the war, with 90% of the indigenous population living in poverty (Luciak and Olmos, 2005). The majority of the indigenous population, which constituted about half of the population, lived in the rural areas, their livelihoods depending on small pieces of land. The importance of women's empowerment, gender equality and gender issues was lost in the sea of all the other problems the society was facing. Women's rights became an interest for the wealthy and rich living in the urban areas of the country, very similar to what was happening in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It became more of an "urban elite problem" (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 211).

"Where all women suffered from the prevailing culture of machismo, the fight for survival, particularly for indigenous women, took precedence over efforts to improve gender relations" (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 211).

Nevertheless, the efforts of women's movements to include and address the gender issues into the peace agreement were remarkable in that time, and were seen as a big achievement. However, this did not mean that agreements regarding gender rights in the peace accord would be followed by the society or the government. While women's movements demanded certain results and change from the peace agreement, the government made promises they couldn't fulfill. Women's movements were angered by the lack of interest that the political parties showed in implementing gender empowerment. Since the peace agreement took effect, the Guatemalan gender relations did not change noticeably. Cumulatively, only a few minor changes were made regarding women's position in the Guatemalan society.

"Guatemalan women in their effort to fully participate in society, argued that despite the industrialization of public policies with a gender perspective, the peace accords resulted in few substantive changes for women" (Luciak and Olmos, 2005, p. 212).

Taking into account the long conflict and the history full of discrimination and inequality against indigenous people in Guatemalan society, it will probably take a long time until changes in the society will be visible. It is still going to be a long fight for equal rights between men and women, and it is also going to take much more than signing a peace agreement to transition from the male dominated society in which Guatemala is trapped.

3.2.4 Analysis Guatemala

The gender development program of Guatemala was not very successful and is progressing very slowly. The following analysis will try to explain that slow progress, according to the theory of change on gender equality & women's and girls' empowerment of DFID.

Barriers

Since the beginning of Guatemala's colonialization and until the late 20th century, gendered and sexualized structural racism has been daily fare. The worst time for women was during the long years of the conflict which ended in 1996.

Before the start of the gender development efforts, barriers preventing gender equality were evident in all categories the development theory of change on gender equality & women's and girls' empowerment of DFID is suggesting.

There were barriers within *policies and laws*: Women traditionally could not hold land titles and were excluded from politics.

Services to address gender equality did not exist. There were barriers within the *civil society*. Girls were not registered at birth and were therefore excluded from the public sector. Sexual violence against women was used as a weapon of war during the conflict.

Because of prevalent *social norms*, such as sons being preferred over daughters and women being taken out of school earlier than men, women lacked *sufficient autonomy and agency*, made visible by their illiteracy, their inability to possess property, the lack of women's rights groups and the lack of agency in political, civil and private spheres.

During the war, women gained equality through active participation in the war and through the skills they learned on refugee camps. However, as soon as the war ended, they were again confined to their traditional roles.

Interventions

In accordance with the case studies, the interventions will be divided into those done by the government, by NGOs and by international organizations.

By the government

Because of internal fights for power and due to the reorganization of the government, there was not much interest in, or capacity for gender development or the advancement of gender

rights. Gender development efforts were pushed by international organizations and NGOs. Therefore, the actual actions towards gender empowerment of the government will be discussed in the output-section.

By NGOs

During the conflict, NGOs were already actively empowering women in refugee camps. After the end of the conflict, local members of many national women's organizations started to propagate the importance and raise the awareness of gender empowerment and development. They were helping women on the *household* and *individual* level, by assisting and representing returning female refugees, providing for their needs and empowering women with education and economic projects so they could participate in the community. Others helped women to investigate the murders and disappearances of their relatives, financially supported widows and orphans and helped women to get access to their land, imposing a change of law concerning land ownership. On the *societal* level, together with international organizations, NGOs succeeded in putting gender equality on the agenda of the peace negotiations. On the *community* level, the women's rights organizations tried to bring home Guatemalan refugees and demilitarize society in order to enable and maintain the gender gains women made in exile.

By international organizations

International organizations mainly worked on the *societal level* by financially supporting NGOs and trying to incorporate gender issues into the peace agreements. Together with the NGOs, they managed to push the new government to recognize the gender issues in the country and the need to strengthen women's participation and women's equality. Consequently, the government committed itself to incorporate the specific situation of women on the individual, the household, the community and the societal level into their strategies, plans and development.

Outputs

Looking at the outputs, the gender development efforts in Guatemala did not reach satisfying results. On the *societal level*, not all the crucial conditions according to the development theory of change on gender equality & women's and girls' empowerment of DFID were fulfilled: Gender equality and development became an explicit aim of the government. Laws

were passed to allow women to officially own land, to severely sanction sexual harassment of (indigenous) women, and to introduce measures of inclusivity for women's participation in politics. These outputs were reached through the mutual effort of the government and international organizations. However, most of the plans and promises of the government did not find their way into empowerment programs. The laws and policies passed, often did not prove practical enough to be of any real use.

Although the government was building women's offices with the aim of representing women's needs, these offices proved to be more or less ineffective. On the *community level*, the gender empowerment efforts were overshadowed by the dire economic situation, the fight for survival, and other substantial problems the Guatemalan society was facing, leaving them to be an interest for the wealthy elite. On the *household and individual level*, the culture of machoism could not be broken and the empowerment of women in their families proved to be very difficult. A major factor contributing to the difficulties was the prevalent alcoholism within among Guatemalan men.

Although many good efforts were made to improve the situation of women in Guatemala, unfortunately, they failed to work together for a mutual aim and lacked an overall plan. In contrast to Rwanda, the government and the public failed to connect the improvement of the precarious economic and social situation with the improvement of gender equality, and ultimately saw gender development and empowerment as a facultative project rather than a necessity. The specific interventions seldom targeted other levels and therefore did not have a wider effect.

Outcomes

Besides governmental promises and novel laws, the outputs did not lead to lasting outcomes. Although the government made gender development an explicit aim, which led to more equitable and non-discriminatory structures, these structures failed to deliver results. As there was no big change in social norms, gender power relations did not become more balanced. According to UNDP, the Gender Inequality Index (GII) only slightly improved from 0.596 in 1995 (no ranks yet) to 0.494 (worldwide rank 113) in 2015. Most of this improvement happened in the last few years (United Nation Development Programme, 2016).

The Global Gender Gap Index (GGI) improved from 0.6066 in 2006 (the first time it was measured), to 0.666 in 2016, even though the worldwide ranking worsened from rank 95th in 2006 to rank 105th in 2016 (World Economic Forum, 2016a).

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) for primary education in 1991 was 0.87 and improved to 0.96 in 2013. In 1993, the ratio for secondary education was 0.89 and improved to 0.92 in 2013. Tertiary education improved from 0.72 in 2002 to 1.04 in 2013. The proportion of seats held by women in parliament improved from 7.0% in 1990 to 13.3% in 2015 (United Nations Statistics Divisions, n.d.).

Only a small change in gender equality is visible. In particular, access to tertiary education for women improved. However, the changes are almost negligible, and the overall gender equality is still on a substandard level.

Strategies

The development strategies in Guatemala were mostly mainstreamed strategies, with the aim of integrating gender analysis in all development planning. There was a clear lack of targeted and concrete strategies for bringing about the process of change. Although the strategies were mainstreamed, they were mostly confined to a single level and did not generalize to other levels. For example, the gender laws which did not prove to be of practical value, and therefore did not have any effect on the community or individual level.

Programming approaches

The programming approach was planned to be a *gender-transformative* approach, as Guatemala sought to transform gender relations on a broader basis. In actuality, it was more of a *gender-sensitive* approach, as it recognized the differences and specific needs, based on the social constructions of gender roles, but did not really try (or succeed) to change those social constructions. A gender-transformative approach needs to address and change the underlying structural constraints of gender inequality, an aim that ultimately was not reached.

Research questions and hypothesis

The gender empowerment efforts made in Guatemala proved not to be very successful under the following conditions:

- (1) The government recognized the importance of gender development only after substantial propagation by NGOs and international organizations.
- (2) The government was closely cooperating with international organizations and NGOs

when it came to planning, however failed to deliver when it came to the execution of the planned programs.

- (3) The overall approach was a gender-sensitive approach, aiming at mostly the societal level, neglecting the other levels.
- (4) Men were only partially incorporated in the development process.
- (5) A long-term approach to gender development could not be achieved.

Hypothesis 1 cannot be accepted: The efforts made to improve gender empowerment and development in Guatemala resulted, if at all, in only moderate effects.

Hypothesis 2 can be accepted. The situation of women's rights pre-conflict was not good and subsequently did not improve much post-conflict.

Hypothesis 3 can be accepted. The cooperation with domestic actors seems to be important. However, the close and successful cooperation between the government and international actors might be even more important.

3.3 Case: Study Rwanda

Introduction

The Rwandan conflict, genocide and the international response to the genocide contributed to a major controversy and debate in international politics in the 1990s. The work and the attention of involved international organizations was focused on the victims of the genocide, the majority of which were women, and their later role in rebuilding their own and their families lives and contributing to rebuilding the state and the society after the conflict. Gender issues were a major focus when rebuilding and reconstructing Rwandan society. Women, who made up the majority of the survivors of the genocide, needed to find their way in new society positions. One of the aims of international organizations was to empower the women who survived the genocide and to assist them in finding new positions in society and helping them to gain better access to education, legal rights and natural resources (Byrne et al., 1996).

A Brief History: Pre-colonial, colonial era and independence

Before analyzing the gender dynamics of the Rwanda conflict, it is important to understand its roots. The conflict started as a result of political and economic factors, as well as ethnic divisions. Before the colonial era there were three ethnic groups that together made-up the Banyarwanda people: the Hutu, the Tutsi and the Twa people. They were seen as three different ethnic groups who lived under the same general group of the Banyarwanda people and shared the same culture, language and land. During this time, all three ethnic groups were organized “into occupational categories, denominated by the cattle chiefs who were all Tutsi” (Byrne et al., 1996, p. 33).

When Rwanda came under Belgian control after the First World War, the dynamics between the groups changed and it became a more unequal relationship, whereby the Tutsis became an elite group. Whoever was considered a Tutsi was defined by the colonial power in 1933/1934. In colonial times a person who had more than ten cows was categorized as Tutsi (Byrne et al., 1996). The result was that approximately just 15% of the Rwandan population fell under the colonial definition of Tutsi. Ethnicity was legally passed through the male lineage and recorded on identity cards that were defined by political power and economic criterion (Byrne et al., 1996). During this period the Tutsi minority was considered as “alien” and “superior race” by colonialists. Tutsi were privileged in their political and economic rights, first by the Germans and then by the Belgian colonizers (Baines, 2005, p. 222). As a result, all important governmental positions were taken by the Tutsis and the Hutu were left without ruling positions (Byrne et al., 1996). “Thus the Hutu became the “subject” of indirect rule in the colonial period” (Baines, 2005, p. 222).

During colonial times, political tension rose between the Hutu and Tutsi, because the Hutu felt discriminated against and powerless (Byrne et al., 1996). At the end of the monarchy, marked by the death of the Tutsi king in 1959 the numbers of Hutu elites, which were against the privileged Tutsi group, was increasing very quickly (Byrne et al., 1996). This was considered one of the final turnovers, which gave more power to the Hutu elites and it presented them with an opportunity to overturn the ruling Tutsis. It was also the year when the attacks and killing of the Tutsi population started (Baines, 2005).

Although Rwandans gained their independence from Belgium in 1962, the attacks and slaughtering of the Tutsi ethnic group continued. Tens of thousands of Tutsis were killed in the years 1959, 1963, 1967, and 1973. Those who survived were forced to leave Rwanda and seek shelter in neighboring countries such as Uganda (Byrne et al., 1996). Shortly after the

massacre of the Tutsis in 1973, the new Hutu Major-General, Juvenal Habyarimana, started to rule the country and “[...] assumed the presidency and authoritarian control of political institutions and the military, pursuing a policy of accommodation but also retribution, where Tutsis faced deliberate institutional exclusion” (Baines, 2005, p. 222). Major-General Juvenal Habyarimana later established the single ruling party called the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND), which came to be one of the two most important players in the Rwandan Conflict (Byrne et al., 1996).

3.3.1 Gender Dynamics before the conflict

Before the last conflict occurred in Rwanda in the 1990s, gender dynamics were very “traditional”. Men ruled the public sector and women were left in the private sector with no decision-making abilities. Tutsis and the Hutu, shared “a common history, language and culture” (Baines, 2005, p. 222). The two groups also shared the same view when it came to the position of women and men in society. Ethnic affiliation was more important for a man than for a woman. The ethnic affiliation of a woman’s husband was far more important for her than her own ethnic affiliation because the definition of Tutsi (owning 10 cows or more) only applied to men in the colonial era. This also meant that the children adopted the ethnic group of the father and not that of the mother. Men’s ethnic affiliation determined their access to resources, high level government jobs, education and land. However, ethnic privileges did not exist for women and it didn’t make a difference to which ethnic group they belonged. They could not enjoy the same rights of ethnicity as men, since those rights were reserved for men and were gender specific (Byrne et al., 1996).

Women depended not just on their husbands, but on all their male relatives. A man's position in society was to provide for the family and the woman’s position was to raise children and be a wife and mother. In Rwandan society, women were valued according to the number of children they had and even more so, if these children were male (Cherry and Hategekimana, 2013). Their role in society was determined by their position as a wife and a mother and how they raised their children. Mothers told their daughters from an early age how to behave (reserved attitude) and prepared them for the role of a mother and wife and to take care of the household and the fields. In fact, before the genocide, Rwanda had the highest birth rate in the world at 6.2 children per woman (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996).

In the colonial era, women, regardless of their ethnic status, had few rights and were mainly reduced to the private sphere (Byrne et al., 1996). Only a few women, mostly Tutsis, had formal access to political and economic power (Jefremovas, 1991). During this time women

lost the previous rights they had “held to land and labour in the lineage system” and they had limited access to “critical resources” (Jefremovas, 1991, p. 380). Throughout the colonial time and until the conflict in the 1990s, women were not considered subjects, nor were they considered citizens. They were given a few narrow legal rights and “enjoyed few spaces in the public realm” (Baines, 2005, p. 222).

Opportunities for women to have jobs or to seek outside work were very limited, because the role of the women in the society was one of bearing and raising children. The ideal image of a woman at that time was that she must be fruitful, reserved, silent and hard-working in the field (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996).

According to Human Rights Watch, women had a very important role in agriculture and made up 65-70 percent of the economically active population in agricultural work. However, they were, due to the discrimination law, not allowed to possess any land, and what they earned was controlled by men (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996). Women took more responsibilities than male family members for land cultivation, water collection, etc., in addition to their responsibilities of taking care of their children and household - all without being paid. In order to have a job that paid, a woman needed to have her husband's permission (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996).

The influence of the Rwandan women in the decision-making process was little or non-existent – they had to obey the rules and decisions made by men (Cherry and Hategekimana, 2013).

Before the war, there was an under-representation of women in education as well as in the political sectors. Women made up 45 percent of students in primary school, but the numbers decreased rapidly the higher the educational levels. At the university level women were outnumbered by men 15 to 1. The level of illiteracy among women was extremely high. The reason women did not receive a higher education was that they remained home from puberty onwards and because of poverty, parents would rather remove their female children from school than their male children (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996). Further, it was also social perception that it was not worth investing in girls' educations, because parents would lose their daughters when they get married. Additionally, girls were responsible for the care of their younger siblings (Byrne et al., 1996).

During the rule of Hayarimana a quota system was introduced in 1973, where the Hutu men from Northern Rwanda were given preference for positions in the army, diplomacy and parliamentary seats. This quota system excluded all women from decision-making processes,

power and seats in parliament, except for the few privileged women such as the wife of Habyarimana himself, Ms. Agathe (Byrne et al., 1996, p. 34).

When it came to participation in elections and voting, women's choices were often the same as those of their husbands. Shortly before the conflict in the 1990s broke out, there were 17 percent women in the National Council for Development and 13 percent magistrates, but there were no women "*Prefets*" and no women as Mayors (Byrne et al., 1996, p. 34). Also, there were no women in ministerial positions until 1990 (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996). During the time when the country was ruled by the Hutu elites, women were widely neglected in the public sector and were excluded from decision-making processes.

Further, the men were the ones affected by the ethnic factor, which was the determinant where in society they would belong. For women ethnic belonging didn't have any effect on their role in society. The gender roles were very unequal in Rwandan society and there were different rules for men and women.

3.3.2 Gender Dynamics in the conflict

The Conflict

The conflict between the Tutsi and Hutu started on 1 October 1990, when the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPW) invaded the territory of Rwanda (Burnet, 2011). The RPW was a rebel movement, which was made up of exiled (refugee) Tutsis, who didn't feel welcomed in the territories they were located in during the 1980s like Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Burnet, 2008). They were later "encouraged" by the newly elected President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, to set up an army and to fight for Rwanda. The RPW believed that "armed conflict was the only way to mount an invasion to 'liberate' Rwanda" (Baines, 2005, p. 222).

The RPW engaged in fighting with Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR), which for the most part represented the Hutu ethnic group ruled by the President Juvenal Habyarimana. This was the start of one of the most bloody wars the country had ever experienced. The aim of the Rwandan Patriot Front was to "liberate the country from President Habyarimana's dictatorship" (Burnet, 2008, p. 7).

The conflict continued throughout the beginning of the 1990s until President Habyarimana was forced to the negotiating table, because he was facing dramatic losses of territory and power (Burnet, 2008). Both sides were under international pressure to come to a mutual resolution of the conflict. They therefore entered into the Arusha Peace Agreement. The

Arusha Peace Agreement ended the hostilities, caused repatriation of refugees and, most importantly, created the transition to a power-sharing democracy under the assistance of the international peacekeeping force, whereby the Security Council Resolution 827 introduced the UNAMIR and requested 5,500 troops (Baines, 2005).

The peace transition failed and instead of peace it brought violence and death. The plan of Hutu militants was meant to stop the peace agreement by “carrying out the mass killing of Hutu moderates and Tutsi civilians, as well as murdering Belgian peacekeepers to oust international forces who might delay this genocidal plan” (Baines, 2005, p. 223).

In April 1994, shortly after this plan came to light, the Rwandan president Habyarimana was shot down in his presidential plane by unknown assailants on his way back from peace negotiations in Arusha, Tanzania (Baines, 2005; Burnet, 2008). This was the perfect opportunity for the Hutu militant group, better known as the “interahamwe,” which means “those who attack together” to gain influence over the Hutu people, take control of the government and to use this incident as an excuse to “begin a series of organized attacks on Tutsi men, women, children, babies, moderate Hutu politicians, and United Nations peacekeepers” (Baines, 2005, p. 223). During the horrific war, Rwanda experienced genocide. Between 500,000 and one million Rwandans (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996), mostly Tutsis as well as politically moderate Hutu, lost their lives in a “state-sanctioned massacre” (Burnet, 2011, p. 308).

The international community's reaction was to pull out their troops as fast as they could and leave just 270 peacekeepers on Rwandan ground (Baines, 2005). At the same time, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) was fighting against the government army, which was also involved in the genocide by the Hutu militia group and giving them a strong offensive force. The genocide finally ended when RPF troops gained control of the majority of the territory, seized power in Kigali and managed to establish the new GNU. RPF were named the transitional government, which was called “Government of National Unity” in July 1994 and this transitional government would remain for the next five years. RPF promoted an ideological program called “national unity and reconciliation,” with the aim to build a “New Rwanda” or a unified nation of Rwanda (Burnet, 2008). However, there were reports that RPF were engaged in several disappearances and civilian massacres between the end of 1994 and the beginning of 1995 (Burnet, 2008).

This resulted in two million Hutu civilians, prominent Hutu politicians, Hutu members of the RPF, Hutu-extremist government, militias and the army fleeing into neighboring Tanzania and Zaire (now known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo) (Baines, 2005; Burnet,

2008). At the end of the war, one million people had lost their lives and two to three million people became refugees, which was almost half of Rwanda's population. More than 48,000 men, approximately 1,000 women and 200 children (mostly boys under 14) were charged with genocide (Byrne et al., 1996).

Gender dynamics in the conflict

During the conflict gender relations were clearly divided with few exceptions. The men fought the war and the women stayed at home and took care of children and land. The women were in very vulnerable positions and the men were leading the war and using the women as a weapon of revenge on the "enemy". According to Baines (2005) woman's body was considered an "object" used to humiliate the other side and to show the dominance and power over the opposing side. Rape, like in BiH and Guatemala, was used as a weapon of war and in the end, the women were the biggest victims of this horrifying war tactic (Baines, 2005).

For Hutu militants, the Tutsi women represented the "source of evil" (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996). The propaganda about Tutsi women started before the genocide began in the 1990s. Tutsi women were considered more beautiful than Hutu women, since part of the Hutu militant propaganda was that Hutu women were made to work, while Tutsi women were made to be beautiful and sexual. The Tutsi women were considered by the Hutu propaganda to be something special, some kind of royalty, but also to be women, who are unreachable for the Hutu man (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996). According to Hutu propaganda, they believed that the "[...] Tutsi used two means against Hutu: money and Tutsi women" (Baines, 2005, p. 223).

"Hate literature described Tutsi women as temptresses, and Hutu men who married a Tutsi woman as traitors [...]" (Baines, 2005, p. 223).

During the genocide Hutu men were raping, humiliating and mutilating Tutsi women merely to demonstrate their artificial superior manhood.

"Rape and sexual violence were widespread strategies of Hutu militias. Most women were murdered, alongside their children. Sexual violence was used as a weapon to humiliate the Tutsi as a group; women were sometimes raped and sexually mutilated in front of their families" (Baines, 2005, p. 223).

In addition, for the Hutu militants, the Tutsi women were one of their biggest enemies, which was also a reminder of the time the Hutu were under the power of Tutsi elite. This is also considered as one of many the reasons why they had so much hatred for and were so violent against Tutsi women (Baines, 2005).

“During the Rwandan genocide, rape and other forms of violence were directed primarily against Tutsi women because of their gender and their ethnicity. The extremist propaganda that exhorted Hutu to commit genocide specifically identified the sexuality of Tutsi women as a means through which the Tutsi community sought to infiltrate and control the Hutu community. This propaganda fueled the sexual violence perpetrated against Tutsi women as a means of dehumanizing and subjugating all Tutsis” (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996).

Hutu militia gangs were also targeting “educated, elite” women, regardless of their ethnicity. Additionally, they were targeting Tutsi women married to Hutu men, further Hutu women married to Tutsi men, Hutu women associated with Tutsi groups and Hutu women who were trying to protect Tutsi. Also, some Hutu women experienced sexual violence by RPF (Tutsi) soldiers as revenge for what the Hutu militia groups did to Tutsi (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001). In the end, regardless of which ethnic group women belonged to, both groups of women suffered from the violence in the war (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001). More than 200.000 women were raped, sexually mutilated or murdered in the civil war in Rwanda (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001). Thousands of children were born out of rape (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001).

However, there were also women who participated in the genocide. The report “Not so Innocent: When Women Became Killers” documented that not only were women victims of war crimes, they were also committing such crimes. Women were participating as murderers, informers, inciters and also supporters of the genocide (Leatherman, 2011). One of the best examples of such behavior was Agathe Habyarimana, who was the wife of the President Habyarimana. She was one of the main actors and supporters responsible for planning and carrying out genocide (Baines, 2005, p. 224).

Further the Tutsi RPF included not just men, but also women in political armed actions during the conflict between 1990 and 1994. This was also a way to distinguish themselves from the opposite party (Burnet, 2008). The RPF also had women, who held positions of well-respected generals from which some became well known political figures in Post-conflict Rwanda (Baines, 2005).

Even though there were male as well as female fighters, gender relations in the conflict were, with few exceptions, clearly divided. Mainly men were fighting in the war and women were taking care of children and the crops when the men were away. The women’s responsibility was to try to protect the family and the house from the enemy, which most of the time proved almost impossible to do.

3.3.3 Gender Empowerment in post-conflict Rwanda

Gender dynamics after the conflict

After the conflict, the country was left in ruins with a traumatized Rwandan society. To rebuild the society, it was time to change the ways in which the social structures were working regarding gender dynamics. According to international organizations, such as the UN, a critical factor was to empower women as well as men to obtain equal rights and participation options (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996).

In the aftermath of the conflict, many Rwandan women found themselves alone (because their husbands had died or were in prison) and were forced to take the primary economic responsibility for their households. They therefore were in an even more demanding position than before and were forced to take on additional roles in society. Further problems were caused by the fact that the patriarchal system prevented women from gaining access to their family land (deceased husband's property or relatives) (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001) without any surviving male family members they had no chance of gaining the land rights to their family property (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996). By having no access to the land they weren't able to earn for living (considering that before the war women were mostly working in the agricultural sector) (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996). For many women in Rwandan standard of living decreased (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996). Most of the genocide survivors had little or no education (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996). Further poverty was growing and many women were left without any place to live or were not able to take care of their children (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001). It was estimated that 70 percent of the population in Rwanda were living below the poverty line in 1999 (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001).

Women survivors were forced to give birth to children conceived by acts of brutal rape (Kumar, 2001); two thirds of them were deliberately infected with HIV/AIDS, which had devastating consequences on the survivors. The infection rates more than doubled after the genocide (Elbe, 2002) because of the traditional view on gender dynamics in Rwandan society, the forced rape had a huge impact on the entire Rwandan society (Cherry and Hategekimana, 2013). The genocide on the Tutsi ethnic groups resulted in dual damages: "[...] a physical damage based on the injury itself, and an emotional and social damage for the woman who is deprived of her reproductive capacity and thus her ability to fulfill her societal role as a mother" (Cherry and Hategekimana, 2013, p. 101).

After the genocide, women who survived rape and torture by the extreme militant Hutu men lost their role in society and their purpose. After being raped, a woman had no value in the Rwandan society or the community. Therefore, many decided to leave their homes and to stay away from their communities or to live somewhere alone. Women and girls who didn't marry and were raped had worries that they would not be able to find husbands. If the woman was raped or suffered other harm to her body and as a result she was not able to have children, she lost her role and identity in society, was excluded from the society and suffered even more psychological damage. Considering that most of the Rwanda population is female, the trauma and the change in society after the genocide cannot be ignored and its impact cannot be underestimated (Cherry and Hategekimana, 2013).

After the genocide the Rwandan population was 70 percent women and 50 percent of all households were held by women, "Rwanda became the country of women" (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996). Approximately 60 percent of the female-headed households were widows. As can be seen it was a big demographic change in the population, an imbalance in numbers between men and women (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001). Therefore, the gender positions in post genocide Rwanda needed to change and new gender roles needed to be assumed.

"Given the deep social rifts engendered by these events, and in the absence of social welfare institutions, both traditional and new gender roles of women are sources of social and economical capital, contributing to the prospects for peace in the country" (Baines, 2005, p. 220).

A further problem was that in Rwanda prostitution was on the rise, many women did not have any other option or were pushed into it, as they were considered social outcasts because of their previous experience in the war (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001).

Rwandan Government and gender empowerment

In post-conflict Rwanda, the wounds of the war were still very visible, and the victims were still suffering from the war. For example, many women and activists from the UNHCR who built refugee camps for those forced to flee were attacked. The violence, rape and murder were still continuing. It was important for the further development in the country to act, to find shelter fast, and establish a dialog between the groups and build a safe zone for the displaced people (Baines, 2005).

International actors considered it to be important that women needed to be empowered, they needed to have their own opinions and access to information and to be able to make their own

“choices and to take initiatives, to make independent choices and to influence change” (Cherry and Hategekimana, 2013, p. 102). These changes provided the power to make the laws and decisions for society. After the horrors of 1994, the Rwandan government showed its commitment to promote gender empowerment and gender equality (Cherry and Hategekimana, 2013).

“In the aftermath of the genocide, the Government of National Unity worked to erase the colonial past and to move toward a future where Hutu and Tutsi, men and women, would be equal” (Baines, 2005, p. 228).

The new government RPF publicly recognized the importance of equal treatment for men and women and the importance of promoting gender equality. It took various steps towards implementing and promoting women’s empowerment and as a result the government appointed women to high-profile positions, such as ministers, secretaries of state, Supreme Court justices, and parliamentarians. RPF reorganized and rearranged the government’s structure and established numerous institutions with the main focus on expanding gender equality and representation (Burnet, 2008).

The Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Affairs (MIGEFASO) was created, and it was the first ministry in Rwanda that was not merely focusing on women, but also on gender (Burnet, 2008). In 1999 the ministry was reorganized and renamed “the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development” (MIGEPROF). The main aim of the ministry was to not only integrate gender analytical frameworks into all policies and legislation, but also to reinforce knowledge of gender analysis into local, national, regional administrative structures, the ministries, legislature, and judiciary arenas. This would be accomplished through training education and through active promotion of gender equality (Burnet, 2008). The Ministry for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (MIGEPROF) promoted gender equality as a key to a unified country and equal opportunities for women in the job market (Baines, 2005, p. 228).

“MIGEPROF has branches that focus on affirmative action and capacity building, legal reforms and revision, political mobilization, and gender mainstreaming throughout all levels and agencies of the GNU” (Baines, 2005, p. 229).

One of the most visible initiatives by MIGEPROF was the mass organization of civil, as well as political society at the grassroots level. The role the Ministry had taken was strengthening weakened women’s organizations and associations in the aftermath of the genocide, by empowering them to continue and to provide leadership and resources (Baines, 2005). The government actively promoted gender empowerment and gender equality and worked with

local NGOs as well as international organizations. Rwanda is a special case because of how seriously the gender issues were taken and how many actors were all working together for the same goal. The MIGEPROF organized women within rural areas and supported their work and the work of urban-based NGOs. Women's committees were established in every political organization in cooperation with the NGOs and international organizations, so that the grassroots women would have some kind of influence on the dominating male political constructs (Baines, 2005).

"Each committee consists of ten woman representatives, and each representative is responsible for voicing women's perspectives on a special issue (such as education, health, legal matters) to local government structures" (Baines, 2005, p. 229).

At the lowest level of political organization, "the cellule", women-only elections were held in March 1999 in order to elect ten female committee members, who would represent approximately 1000 to 2500 women. Later, committee members at the cellule level were elected as representatives to form a committee at the sector level and this election procedure was extended to the commune, prefecture and national levels (Baines, 2005).

A gender quota was introduced in Rwanda after the conflict. The aim of gender quota policies was to increase the proportion of women in political office (Burnet, 2011).

Thanks to the gender quota, many women were able to have a chance to build political careers, enjoy economic opportunities and improve their social mobility (Burnet, 2011). The gender quota was applied on the national, local and regional levels and had an impact on Rwandan society. That women would get more opportunities and would be included more in all areas and decision-making processes, can also be tracked back to the RPF. The RPF had women-friendly policies in comparison to the patriarchal pre-colonial and colonial period, where women were managing the domestic and private sphere and men worked and made decisions in public sectors (Burnet, 2011).

After the conflict, the ruling RPF also started to ratify the international conventions, whose main goal was gender equality and woman's empowerment (Cherry and Hategekimana, 2013). The conventions and protocols that were ratified by the Rwandan government on gender equality and empowerment are:

- "Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, approved and ratified through the Presidential Order No 159/01 of 31st December 2002;
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1980, approved and ratified through the Presidential Order No 159/01 of 31st December 2002;

- The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995;
- The Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age and Registration of Marriages concluded in New York on 10th December 1962, approved and ratified through the Presidential Order No 159/01 of 31st December 2002;
- The Convention on the Political Rights of Women concluded in New York on 31st March 1953, approved and ratified through the Presidential Order No 159/ 01 of 31st December 2002;
- The Convention on Married Women's Nationality concluded in New York on 20th February 1967, approved, and ratified through the Presidential Order" (Cherry and Hategekimana, 2013, p. 103).

By signing these conventions and protocols, although there was no strict plan how to implement them, the Rwandan government showed its effort to make a fruitful platform where it would be possible to implement women's empowerment and create gender equality rights (Cherry and Hategekimana, 2013). But when talking about gender empowerment, it is important to note where the women came from that made the biggest use of the empowerment. Those were mostly women coming from elite societies which were gaining "[...] lucrative positions in the national legislature and ministries, and greater purchasing power (for items like automobiles, clothing, and domestic servants)" (Burnet, 2011, p. 305). The parliament in Rwanda is directly elected and the majority of the parliament is female. Most of these women are "[...] card- carrying members of the RPF or its coalition partners. In addition, women elected to seats reserved for women were nominated, or at least vetted, by the RPF via the Forum of Public Organizations. Thus, most of these women owe allegiance to the RPF, rather than to the constituents who elected them" (Burnet, 2008, p. 310). The RPF has promoted and supported women's rights from the beginning of the reconstruction of Rwanda after the conflict. They were supporting the establishment of the Ministry of Gender and women's councils from the grassroots to the national level and they also promoted women's civil society organizations (Burnet, 2008, p. 310).

Compared to the Rwandan society before the conflict and taking into consideration the colonial and post-colonial Rwandan society, there was a huge change in the society of gender positions and gender equality. Through the international ratifications and with women taking different positions in the society it also changed civil society and the traditional old roots of gender positions started to fade away.

In comparing the situation in Rwandan society to the situation before the conflict where there was no female representation in almost any public sphere versus after the conflict, there is a

major change, whereby women and men are almost equally represented in all branches of government on the national, regional and local levels (Burnet, 2011).

Gender empowerment by domestic NGOs

The local women's groups played a very important role in promoting gender issues and gender empowerment. Both, Hutu and Tutsi groups were starting to work together and trying to find a dialog amongst each other:

“Tutsi and Hutu women have begun to work together despite the tragedy of the genocide, focusing on the commonality of their struggle as women. Together they are rebuilding their lives, their homes, their country. In doing so, they have begun a healing process, a process of building peace” (Baines, 2005, p. 221).

After the genocide a great number of national women's organizations and grassroots associations emerged to help rebuild the society, the country and most importantly to help the victims of the genocide return to life. It was the beginning of the establishment of organizations such as Avega Agahozo (AVEGA), that was founded in January 1995, one of the most important national organizations to assist genocide widows. It had ten thousand members by the end of 1999 (Baines, 2005, p. 231). Also important to mention was the Association de Solidarite des Femmes Rwandaises (ASOFERWA), which was founded in September 1994 to assist widows, single mothers, and orphans of the genocide (Baines, 2005, p. 231). Haguruka, which means “stand up” in Kinyarwanda, was also one of the local groups which was providing legal assistance to women throughout the country and promoting women's rights (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997).

“In Kigali, woman's organizations formed prior to the genocide began to reinitiate their activities. For example, by 1995 the women's NGO Duterimbere, originally formed in the late 1980s, had resumed activities to promote the role of women in economic development; and HAGURUKA, an association of lawyers and paralegals, renewed its activities to promote women's legal rights. New organizations formed in response to the genocide, such as Avega Agahozo (AVEGA), an organization of genocide survivors and widows. Many Rwandan women's organizations that had been formed by refugees in exile relocated to Kigali after 1994. For instance, Club Mama Sportifs, founded in Burundi, now provides educational and literacy classes to Rwandan women and girls” (Baines, 2005, p. 225).

Many of the organizations mentioned above belonged to the umbrella of Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe, which consisted of a group of 35 women's organizations countrywide by the end of 1999 (Baines, 2005). Their aim was to promote women and development and also to try to

build strategies with which women can practice their skills beyond agriculture, such as teaching, trading and marketing (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997). The Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe launched the Action for Peace Campaign in 1996. The Pro-Femmes Action for Peace Campaign had four main goals: "(1) to promote and encourage culture of peace throughout Rwanda; (2) combat gender discrimination; (3) Promote socioeconomic reconstruction; (4) Reinforce the institutional capacity of Pro-Femmes and its member associations" (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001, p. 104). While they also were monitoring and encouraging a dialogue between women of different ethnic groups, they were trying to provide them with skills on conflict resolution (Baines, 2005). Pro-Femmes were also providing microcredits to both rural and urban women. They were also promoting the importance of girls education (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001).

After the genocide and during the peace negotiations, the women's organizations in Rwanda were, providing assistance and services to grassroots women, focusing on widows, rape survivors, widows created by the genocide, female-headed households, rural women and for those women and girls caring for the orphans. They were providing the ones in need with basic necessities, such as clothing, food and shelter for the women and girls returning to Rwanda as well as survivors of the genocide (Baines, 2005).

Programs which were organized by various women's NGOs gave women a chance to participate in different activities, which later empowered them to have open forums for dialog between two different groups. For many women it was very hard to move from their established points of view and to understand each other's perspective, but in the end, they were able to move forward and to have a dialog and better understanding of each other. The women were divided into survivors (Tutsi women) and the "new returners" (Hutu women), who were returning from the neighboring countries such as Zaire, Burundi and Tanzania (Baines, 2005). At the beginning of the dialog, both groups of women had to focus on listening to each other. In the end, they could understand that both groups were widows of the war and this brought empathy for each other (Baines, 2005).

Both groups understood that they were, in one way or another suffering from widowhood. Tutsi women lost their men in the genocide and Hutu women lost their men as war crime prisoners serving their sentences in jail. Both women's groups understood after the dialog organized by the NGOs that they were left alone. It is important to emphasize that the process of working together by the two women's groups was not a process of reconciliation because too much was done and too many lives were lost, it was more about trying to find a way to

live alongside each other and an attempt to overcome difficulties for the sake of peace (Baines, 2005).

The men in post-conflict Rwanda can also be divided into men who lost their lives in the genocide or went missing, and men who were accused of the genocide and the violence and ended up in jail.

Rwandan society was divided, and the wounds of the war were very deep, so it was of great importance to make the effort and try to bring understanding and dialogue into the divided society (Baines, 2005). The first step was made with the help of the women's NGOs, which were doing their best to make it clear that there were no winners in this war, just losers and that everybody needed to work together to establish peace and future development of the country. The women played a very important role in this process. Considering that the gender roles completely changed after the conflict it was important to prepare women from both groups for their new gender roles and to empower them in their work and actions. But to do this it was also important that Tutsi and Hutu women had a mutual understanding and empathy for each other (Baines, 2005).

According to the leaders of AVEGA, projects that were organized by women of both sides, worked better. AVEGA's members are 60% widows of the genocide and the rest are married to war crime fighters and they work together on different projects (Baines, 2005). NGOs such as AVEGA resulted in both women's groups working together, women feeling empowered and not being left alone with their problems. They understood that there were many others just like them and that women are considered the hope of Rwandan society (Baines, 2005). Not only did the Rwandan government recognize the importance of the work of national women's organizations, but also that international organizations were some of the main supporters of such NGOs.

The work of national women's organizations was very much dependent on financial support of international donors. The international organizations recognized the importance of the women's organizations and their effort to bring development to the country. Women's organizations were considered by the international organizations as the key mediators after the conflict and the main group, which would help prevent future conflicts in the country (Baines, 2005). For example AVEGA was officially recognized by UNESCO for its work for peace and tolerance in 1997 (Baines, 2005).

It was estimated that in 1997, in each of the 154 Rwandan communes there were an average of 100 women's organizations, totaling 15,400 groups (Newbury and Baldwin, 2001).

Gender empowerment by international organizations

After the bloody conflict in Rwanda the gender-related issues in the armed conflict were brought to the attention of the international community by the international media, and feminist activists who existed or were participating in the Fourth World Conference on Women. During that time the appreciation was growing for women's initiatives, which were seen as peace builders in post-conflict regions. Among the international donors were the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and other Humanitarian Organizations each financially, as well as logistically supporting the Rwanda Government (Human Rights Watch/Africa et al., 1996).

Women's empowerment projects were strongly supported and funded by the United Nations and donors including the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Trust Fund for Women, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Women in Transition Program (WIT), and UNHCR's Rwandan Women's Initiative. The empowerment programs each in their unique way concentrated the emergency assistance not only on women who suffered from any kind of violence during the war and after the genocide, but also on long lasting gender empowerment in Rwandan society (Baines, 2005, p. 234). For example, the USAID was strongly focused on funding Women's Communal Funds. UNHCR and UNDP focused more on the empowerment in educational, legal, psychological areas and in the resource and capacity building of the Ministry for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (MIGEPROF) and other women's organizations (Baines, 2005, p. 234).

The Ministry for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (MIGEPROF) worked very closely with the United Nations with the aim to give "[...] resources to grassroots woman, build organizational capacity, and encourage political and economical participation" (Baines, 2005, p. 221).

International Donors and the United Nations collected and gave direct aid of approximately \$3 billion to programs for women and children in 1997. The United Nations had found it very important to contribute to NGOs which had as their main focus women's programs, gender empowerment and gender equality and approximately \$7 million went to the UNHCR'S Rwandan Women's Initiative (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997). The Rwandan Women's Initiative (RWI) was rewarded by the international community with a budget of \$2.6 million in the first year, which was monitored by the MIGEPROF and (Baines, 2005, p. 235).

The Government of Rwanda together with UNHCR slowly implemented the Rwandan Women's Initiative. In January 1997, the Rwandan Women's Initiative (RWI) launched an initiative to improve the economic status of women and strengthen the social structure of the country. The main target population of its initiatives and funding were female genocide survivors, including victims of rape, their children and the returning women (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997).

Women's national organizations such as Hagaruka and Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe, received support from the Rwandan Women's Initiative (RWI) (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997).

Also, the UNHCR Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women were calling on all the international organizations, which were helping to rebuild Rwanda to consult with women, and to train them when implementing, planning and visualizing their projects (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997, p. 9).

The UNHCR Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women also consisted of some points, that would later have an impact on empowerment programs and development in Rwanda (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997):

- Establishing training programs for field workers and community workers to make them more aware of the rights of women and their responsibilities to provide protection for them;
- Offering education programs for women to educate them on their rights and the recourses open to them if their rights were violated;
- Assessing the legal standing of refugee women who were integrated into local communities, with particular attention given to legal provisions that limit the rights of women, e.g., property rights. (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997)

As already mentioned, the Women in Transition (WIT) was a program of the United States Government that began operating in Rwanda in 1995. It operates through the Office of Transition Initiatives of the Agency for International Development in Washington and it worked very closely with MIGEFASO (now known as MIGEPROF). WIT worked very closely with MIGEPROF on programs to support rural women's groups and women's NGOs. MIGEPROF worked according to guidelines given directly from the USAID and was supervised by it (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997). The international organizations not only helped fund it, but also assisted and taught the

government bodies how to implement the resolutions and provided guidelines for the future work of national actors.

When the conflict ended, one of the best-known initiatives in Rwanda was the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Trust Fund for Women called “Special Window for Women” that was funded by the Netherlands. UNDP managed to raise \$56.7 million for development in the country, such as education, housing and rehabilitation of public buildings (Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997, p. 14).

“The program hopes to encourage decision makers to adopt a gender approach to development and provide women with greater access to opportunities for socio-economic advancement” (Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997, p. 14).

It is also very important to mention that in September 1999, the UN Program for Women (UNIFEM) organized a conference on the implementation of the Beijing Platform Action in Rwanda. This conference was attended by the Rwandan Government and national and international organizations in order to “[...] coordinate mechanisms to implement parts of the Platform of Action, including: revising national laws; providing access for women to basic services, including health; preventing violence against women; improving literacy; and establishing economic support initiatives” (Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 1997, p. 17).

International donors were also supporting women farmers through financial aid and by providing seeds and supporting “cow banks” (Kumar, 2001). “Cow bank” was a very successful program that was providing cows to women that were using them to produce cheese and milk and in that way earn for a living (Kumar, 2001). Furthermore international donors were providing food aid and food assistance to women and women-headed households (Kumar, 2001). Additionally microcredits were provided by international organizations in Rwanda were considered as a success when empowering women in rural as well as urban areas (Kumar, 2001).

“In Rwanda, women’s leadership in the microcredit activities of rural women’s associations led directly to the elections of women to both reserved and open seats in local government councils” (Kumar, 2001, p. 22).

Conclusion

When talking about the international actors and their actions regarding gender empowerment in Rwanda it is important to consider that the UNHCR, USAID and UNDP primarily did reports on the progress of the programs, but “[...] rarely on how such initiatives related to the

wider political context that shaped such processes” (Baines, 2005, p. 236). Considering the gender dynamics before and during the conflict, it is certain there was a successful gender empowerment in the country. Gender equality was higher and access for women to the public sector was better and their importance in rebuilding the country was widely acknowledged. But when reviewing the empowerment and the work that international organizations did and are still doing in Rwanda, the question that should be considered is: Who were the women and who were the men empowered by the international organizations and the Rwandan government?

Where Rwandan government and international organizations go hand in hand, because of their intensive work together and mutual support in promoting gender empowerment, there is a greater possibility of improving and expanding their programs. The international organizations were focused on women, but on which women? Most of the time the ethnic and class relationships were not included or neglected, a fact that might lead to future conflicts.

“Differences based on ethnicity, class, and geography intersect with gender to shape relations of power, privileging some groups of women (old caseload returnees) over others (new caseload returnees and survivors), resulting in new tensions based on different access to resources” (Baines, 2005, p. 237).

Another often overlooked point is the relationship women have with each other and the relation women have with men in their new gender roles (Baines, 2005). As already seen in the example of BiH, international organizations were empowering women and embracing their importance in post-conflict reconstruction by implementing new laws and policies and assisting and funding local NGOs. However, the women who gained the biggest profit from these programs were mostly those women who already – before the conflict and in the conflict – had leading positions in society. The international programs increased their achievements even more. This also happened in Rwandan. Women who were already high ranked in the society were pushed even higher through the international programs (Baines, 2005). Women, who these programs were primarily intended for, mostly did not or could not gain access to the high-ranking positions. Also, in many women’s projects, men were often involved in either leadership positions of the organizations or in marginal ways, which would later have an impact on families, children and on the community. The men for the most part in the international organizations were left out of the discussions and often had a hard time understanding women and other men because of the lack of dialogue (Baines, 2005).

“In short, an emphasis on the role of women in building peace should not eclipse differences among women and relations to men. By ignoring such differences, the international

community subscribes to the GNU's vision of national unity, and relations of power remain unchecked, and potentially unresolved" (Baines, 2005, p. 236).

Nevertheless, Rwanda can be considered a country where gender empowerment was successful, when compared to the situation before the conflict. The reason for the success in Rwanda was that the international organizations were working very closely with national actors and the government, which was at that time very open to cooperation and to implementation of gender equality. The Rwandan government gave a lot of effort to fulfill all the conditions of the international community when it came to gender empowerment and it followed the guidelines given by the international organizations. International organizations were, as already mentioned, funding the governmental bodies that were working on gender empowerment and the women's national organizations, but also controlling their work and assisting them in everyday tasks. From a formal perspective, Rwandan gender empowerment and development can be considered a success because of the close work of the international organizations with the Rwanda government, which was open to and ready for the changes. It is very doubtful if gender empowerment would have been so successful if the Rwandan government hadn't cooperated and been so dedicated to making gender empowerment one of its top priorities.

3.3.4 Analysis Rwanda

The gender development program of Rwanda proved to be successful. The following analysis will explain that success according to the theory of change on gender equality & women's and girls' empowerment of DFID.

Barriers

Before the gender development efforts were undertaken, the gender relations in Rwanda were very unequal. Barriers preventing gender equality were clearly visible in all categories suggested by the development theory of change on gender equality & women's and girls' empowerment of DFID.

There were barriers within *policies and laws*: The family land was always the husband's property; There were no social welfare or health benefits for women; Politics were male dominated; There were quotas which denied almost all women from decision-making positions; Women were not considered citizens; "Rights of ethnicity" were only for men; Women could not do work at paid jobs (without the permission of their husband).

Until the start of the gender empowerment program, there were no *services to address gender equality*.

There were barriers within *civil society*: Women had little to no education, because parents would rather invest the little money they had into their sons; Women were traumatized due to sexual violence during the war; There was almost no female representation in any public sphere; Women in the private sector had no decision-making abilities. Because of prevalent *social norms*, women were expected to suffer silently and were re-traumatized. Even after the war, women were still victims of sexual violence; The reputation of a woman depended on her reproductive ability, in particular her ability to bear sons.

Women lacked *sufficient autonomy and agency* because of their illiteracy; Their inability to own property; The lack of women's rights groups and the lack of agency in political, civil and private spheres.

Interventions

In accordance with the case studies, the interventions will be divided into interventions done by the government, by NGOs and by international organizations. However, as will be seen, a clear separation is not always helpful.

By the government

The development theory of change on gender equality & women's and girls' empowerment of DFID is written from the point of view of NGOs and international organizations that are trying to empower women. Therefore, interventions done by the government are not seen as interventions, but rather as outcomes of successful interventions on the societal level. However, in the case of Rwanda, pure necessity added to the push for gender development by NGOs and international organizations. Because of the results of the war, the dire pre-conflict state of gender equality was just not practical any more. There was no way around giving more rights to women. Because so many people died, and a big part of the population had left the country during the conflict, women had to be allowed to work, as there just was not a big enough labor force. Women needed to be allowed to own land, as so many of their husbands died or disappeared, leaving behind chaos and obscurity regarding the ownership of the family's property. Almost every surviving woman had suffered sexual violence, many rapes resulted in pregnancy and many families had been destroyed. These facts had an impact on

the social role of women, which until now was mainly defined through their ability to give birth to as many children as possible and to be wives.

Therefore, the government has shown its commitment to promote gender empowerment and gender equality, without much of a need of preliminary development interventions by NGOs and international organizations. Because of these specific circumstances, the interventions of the government will be analyzed as *interventions* as well as *outputs*.

The Rwandan government (GNU) publicly recognized the importance of equal treatment for men and women and the importance of promoting gender equality. It took various steps towards implementing and promoting women's empowerment like appointing women to high-profile positions and implementing gender quotas for leadership positions on national, local and regional levels. GNU reorganized and rearranged the government's structure and established numerous institutions with the focus on expanding gender equality rights and representation. The most prominent, the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development (MIGEPROF), was created to focus on women, as well as gender. It reinforced knowledge of gender analysis into local, national and regional administrative structures, the ministries, the legislature, and the judiciary through training, education and active promotion of gender equality. It also had branches focusing on affirmative action and capacity building, legal reforms and revision, political mobilization, and gender mainstreaming. However, the MIGEPROF intervened not only at the societal level, but also on the community level by strengthening grassroots level women's organizations and empowering them to provide leadership. They also established the "cellule" at the lowest level of political organizations. Working with international organizations the government ratified several international conventions and protocols on gender equality. Even though the interventions were not specifically aimed at the household and individual level, they still impacted those levels via the significant change in social norms that took place.

By NGOs

After the end of the conflict, many national women's organizations and grassroots associations emerged with the aim to rebuild the country and help the victims of the genocide. They were helping women on the *household* and *individual* level, by assisting widows, single mothers and orphans, and returning female refugees of the genocide by providing necessities, shelter, legal assistance, education and literacy classes. They were helping women gain skills beyond traditional agriculture. On the *societal* level they were advancing women's legal rights and promoting the role of women in economic development. On the *community* level, NGOs

were encouraging a culture of peace throughout Rwanda, monitoring and encouraging dialogues between women of different ethnic groups, making clear, that there were no “winners” in this war and trying to find a way to live alongside each other and to overcome difficulties for the sake of peace.

By international organizations

International organizations were mainly working on the *community level* and the *societal level*. They supported NGOs and the Rwandan government financially as well as logistically. The support especially aimed for long lasting gender empowerment programs. They focused on women's communal funds, educational, legal and psychological aid, and building MIGEPROF and other women's organizations. They implemented initiatives together with the government and shared knowledge on implementing resolutions, legal advice and establishing guidelines. International organizations were working on all levels, however they mostly empowered the government and local NGOs instead of executing grassroots programs themselves.

Outputs

Looking at the outputs, the gender development in Rwanda has to be considered a big success. On the *societal level*, all the crucial conditions were fulfilled according to the development theory of change on gender equality & women's and girls' empowerment of DFID: Gender equality and development became an explicit aim of the government and was followed through by policies, laws and budgets. These outputs were reached through the mutual effort of the government and international organizations. They also established new capacities for women's rights defenders like MIGEPROF and the numerous women's rights NGOs. On the *community level*, a substantial shift in social norms happened. Women went from their sole purpose of being mothers and wives, to becoming full members of every aspect of society. On the *household and individual level*, women were empowered to exercise their rights and to become more equal partners through educational, financial, psychological and legal aid.

It is obvious that many interventions generated outputs on multiple levels. For example, influencing and guiding policy makers resulted not only in the legal right of women to own property, but also changed the social norms on the *community level* and empowered women on the *household*, as well as on the *individual level*. That effect can be seen by many of the

interventions and like suggested by DFID, probably was one of the reasons of the overall success.

Outcomes

According to UNDP the GII in Rwanda continuously improved from 0.583 in 1995 to 0.383 (rank 84) in 2015 (United Nation Development Programme, 2016). At the first inclusion of Rwanda in the GGI in 2016, Rwanda achieved a score of 0.8, ranking it on the fifth place worldwide (World Economic Forum, 2016b).

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) released by UNESCO, measures the ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education. In 1990 the ratio for primary education was 0.99 and improved to 1.02 in 2013. In 1990 the ratio for secondary education was 0.81 and improved to 1.07 in 2013. Tertiary education improved from 0.23 in 1990 to 0.75 in 2013 (United Nations Statistics Divisions, n.d.).

The proportion of seats held by women in parliament improved from 17.1% in 1990 to 63.8% in 2015 (United Nations Statistics Divisions, n.d.)

Looking at the numbers, the success of the empowerment program is undeniable. Although, there are some differences between the measures, the distinct improvement since the end of the conflict is visible in all of them.

Consequently, Rwanda now has more equitable and non-discriminatory structures. The empowerment of women's rights defenders and the change in social norms has led to more balanced gender power relations, and the empowerment of the women on the household and individual level has led to an increased agency and autonomy for women.

Strategies

The development strategy in Rwanda seems to have been a good mix between a targeted and a mainstreamed strategy. There were many specific empowerment programs solely targeted at gender development like Haguruka, which provided legal assistance to women. However, all these targeted programs were embedded in a general strategy to integrate gender analysis in all development processes. The main actor for that integration has been MIGEPROF, with the aim to integrate gender analytical frameworks into all areas of policies and legislation as well as into local, national, and regional administrative structures, the ministries, legislature, and judiciary.

Programming approaches

The programming approach can be best described as a *gender-transformative* approach. It seeks to transform gender relations on a broader basis. This differs from a gender-sensitive approach, in that it not only recognizes the differences and specific needs based on the social constructions of gender roles, but also tries to change those social constructions. Therefore, a gender-transformative approach needs to address and change the underlying structural constraints of gender inequality. That means changing discriminatory institutional practices and social norms is at the core of the gender-transformative approach. And that is exactly what happened in Rwanda.

Research questions and hypothesis

The gender empowerment efforts made in Rwanda proved successful under the following conditions:

- (1) The government recognized the importance of gender development by itself and without pressure from international organizations and NGOs
- (2) However, the government was closely cooperating with international organizations and NGOs when it came to implementing the programs and raising awareness.
- (3) The overall approach was a gender-transformative approach, aiming at multiple levels (individual, household, community and societal)
- (4) Men were incorporated in the development process
- (5) A long-term approach to gender development was chosen

Hypothesis 1 can be accepted: The efforts made to improve gender empowerment and development in Rwanda were successful. However, it is important to note that the main impulse for the need of a development program came from the Rwandan government itself.

Hypothesis 2 cannot be accepted. Rather the opposite seems to be true for Rwanda. The conditions of gender equality pre-conflict were very dire. However, the change in gender equality after the war was rather significant.

Hypothesis 3 can be accepted. It proved vital to connect with the local community.

4. Final analysis

4.1 Differences between and similarities regarding gender dynamics in the case studies

Before the conflicts

While there are differences between the cases when it comes to gender dynamics before the conflict, but there are also similarities, especially between Guatemala and Rwanda. Guatemala and Rwanda were under colonial rule for a very long time and later gained independency, followed by military regimes. In both countries one of the ethnic groups was in a superior position than the other group. Nevertheless, in Rwanda both ethnic groups enjoyed the same rights and mixed together, which was not the case in Guatemala.

Both countries were in poor economic shape and gender equality did not exist. Women were mostly excluded from the decision-making positions and did not enjoy the same rights as men. Women had no or very little possibility to own the land of the family. The land was officially the property of male family members and women were not included in this right. When it comes to education the situation was again very similar. Boys were supported to enable them to go to school and get a higher education. Girls were not so lucky and were mostly dropping out of school at an early age due to social structures that didn't see the necessity to send girls to school. Guatemala and Rwanda were very similar in social structures. It was very interesting to see the developments of these counties, considering they are coming almost the same starting point, and their conflicts ended in approximately same time.

BiH is different, as it was never a colonial state like Guatemala and Rwanda, although it was for centuries part of different empires. The country was (and still is) a home to three different but commingled ethnic groups whereby they all had same right and same opportunities. As part of Yugoslavia, BiH was more developed and more economically and politically stable. Yugoslavia was considered an important political powerful player in international politics, which cannot be said about Rwanda and Guatemala. Gender equality was very developed in BiH before the war. Women and men had the same job opportunities and were equal by law. Although men and women had the same rights and same opportunities, women were widely underrepresented in the leading and decision-making positions. The number of women and men getting an education was almost equal, but on the university level were more women than men graduates.

All three countries have in common the fact that all of their social structure were mostly patriarchal. Men needed to be strong and protect the family; women were seen as weak and their main responsibility was to take care of the family.

In the conflicts

In the intense period of the war(s) all three countries experienced genocide and severe human right's violations. When it comes to gender dynamics in the conflict all three countries show a similar pattern. Mostly men were going to war and women were staying at home trying to protect their families and property. In all three countries, the female body represented the weakness of the opposing side and also a way to control the enemy.

In Guatemala women were seen as the mothers of the enemies that will give birth to a new generation of enemies. For this they needed to be "punished" which was done by torture, sexual violence and death.

In BiH and Rwanda sexual violence against women and systematic rape was an organized act and used as a weapon of war and a tool of genocide. BiH and Rwanda demonstrate similarities in the treatment of women and men in war. That is, how rape and humiliation of one group was seen as a victory and as something good. In all three countries there was a very high focus on one particular group of women at which the violence and rape was directed. In BiH and Rwanda nationalistic patriarchy played a very important role when it comes to the horrors in the war. Women's bodies were used as a weapon to destroy and humiliate the opposite side. Rape camps were built, and the number of children born out of rape during war was very high. Despite all the horrible things women needed to go through in war, there were also female soldiers. In BiH and Rwanda women brigades and soldiers were very common, and women were also actively participating in the genocide and the war. Guatemala had female soldiers that also actively participated in the war, however it was not as common as in the other two countries. In BiH, Guatemala and Rwanda men with few exceptions mostly dominated the decision-making positions in the war. However, BiH and Rwanda are the cases that got the greatest attention from international organizations, because of the high level of sexual violence and human rights violations.

After the conflicts

In all three case studies the conflicts ended in a similar time and left the countries devastated. International organizations and local NGOs and women's organizations played a big role in

post-conflict reconstruction, peace negotiations and the promotion of gender empowerment. The reconstruction programs were monitored by the UN.

In all three countries most refugees and displaced persons were women and children and the majority of the missing and killed were men and boys. Women and men were traumatized and had a difficult time managing their lives in the newly gained roles and positions. Further according to Kumar (2001, p. 9) “Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mayan women in Guatemala, and Rwandan women experienced high levels of stress and anxiety in their daily lives”. After the conflicts women needed to take on new responsibilities due to male relatives being killed in the conflict. This was very extreme in Rwanda and Guatemala where women previously were mostly limited to the private sphere and household but needed to take on more responsibilities and find jobs different than their traditional ones. This was also true for the rural women in BiH. Further in all three countries the sex ratio changed, whereby many villages were left without men. This was very dramatic in Rwanda because in a very short period of time the sex ratio and the demographic picture of the country changed completely. There were many more women than men in the country and to be able to successfully function, these women needed to be empowered. Countries were struggling with poverty, and the population with post-traumatic stress disorder. As the result of post-traumatic stress disorder in all countries there was, after the war, high rates of domestic violence. This was especially visible in Guatemala where domestic violence due to high consumption of alcohol was very significant.

4.2 Differences within the barriers

Within policies and laws

In BiH, men and women had equal rights and equal opportunities before the war in the 1990s. The situation in Rwanda and Guatemala was very different. In Rwanda, women did not have any rights and were legally dependent on their husbands. The situation was somewhat better in Guatemala, but still, women were not enjoying the same rights and social status as men.

Within civil society and social norms

Rwanda and Guatemala were more similar within the social structures and the position of women within society. In comparison, the women in BiH had a much more equal status with men. Nevertheless, the society in BiH was still patriarchal, however not as extreme as in Rwanda and Guatemala.

Within autonomy and agency

Before the war BiH had good autonomy and agency compared to Rwanda and Guatemala.

Services to address gender equality did not exist in either Guatemala, or Bosnia. In Rwanda women's rights organization were active pre-conflict.

4.3 Differences in the interventions, outcomes and programming approaches

In all three cases international organizations as well as local NGOs promoted gender empowerment and development on the societal level by demanding the implementation of same into the post-conflict states development plans, laws and peace accords. They succeeded to implement gender issues in the peace accords of Guatemala (especially NGOs) and Rwanda. The peace accords of BiH were gender neutral. In all three countries gender equality laws were implemented. Only in Rwanda however, were gender development and empowerment really backed by the government and subsequently led to substantial changes. There are some important reasons:

(1) The duration of the conflicts. The Rwandan genocide lasted less than 100 days, in which a big part of the Tutsi population got killed and millions of Hutu were forced to flee the country. That led to a heavy depopulation within a very short time frame and severely crippled the economy. In order to achieve economic growth and stabilization, the Rwandan government, in particular the president, viewed a greater gender equality as indispensable. In BiH, like in Rwanda many people were killed and had to flee the country. However, this consistently happened during the 4 years of conflict and didn't lead to such a rapid change within the population as in Rwanda. The genocide of the Mayan population happened throughout the 36 years of conflict in Guatemala and therefore didn't lead to a rapid change in the Guatemalan population.

(2) The relations between different parts of the population. In BiH and Rwanda, the former opposing sides were somewhat equal in their access to work, education and agency. The indigenous people in Guatemala however, which constituted almost 50 percent of the country's population, faced severe poverty and societal disadvantages in comparison to the Ladino population. Therefore, gender empowerment seemed more like a sideshow compared to the much greater inequalities within the country.

(3) Effectiveness of the government. The unfortunate segmentation of the BiH government after the war led to a reduced effectiveness, making it hard to reach mutual agreements on a state level without constant monitoring by International Institutions.

(4) Applicability of the gender equality laws. The laws passed by the Guatemalan government proved to be very unpractical as they were too general in order to be effectively enforced.

(5) Effects of societal outputs on the community, and individual level. Because of the poor applicability of the Guatemalan laws and the significant inequalities within the Guatemalan society, the outputs on the societal level failed to devolve to the community and individual level. In BiH the reason such can be at least partly attributed to the gender-sensitive approach, which failed to change the underlying social constructions especially in rural areas with less exposure to gender development programs and women's organizations.

4.4 Research question and hypotheses

Across the three countries, gender empowerment efforts seem to be successful under the following conditions:

- (1) The intrinsic motivation of the government to implement gender development and empowerment.
- (2) The effectiveness of the government
- (3)) Successful cooperation between the government and NGOs as well as international organizations
- (4) The overall approach needs to be gender-transformative, aiming at multiple levels
- (5) A somewhat equal society with not too much inequality between different groups of the population
- (6) Grassroots interventions that change the social norms bottom up.
- (7) The incorporation of men in the development process
- (8) A long-term approach to gender development

Hypothesis 1 - *The efforts made to improve gender empowerment and development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Guatemala and Rwanda were successful* - is of course hard to answer and depends on the definition of success. According to the measures used in this thesis, gender empowerment improved in all three cases, however with notable differences between the countries. The improvement in Rwanda is by far the most notable, followed by BiH and then Guatemala with only minor advancements.

Hypothesis 2 - *The conditions of gender equality pre-conflict had an influence on the successful improvement of gender empowerment and development post-conflict. More concrete, less gender inequality pre-conflict should have resulted in better improvement of*

gender empowerment and development - showed various results. For BiH and Guatemala it proved to be correct. However, for Rwanda, it was the opposite. This can be explained by the very unique situation after the rapid decrease in population that followed the genocide and made the inclusion of women into the previously male dominated society a necessity.

Hypothesis 3 - *Close cooperation with the domestic actors is important for a successful implementation of gender empowerment and development* - was correct for all three countries. Although it seemed like the most important condition was the successful cooperation between the government and international organizations and NGOs.

5. Conclusion

War destroys a country and its population in many ways. It makes people forget how it was before, it makes people forget who they were, and it often brings out the worst. War changes everything, and it changes gender dynamics. After a war the people are left traumatized and often, the only way to continue living is to suppress the horror of the war.

Having this in mind one can better understand the great challenges international organizations face when working with such broken societies. Gender issues therefore are often seen as some “first world problem” and are not taken seriously. To explain the importance of gender empowerment can be a great challenge. That gender equality is important was very clear to international and women’s organizations as well as the domestic NGOs in the examined countries. However, the male dominated governments were mostly ignorant towards the issue. Without pressure from domestic NGOs and international organizations, it is questionable if anything would have changed on the societal level.

In some countries such as Guatemala a lot of changes were made, but in the end, stayed on a formal level and didn’t translate to the reality of the people. Guatemala is a good example that the efforts of international organizations have their limits. They can promote programs, implement gender issues into the peace accords, give financial aid, and support the domestic NGOs. But if there is a lack of will within the government, it can destroy even the most unique and ambitious peace accord. Rwanda on the other hand is the typical example of how much can be changed if the government is willing to. However, it is worrying, that the country needed to go through the most dramatic demographic changes within a very short period of time, in order to consider gender development plans. Only when Rwanda was without any other options, a change in gender dynamics took place. The case of Rwanda

proved that with enough will, a positive development is possible, even with a less gender focused peace accord. In BiH the peace accord did not address gender issues and the government was divided in three parts, making it very hard to come to mutual agreements. BiH also experienced some big changes in the size of its population, but not in such drastic numbers as Rwanda. In BiH, gender empowerment happened on some levels but could not fully reach the decision-making positions, as it is mostly the case in west and south European countries.

Overall, the thesis came to similar results as the empowerment theory of DFID suggests, highlighting the importance of cooperation between domestic and international players, a gender transformative approach, a combination of targeted and mainstreamed empowerment strategies, strategies that focus on more than one level and a long-term approach do gender empowerment. All of these are important conditions for a successful gender development program. However, also other conditions not previously mentioned by DFID were uncovered. The existence of “bigger” problems like extreme poverty or major inequalities between ethnic groups seem to hinder the effectiveness to a great extent. With one important exception: If gender empowerment and development itself is seen as the solution to these problems, as it was the case in Rwanda, the existence of these “bigger” problems can substantially facilitate and accelerate empowerment efforts. DFID also didn’t acknowledge the effectiveness of the government. If the government is not able or motivated to act, due to structural or other reasons, efforts of international organizations and NGOs lead to nothing.

The finding of Gizelis (2009; 2011) that greater levels of gender equality pre-war lead to better post-conflict peace building seem to not always be true for the success of post-conflict gender development, as seen in Rwanda’s case.

To conclude, the most important conditions under which gender equality and women’s empowerment can happen are the long-term cooperation of domestic NGOs, international organizations and local governments and the expansion of the efforts to all levels of society. However, the single most important condition might be the realization of the government and the people, that gender empowerment and development is inevitable for the good of the country.

5.1 Limitations and implications

The thesis has some obvious limitations. The results are derived from three case studies of three different countries with their specific approach to gender empowerment and development. Even though the cases have many similarities, they have even more differences.

Therefore, any conclusions drawn cannot be generalized and is a result of the specific processes and preconditions of the country. However, most of the results fit to the existing research in the field and can therefore be cautiously interpreted as a confirmation of what is already known. Future research will need to expand the scope and include more countries in the analysis.

Another problem lies within the measurement of gender empowerment and development. The indices used can only depict some aspects of the whole picture. In future research, it would be beneficial to include other measures like questionnaires, contemporary media depiction of gender roles, data of domestic violence, gender role allocation in the family, etc.

5.2 Personal statement of the author

This thesis shows that no matter on what continent, no matter what the level of development or gender equality, in the war everything is forgotten.

It took a very long time for the horrors of the war to be recognized as crimes on an international level. It seems very upsetting that wars such as in BiH and Rwanda needed to happen, before gender based sexual violence and gender empowerment in post-conflict reconstruction would be acknowledged. The fact that agreements and resolutions such as UN 1325 were only passed 20 years ago is even more unsettling.

The three cases show that it is not enough to implement laws, give financial aid, or build local organizations the one thing that can make a difference is to change the way societies function and to break the traditional roles of both men and women. To achieve this, and here I also speak from my personal experience, people need to start talking. Remaining silence is one of the biggest mistake that post-conflicts societies can make. It is understandable, that nobody wants to be remembered of what has happened in the war and what they experienced, but if people do not talk, they will not be able to learn nor understand each other. In the end, a lot will be forgotten as if it has never happened and the next generation will not be able to learn from their parents' mistakes. The opposite might happen and the grudge they hold will one day come out.

Growing up in a post-conflict country felt like living in a minefield, where a wrong question could lead to explosion. Even as a child I knew that I could never ask my parents about the war. They didn't need to tell me, it was like an unwritten rule. Therefore, I and many other children grew up with the fear to ask and have never been able to truly connect with our past. Of course, the horrors women suffered and still suffer in war cannot be accounted for with any amount of written words. However, addressing the issues over and over again, can help

the victims regain their voices, which all too often have been lost due to the psychological trauma, social exclusion and post-traumatic stress. If this work can help only one woman to start to talk and share their experience it was more than worth my effort.

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Abstract English

Since the 1990s, during which the conflicts in Rwanda, Guatemala and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) ended, it has become clear that gender dynamics play a significant role in inter and intra-state conflicts. Gender-based sexualized violence is used as a weapon of war and conflicts can significantly worsen gender equality, making effective post-conflict reconstruction more difficult. International organizations and NGOs have realized that gender development in post-conflict regions is a critical step for achieving peace and stability. This thesis strives to understand the conditions under which efforts to promote gender empowerment and development in post-conflict Rwanda, Guatemala and BiH by the respective governments, domestic NGOs and international organizations were most successful. The countries are analyzed with the *Theory of change on gender equality & women's and girl's empowerment* from DFID in three single case studies. The indices used to measure the success of the gender empowerment efforts are the Gender Parity Index (GPI), the Gender Gap Index (GGI) and the Gender Inequality Index (GII). The results suggest that the most important conditions include the intrinsic motivation of the government, a strong need for change and the existence of a long-term cooperation between the government, domestic NGOs and international organizations.

Abstract Deutsch

Seit den 1990ern, in welchen die Konflikte in Ruanda, Guatemala und Bosnien und Herzegowina (BiH) endeten, wurde immer deutlicher, dass Geschlechterdynamiken eine bedeutende Rolle in inter- und intranationalen Konflikten spielen. Geschlechterbasierte, sexualisierte Gewalt wird als Waffe eingesetzt, Kriege können die Gleichberechtigung der Geschlechter bedeutend verschlechtern und den erfolgreichen Wiederaufbau eines Landes nach dem Krieg empfindlich stören. Internationale Organisationen und NGOs haben erkannt, dass Gender Empowerment sehr wichtig für das Erreichen von Frieden und Stabilität in Nachkriegszeiten ist. Die vorliegende Arbeit untersucht die Bedingungen unter welchen Gender Development und Empowerment Programme der Regierung, Internationaler Organisationen und lokalen NGOs in Ruanda, Guatemala und BiH am erfolgreichsten waren. Die Länder werden anhand der *Theory of change on gender equality & women's and girl's empowerment* des DFIDs in drei Einzelfalluntersuchungen analysiert. Um den Erfolg der Programme zu messen wurden der Gender Parity Index (GPI), der Gender Gap Index (GGI) und der Gender Inequality Index (GII) verwendet. Die Ergebnisse legen nahe, dass die wichtigsten Bedingungen die intrinsische Motivation der Regierung, ein starkes Bedürfnis nach Veränderung, und die Existenz einer langfristigen Kooperation zwischen der Regierung, lokalen NGOs und internationalen Organisationen sind.