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ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF WOMEN ON PEACE BUILDING ISSIUES IN POST CONFLICT SOCIETIES

THESIS

TALAR ABDULKHALEQ OTHMAN DEZAYEE

(Y1312.110053)

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PROGRAM

THESIS ADVISOR: ASSITANT PROFESSOR GULAY UGUR GOKSEL

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İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

Yüksek Lisans Tez Onay Belgesi

Enstitümüz Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Ana Bilim Dalı Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler İngilizce Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı **Y1312.110053** numaralı öğrencisi **Talar Abdulkhaleq Othman DEZAYEE**'nin **"THE ROLE AND EFFECT OF WOMEN ON PEACE-BUILDING AND PEACE MAKING PROCESSES IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES"** adlı tez çalışması Enstitümüz Yönetim Kurulunun 12.01.2016 tarih ve 2016/01 sayılı kararıyla oluşturulan jüri tarafından oy.birliği. ile Tezli Yüksek Lisans tezi olarak kabul ...edilmiştir.

Öğretim Üyesi Adı Soyadı	İmzası

Tez Savunma Tarihi :14/01/2016

1) Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Gülay Uğur GÖKSEL

2) Jüri Üyesi : Yrd. Doç. Dr. Gökhan DUMAN

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Not: Öğrencinin Tez savunmasında Başarılı olması halinde bu form **imzalanacaktır.** Aksi halde geçersizdir.

III

To my lovely parents whom worth more than anything for me.

FOREWORD

A friend of mine and I decided to go and eat outside. Turkey is so much famous for its restaurants, and that is why every time my parents call me, they ask me to try every Turkish delicious food on their behalf too. It was a warm summer day; at early evening we walked out of campus and headed toward Flora Sahel, which is a very beautiful and elite neighborhood. After 3o minutes of drive, we got to Sahel and sat to one of the nearby restaurants where we had a very nice view of the water in front of us and enjoying the natural sound of water hitting the stones.

The food was brought, *Turkish donnerKabab*for me and *Lamajom*formy friend with the traditional Turkish yogurt. While eating the food, a women glimpse of whom I had from window grasped my attention and made my appetite low. There was a young beautiful woman standing nearby the restaurants, she had bottles of water with other slight accessories. She was seemingly selling these. After some moments, my friend who saw how bad I felt for her, she further asked my attention to observe her two kids around her too. The women and her kids who were coming inside the restaurant and asking for selling the tissues were not local people; rather they were immigrants who had escaped their homes due to the widespread violence.

Since then, I was having that immigrant poor young lady and her kids in my mind. Then I was only able to give some money to them which could not adequately cure their problem, therefore, I thought it might be considered more helpful if I do my master degree about the role of women in peace building. By this research, at least, I get relieved that I contributed towards life improvement of people especially women like that poor immigrant woman who has been so much vulnerable to the effects of wars in her country.

I loved this research so much, since besides completing my degree, I was relieved that I am doing a contribution toward empowering women who constitute half the world's population. It was not an easy job, because I was away from family and I had to perform every chore by myself. Sometimes, I was disappointed due to the heavy load of studies and writings, but it was my family who supported me and frequently gave me motivation for doing my studies. I would like to thanks, my mom, my dad, my five sisters and three brothers who always accompanied me through either their presence or calls and texts.

I would like to take the chance and thank my university professors who motivated me and sometimes forced me through their punishment to study more and more. Special thanks go to my great Advisor professor Gulay Ugur Goksel who proved her so much helpful. She was always available to me and supportive.

December 2015   **TALAR ABDULKHALEQ OTHMAN DEZAYEE**
Master Degree and Government Employee

VIII

TABLE OF CONTENT

ABBREVIATIONS

APDP	: Afghan People Dialogue on Peace
APRP	: Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program
BWA	: Baghdad Women Association
CDA	: Community Development Association
CPA	: Comprehensive Peace Agreement
GEST	: Gender Expert Support Team
NDI	: National Democratic Institute
NCP	: National Congress Party
SPLM	: Sudan's People Liberation Movement
SND	: Sudan National Dialogue
SuWEP	: Sudanese Women Empowerment in Peace
WADI	: Woman's Alliance for a Democratic Iraq
WFWI	: Women for Women International

THE ROLE AND IMPACT OF WOMEN ON PEACE BUILDING ISSUES IN POST CONFLICT SOCIETIES

ABSTRACT

Considering the devastating situation of women in the post-conflict societies, this research is analyzing the role and impact of women in peace Building issues in post- conflict societies. The main research question driving this thesis is: what is the impact of women participation during peace building on the outcome of the process. Women in post conflict societies- including Iraq (Kurdistan), Sudan and Afghanistan- have been vulnerable to the fatal effects of war and continual conflicts. As a result of these calamities, constructive role of women in the societies have been underestimated and thus, largely women have been marginalized to participate in public and social events in their related societies. Women are considered as Pacific's groups who don't incline to start wars, but to make peace. This is why mostly women are excluded to take part in peace negotiations and other important national decision-makings.

Despite all of such discriminations, my thesis explores the local women initiatives in different post conflict societies aimed to shift the exclusive role of male -dominated decision makings into a more inclusive program where women can freely represent and fight for their rights too. In this regard, the thesis presents the local initiatives perpetrated by the women activists in Iraq (mostly Kurdistan), Sudan and Afghanistan, which improved women status in peacemaking issues and political participation. A great success by woman gain is lobbying for application of SCR 1325, provides basis for women participation and a foundation for peace, and conventions like CEDAW which supports for women empowerment and prevent any type of discrimination against women in these societies.

Nonetheless, incredible barriers and obstacles stand on the way to women empowerment in post conflict societies. To mention some, insecurity, low level of economy, corruption, traditionalism of societies all prevent women to take an effective part in peace making issues and participate in governance. Therefore, the role of women in peace building is still contested and women still struggle to fight for their rights in post conflict societies, despite of the heavy rhetoric of international community for supporting women empowerment.

Keywords: *Peace, War, Women, Peace building, Political Participation, Post Conflicts societies.*

ÇATIŞMA SONRASI TOPLUMLARDA BARIŞ İNŞASI KONULARINDA KADINLARIN ROLÜ VE ETKİSİ

ÖZET

Bu araştırma, çatışma sonrası toplumlarda kadınların yıkıcı durum göz önüne alındığında, barış inşası konularında kadınların rolünü ve etkilerini analiz ediyor. Bu tezin ana araştırma soru: barış inşası sırasında ve sürecinin sonucundan kadınların katılımının etkisi nedir. Çatışma sonrası toplumlarda, (Kürdistan) Irak, Sudan ve Afganistan dahil kadınlar savaş ve sürekli çatışmaların öldürücü etkilerine karşı savunmasız olmuştur. Bu felaketlerin bir sonucudan dolayı, toplumlarda kadınların yapıcı rolü göz ardı edilmiş ve bu nedenle, kadınlar toplumlarda kamusal ve sosyal etkinliklere katılmak için marjinalize edilmiş. Kadınlar savaşları başlatmak için değil barış yapmak eğmeyin Pasifik gruplar olarak kabul edildiler. Büyüzden çoğu kadınlar barış görüşmelerine ve diğer önemli ulusal karar kazançlar katılma hariç olmuşlar.

Tüm bu tür ayrımcılığın rağmen, Benim tez çatışma sonrası toplumlarda kadınlar kendi hakları için mücadele bir daha kapsayıcı bir programa erkek pazarı hedeflenerek karar kazançlar özel rolünü kaydırmaya amaçlayan farklı yerel kadın girişimleri araştırıyor Bu bağlamda, tez barış sorunları cözmesi ve siyasal katılım kadınların statüsünü gelişmiş amaçıyle Irak (çoğunlukla Kürdistan), Sudan ve Afganistan'da kadın aktivistlerin, tarafından işlenen yerel girişimleri sunar. Kadınlar için büyük kazanç ve başarı SCR 1325 uygulanması için kulis yapmaktır, böylece kadının güçlendirilmesi için destek sebeb olmuş. Buna ek olarak toplumlarda kadınlara karşı her türlü ayrımcılığın önlemek amaçıyla CEDAW gibi kongreler, kadınlar katılımı ve barış için bir temel oluşturur.

Ancak, çatışma sonrası toplumlarda inanılmaz engeller kadınlara güçlendirilmesi yol üzerinde duruyor. Bazıları bahsetmek gerekirse, güvensizlik, ekonominin düşük seviye, yolsuzluk, toplumların geleneksellik, tüm barış yapma konularda etkin rol almak ve yönetime katılma kadınların engeller. Bu nedenle, barışın inşasında kadının rolü hala tartışmalı ve çatışma sonrası toplumlarda kadınların güçlendirilmesini desteklemek için uluslararası toplumundan ağır retoriğine rağmen, kadınlar hala kendi hakları için mücadele ediyorlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler*: Barış, Savaş, Kadın, , Bariş İnşasi Siyasal Katılım, Çatişma Sonrasi Toplumlarda.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I am presenting an overview about women and their role and impact toward peace building in their societies. I will present the status quo of the women in post-conflict societies, especially the ones who want to work toward a change. Then, I argue why this issue matter and worth a comprehensive research on it.

1.1 Why This Topic?

"The hand of women is like a flower and when it touches things, it makes it more beautiful" this Chinese famous proverb defines women abilities in a quite great way. Throughout the history, in both ancient and current times, women are the ones on whom the others- family, children, spouse- rely. In ancient times, people used garlic to cure seventy-two diseases. They used to name this vegetable as the mother healer (Susan, 2004). Regardless of the feminizing concept of the word, I also believe that women are the ones who are the healers of most of the social, political and economical problems.

The end of world war marked the inception of another dangerous war, Cold War. Cold war brought a tremendous shift in the system of world order. Unlike the inter-state conflicts, which are the wars between separate states, intrastate conflicts, which are war between different groups in one state, started to occupy societies especially in third world countries. Intrastate conflicts were accompanied with great number of fatal infightings, which produced tremendous amount of violence in the societies (McCarthy, 2011, p. 6).

Women and children fall victims to the destroying effects of civil wars. Women in third world countries where intrastate conflict were prevalent became vulnerable to war committed atrocities such as raping, kidnapping, harassment and so on. In addition to this vulnerability, women were already suffering a lot due to the preexisting gender imbalance in level of political, economical and social power (McCarthy, 2011, pp. 6-7).

1

The traumatic effects of civil war to women have not been equal to male combatants. It is important to recognize the impact of this violence on women and thus reconciliation process. Women are usually not incorporated into the former efforts to resolve conflicts. However, women have the potential to bridge the differences between the warring parties. Women are the key players in non-governmental organizations, leaders of protest and grassroots movements, which inspire societal changes in their societies and contribute toward peace process. From 1992 to 2011, less than 4 % of signatories to peace agreement and less than 10 % of negotiators at peace talk s were women (Tom, 2015). Therefore, it is worthwhile to examine women incorporation into or their exclusion from the peace building efforts.

It should be acknowledged that transition from civil war to stable peace is complicated and challenging. No one can determine its success, due to the complex nature of peace building that supports for a strong incorporation of women in the process (McCarthy, 2011, p. 9). This is, too, internationally recognized on October 31 2000, UN security country resolution 1325. This resolution provides the basis for women inclusion and a foundation for peace. As a result, global progress shows that there has been an improvement in women inclusion in governance and decision-makings. In 2009 the proportion of women occupying the parliament was 18% while in 1995 this proportion was 11 % (Adel 2013, pp. 1).

Women are not a monolithic group. Diversity of women should be acknowledged. Women are a multi dimensional group diversified through factors such as ethnicity, class and religion. In addition to this, women are universally disadvantaged in the patriarchal societies of course; the level of disadvantage is dependent on different ways and different degrees and based on the place they live in. women are diverse group of social actors with differentiated backgrounds and capacities (McCarthy, 2011, pp. 9-10).

Women make up a significant bulk of the societies now. The population of women is exceeding the men population in the world. There are a lot of states whose women population is outnumbering their male population (Osalivan, 2015). And there are many

other states, too, which are anticipated to have more women population than male population in the coming years. In Iran, for instance, the women have outnumbered the men in population (Osalivan, 2015).

I content to say the frequency of violence is high in countries, which don't have a just and equal distribution of opportunities and resources among its population. The unbalance inclusion of men and women in decision-making processes is not a proper way for getting forward from the view point of economy, politics and social issues.

It gets its worst form when the unbalance equilibrium, the men participation in decision-making is more than the women's. It causes the half or more than the half of the society population to marginalize and thus slow down the development, modernization and generally speaking the prosperity of the society. For example, among the 192 countries as of now in 2015 only 29 countries have quotas to promote women political participation at both national and sub national levels (Kibel, 2012).

This issue of exclusion of women in a decision-making has intrigued me so much. Experiencing from my own life and my own country, north of Iraq, I am so excited to do a research study to see if inclusion is defined in our system and in other similar system too or not. Having lived in north of Iraq, I know that women are given fewer opportunities to participate in decision-making processes. Most of the times, they are suppressed to stay at home. As traditional societies they confined women at homes and limit their actions and participations in social and political events. In my country, unbalanced participation of men and women in political and economical arena has affected the society in a significant way.

Since my childhood, the engraving conflict that broke between the Kurdish political parties has taken most of my memories. They are even now so horrible to remember, but still they pass my memory every now and then and make me to feel pity for my childhood and my people. Now I feel like, if the system was not only male dominated and only driving by wishes of men, those horrible events- atrocities resulted from the

Kurdish Civil war 1994-1998- would not have occurred and would not have been occupying part of my memory for that long now. What if my mother, for example, instead of my dad had been an active politician whose words had an actual value in decision-making? From my own experience, I can say if she were instead of him in making a decision that terrible time would have not occurred.

The disturbing reality is that until now; this unbalance system of participation exists in my society. This unfair system, which is so discriminating against the women, has underestimated the abilities of women. It considers that women are completely unable to have constructive initiatives to heal the existing societal disorders. The main issue is neglected that this is the low participation of women in decision-making processes which has resulted in this much disorder and economic disaster (Maaitah, 2007, pp. 7-9).

Therefore, my thesis gives me the perfect opportunity to conduct a research on this long held interesting topic of mine. Throughout my thesis, I am going to focus mainly on the role and effect of women in peace-building issues in post-conflict societies. I do limit my topic on the role and effect of women on peace-building efforts. Without any doubt, women's ability covers much wider domain of activities than on only peace-building issues. However, for sake of the limited length and scope of my research, I am to focus on the significant initiatives that women have been able to do in their societies including my own society.

I limited my research focus on post conflict societies. Iraq (Kurdistan), Sudan and Afghanistan as three samples for the post conflict societies have grasped my attention passionately to focus on. My society, Kurdistan, experienced civil war in 1994 and then after a period of four years peace prevailed. And in 2003 again, the US invaded Iraq and my society in north of Iraq was threatened by fatal dangers of existing wars(Copson, 2003, pp. 18-20). Thus my society is a post conflict society now and I am trying to find a healer for current political and economical issues by analyzing the role of women in peace building issues. In addition, I am looking forward to find out some suggestions about developing the economical and social prosperity in my society and other societies

4

that are similar to mine. The recommendations, which I get as a result of my study, would be useful guidelines and friendly suggestions for the countries officials who value research in social issues.

My ultimate goal is to contribute toward development in my society. Nothing is sweater than doing something for your people that help them to have a better life and happiness in the society. There are fewer studies and literature reviews done about the role and effect of women on peace building. I consider this study as a need and as a must for Kurdistan and other developing societies so that they start to take the right pass toward the modernization and so on.

1.2 Women and Peace

Women constitute a major segment in population of the societies now. Women are capable to play a very constructive role in peace building issues. However, women are usually considered as pacifist creatures (Arousi, 2009, pp. 1-2) who are greatly linked with the idea of motherhood, peacefulness and capable of caring for offspring's. In construct to men who are assumed to start war, women are more assumed to end wars and make peace because they care about their children more than men. Women are perceived as kind, care giving and more rational than men who are considered to be irrational (Arousi, 2009, p. 2).

During the history far and contemporary one, the notion of peace was considered as feminine (Arousi, 2009, p. 3). For example, within the Mediterranean tradition, peace was generally believed to be feminine represented through women gods and deities spread among the societies. The peace-god was considered as fertile, childbearing and prosperous. Nevertheless, they were subordinated to the men gods, who were considered as angry, savor and haters. "In Greece, their god for peace was named Eirene and who was the daughter of Zeus and Thmis. She was shown in classical Greek arts with a branch of bumper harvest and was holding her son Pluto in her arms" (Arousi, 2009, p. 4).

One explanation of the relationship between women and peace is that women are naturally more peaceful. Women have innate qualities that make them more peace loving. They are "high in sympathy and are horizontal and centripetal, making them more prone to peaceful relationship" writes Johann Galtung. He further believes, that young girls tend to share and co-operate whereas young boys compete. It is believed many groups have portrayed women as more sensitive, more caring, more thoughtful ad more committed to producing a more humanistic and compassionate world than men as a whole(Potter, 2004, p. 7).

In contrast to this, men are portrayed as makers of war and perpetrators of violence. They connect men with low empathy; menhave vertical, centrifugal character by pointing that 95 % of direct violence is committed by them. Galtung further argues that it is male value system that creates war and it is women who suffer. Although other critics sometimes criticize these ideas and they argue that such concept of women and conflict tends to view women as victims rather than as active actors (Potter, 2004, p. 7).

The difference between peacefulness and war inclination was related to the gender issues and making it masculine or feminine. This trend continued to exist. And due to such arrangement, an idea developed that women should not be given any chance to participate in military forces, since they are peaceful and they don't fight. They were also forbidden to work in law and courts because there was a belief that their decision would be overwhelmed by their nature of care. Slowly, this trend ended up in marginalizing the women from participating in decision-making processes (Arousi, 2009, p. 5).

One of the major vulnerability for women is perceived due to their pacifist nature, was in the area of military and peace talks. Women are not given the chance to occupy a chair in the negotiating table among the warring groups. The reason behind that is conceived, as women don't fight, they don't even start it, they are peaceful, caring and above all they are mothers and the concept of motherhood is connected with peace.

Therefore, they are driven to the margins of decision-making area (Arousi, 2009, pp. 4-6).

Marginalization of women has a very severe result to them. If women are not taking part in the negotiation talk among the fighting groups, then there is no one to fight for their fights. That is why in most post conflict societies, the engaged conflicting groups on the negotiation table come to some agreements which endanger the rights and positions of the women in a significantly important way.

Marginalization of women in peace related issues and generally their participation in politics become a major concern for states. This concern leaded to the creation of United Nations resolution for women. In 2000, UN adopted a new resolution, which played a significant role in empowerment women in the world. Resolution 1325 reiterated that women should be given more chance to participate in peace making negotiation and in general they should be more engage in decision making processes in the all the states (Sudhakar, 2011, pp. 1-3).

Stakeholders including officials from UN argued that the idea of women pacifism has made them stay away from taking part in important decision-makings. They also emphasized that if the nature of women is caring, peaceful, then it doesn't mean that women should be marginalized.

This resolution created some sort of opposition too. The women activists contented that this resolution is institutionalizing the stereotyped that are connected with the women. They putted forward that this resolution is supporting that false idea of women connecting to feminine and men to masculinity. Biological traits should be disregarded and masculinity is not only referring to biologically definition of a man.

It is also sometimes argued that there is not a strong international will for incorporation of gender mainstreams into the international system of policy makings. For example, UN never appointed women as leading mediators. And in 60 years, only 8 women have been appointed as UN special envoy. In addition, in the last 20 years, 21 major peace

agreements have established, only 2.4 percent of their signatories were women (Tom, 2015).

In addition to UNSCR 1325, the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against women (CEDAW or the Treaty of for Rights of Women) is another international norm, which contributes towards empowerment of women around the world. The Treaty was adopted by the United Nations in 1979 and is the most comprehensive on the basic human rights of women. The Treaty is providing an international standard for protecting and promoting women's human rights and is often referred as bills of rights for women (Venisa, 2011, p. 1) .

CEDAW is considered as the only international instrument that comprehensively addresses women rights within political, social, civil, economical and cultural life. As of August 2009, 185 countries have ratified CEDAW including Iraq, and Afghanistan. However, their practical commitment to applying CEDAW on everyday women cases differs in these countries depending on how much the governments have been loyal to the values that this treaty is carrying with itself (Venisa, 2011, pp. 1-2).

USA, Iran and Sudan fall into the small minority of countries that have not yet ratified CEDAW. The reasons for that can be the political and cultural motives for example, in Sudan CEDAW is considered hostile to the Islamic tradition of the people, and thus it is not accepted in that community. By not ratifying CEDAW countries like Sudan and Iran remain in the company of countries where women's rights are in a deplorable state (Venisa, 2011, p. 1).

The Treaty for the Rights of Women is a tool that women around the world are using effectively to bring about change in their conditions. In nations that have ratified the Treaty, CEDAW has proved invaluable in opposing the effects of discrimination, which include violence, poverty, and lack of legal protection, along with denial of inheritance, property rights. The treaty has encouraged political participation for women in Afghanistan and Iraq. It also has fostered development of domestic violence.

1.3 Post-Conflict Societies

 I would like to shin light on three types of societies with regard to war and peace issues. The first is pre-conflict societies, which has not experienced war but there is potentiality to experience soon. The second type is conflicted society; it is experiencing war and conflict at the moment. The last type is post-conflict societies. Post conflict societies are the ones, which already experience some type of civil war or invasion, and now they are trying to heal and stand on their feet (Lambach, 2007, pp. 11-14).

I am focusing on post conflict societies for my thesis. One of the main features of the post conflict society is that there is always the possibility to fall apart the system since system is fragile and it needs sometime to stay glued together. Some of the post conflict societies go through a rough path sometimes coming down and then going up based on their capacities than taking a straight way. There is always the issue of transitional justice and peace negotiation in post conflict societies too. This is I can say a common feature of it (Lambach, 2007, pp. 11-14).

There is a common understanding about the post conflict societies that they don't allow a lot of initiation for women. Women are the most deprived segment of the population and are highly victims of inhuman violence. That is due to its patriarchal structure of the society, which is mostly dominated by men. Such patriarchal societies tend to share the power and resources inequality among different segments of its population. Special deprivation goes to the women who are victim to a great level of discrimination in their societies.

To sum up this chapter, there is little work done to examine the role of women on peace building so far. Conducting a research about women's role on peace building is one of my old desires that I am achieving. I am going to analyze the role and effect of women on peace building issue in post conflict societies. Throughout the study, I analyze the application of international mechanisms such as UNSCR 1325 and CEDAW to better understand the role and impact of women in Peace-building efforts in post conflict

societies. Next chapter is focusing on literature review of the concepts of peace and war and especially the role of women in peace-building issues. The following chapter lays the foundation for discussions for the rest part of the study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explores the existing literature about the role of women in peace building issues. Although there is a lot of work done in regard to the effect of war on women, the impact of women on peace building issues have not been the focus of many studies so far. With this point in mind, here I am exploring the existing literature review of women's role on peace building issues which will provide a basis for my study in the chapters the follow.

2.1 What Is Peace?

Jesus said "peacemakers are to be blessed as children of God, but in the real world they are often dismissed as utopian dreamers or worse, quaking defeatists who live in denial of reality". Peace is "naked, poor, and mangled," wrote Shakespeare (Cortright, 1997, pp. 1-5).

Centrally to the common belief held by many people, Peace is not only the absent of conflict and war. The word peace has been used with different meanings throughout the recent centuries. Learned scholars and thinkers have thought about it a lot and expressed their works as the today existing literatures for our generation. Usually the political leaders use the word peace for political propagandas when they want to use force against their assumed aggressor simply by using their right of self-defense. At the same time, Peace can be both slavery and freedom or subjugation and liberty (Cortright, 1997, pp. 5-10). In a slavery system, there is no conflict so can it be called it is peaceful?

In addition to absent of conflict, peace also refers to maintenance of an ordered and just society. Ordered society refers to absence of violence and exploitation and just society refers to extortion of powerful on the weak. So barely if one society is not going through conflict, it doesn't mean it is peaceful (Cortright, 1997, pp. 11-12). To make this assertion clear I present here an example. If there are two imaginary states of X and Y,

they would be call they are in peace in they don't have war and at the same time, they don't have any relation with each other. It means there is no cooperation between state X and Y. therefore I can be inferred that peace is not only the absence of violence but also maintenance of endurable stability.

There are two types of peace. One is negative peace which only refers to the absent of conflict in a nation. But the level of exploitation and inequality among the masses is so visible. On the other hand, the other type of peace is positive peace which refers, in addition, to the absent of war to the maintenance of a just and orderly society(Cortright, 1997, pp. 10-15).

2.2 War and Peace:

War and peace are one of the oldest concepts that human beings have been engaged with. It is narrated that war and conflict was first witnessed between the children of Adam at the very early days of world creation. Qabelstarted to fight and kill his older brother Abel for marring their only sister who was supposed to be Abel's wife. Since then, there is a common belief held that the humans who are harming others and initiating wars are the offspring of Qabel. At those early ages, the notion of fighting and killing was so preliminarily conducted and since then it started to become more complex and widespread among the humans (Katheer, 2008, pp. 10-15).

There are also different beliefs about the notion of war and peace issues too. One mainstream belief holds that human are both potentially able to take the place of an angel or occupy a worse place than Satan's place. This belief is mostly held in Islam and assumes human are both capable of doing even better things than angels and at the same time doing worse things than Satan. So this common belief of Muslims undertakes that human are the ones who make wars among each other's and at the same time if they think well they can bring peace to it, since war and peace making is in the nature of human beings together (Katheer, 2008, pp. 10-16).

On the contrary, there are other ideas, which hold different path to it too. Thomas Hobbes, a famous British philosopher, argues that human nature is short, nasty and brutish in the state of nature (Mukherjee, 2001, p. 188). He defines states of nature as a state which there is neither law to apply and nor police to enforce it. Thus he expresses in his book, Leviathan, which humans are always fighting and competing for natural resources. What he meant by natural resources is not clear for what specific items he meant. However, natural resources can be called to any items that humans need. It can be food, shelter, cloth, power and so on. Hobbes adamantly assumes that because there is always lack of natural resources and these natural resources are depleting due to the human daily usage for survival, they always fight with each other over the natural resources. So he believed that life of humans is not peaceful and no one can make peace among human since they need the natural resources and the natural resources are depleting day by day (Mukherjee, 2001, pp. 188-191).

In contrast, another medieval European philosopher, Locke, hold the belief that human nature is short, brutal and nasty but also capable of doing good things. Lock argues that humans may compete with each other on natural resources but they are also capable of making peace among each other. As long as they solve the issue of natural resources depletion, they come to cooperate together and to have a better time. But how they solve the issue of natural resources remains unsolved and it is until now one of the major issue of the conflict creating issues in the contemporary world (Mukherjee, 2001, pp. 250-257).

There are many other believes which hold a different position on the issues of making war and peace. None is focusing on the engendering concept of war and peace. Both male and women are capable to compete for their interest and their own grasp of power and influence over the other.

States are in continues relations with each other and they are trying to hold this relation as friendly as possible. Having friendly allies outside is a like having strong muscle in case a transgressor is offending your sovereignty. The worse scenario is to be isolated

by the outsiders and the other creates a large allied circle against you. To avoid it, states need to develop a good diplomatic relations with powers inside and outside to grasp the attention of their supporters and allied forces in case there is one time you need it.

To apply the theories of international relation to the concept of war and peace, we find out that each theory is taking its own path toward embracing wars and peaces concept.

Realism is the most common international theory with whose accordance; many of the states make their foreign policy. It is the oldest and most common theory among the states. Realism holds a negative view about human nature and clearly express that human are highly driven by their interest and don't care about the interest of others(Mearsheeimer, 1998, pp. 25-28). It holds that society is like always bringing people under an umbrella. Furthermore, it holds that international system is so like a jungle where there is not a higher authority to enforce laws on states. It assumes that states are functioned by three main principles, which are survival, Statism and self-help. States and human are always fighting for survival and that is why they are frequently entering into fatal wars with each other. According to realism, states are the lowest level of analyze in international system. In addition, international system is based on self-helped concept, where the rule of game is winning losing. One states gain is equal to another loss. Therefore, realism believes that war is part of our life and it's going to repeat itself a lot. And peace is not going to be achieved ina remarkably good way (Mearsheeimer, 1998, pp. 25-28).

In comparison with realism, liberalism that is another school of thought of the international relations states a different stand. It assumes that states and human are driven by their self-interest, but they avoid wars by having cooperation with each other(Dunne, 2013, pp. 95-97). This school of thought gives a distinguished attention to economic cooperation. It is economy, which states in general and human specifically consider most in their relations. Therefore, states and humans are capable of making peace even if they fight with each other. This notion of win-win system of international

politics holds that benefit of any state is the benefit of the other too and it undoubtedly rejects that the win of a state result in loss of another (Dunne, 2013, p. 99).

Among the other theories of international relations, feminism also catches a great amount of attention with regard to my topic(Motta, 1999, pp. 1-5). Feminism holds that political, social and economic systems are highly dominated by men and there is a great amount of discrimination against the women. Feminism argues that war is coming to show because the system is male dominated and men are prone to war making. However, women's if are given the chance to participate in decision-making processes, peace will replace war. The feminists believe, women are more caring than men and they have the concept of motherhood, by which they are forced to act more rationally. Therefore, they are making more rational decision and there is a better chance if they rule, it would be accompanied by peace and prosperity (Motta, 1999, pp. 1-5).

I have presented a review on these international theories to observe how they analyze the issue of war and peace making. I found out that war and peace is embraced differently by every singly theory and there is not any unique and single idea to present a concrete understanding of these two phenomenon. Knowing these basic issues, I can come up with a good analysis of understanding the role of women in peace building issues.

2.3 Theoretical Perspective on Peace-Building

Before exploring the role of women on Peace building issues, it is necessary to define Peace building and differentiate it from peacemaking and peacekeeping. "Peace-making" generally refers to the signing of the any agreement by the policy makers, which brings the occurring fighting into a halt. For United Nations, for example, peacemaking is bringing the hostile parties to an agreement through diplomatic ways. The role of women to peace making is difficult, since women are not making up a lot of military force and physical power in the societies. Peacemaking is usually done by the international organizations like UN and other regional organizations, which share a

stake in the conflicted society and thus see their benefit in peace rather than conflict. (McCarthy, 2011, p. 10).

But usually signing an agreement is not guaranteeing that conflict might not resume. Here is when peace keeping comes into the scene." Peacekeeping" refers to the deployment of the international personnel to maintain peace. By peacekeeping the warring groups are obliged to lay down weapons and enter into diplomacy to maintain order in the society. Women in the societies also proved not so effective in peacekeeping actions. Except that they were employed as peacekeepers by the international organization. However, the local women who are at the middle of warring zone cant barely contribute toward peace keeping (McCarthy, 2011, p. 10).

On the contrast, Peace-Building refers to the long term commitment that include post conflict construction and also other wide range processes that transform a conflict toward a sustainable peace. Peace building aims to establish an endurable settlement among the warring parties in the society. With peace building, the role of women is become very bold. Since usually peace building has to do more with stuff related with after math of war. When conflict fade and give its place to peace, women can get out and engage with the society and contribute in politics, economy and culture of their society (McCarthy, 2011, p. 10).

The process of Peace building may start while the conflict is ongoing. And usually the transitional period of negative peace, absence of violence, may last longer until positive peace, enduring stability, is accomplished. This delay is due to the challenging nature of peace building which range from ending physical fighting and disarming to establishing economic and social stability,

In this paper, four functions of peace building and the role of women in accomplishing these functions are closely explored. The first function of peace building refers to addressing fear and mistrust among the fighting factions. After a civil war comes to a halt, both warring factions lack trust on each other that the other party may return to

16

violence. Therefore, women can play a constructive role in keeping the trust and eliminating fear from between the warring factions. Woman can have unique leverage in their role as wife and mothers to foster trust among the warring faction. For example, women can have loyalties to their kin, and local people due to their local marriage customs. So women can contribute toward peace by convincing their husband if he is fighting with another group of the same society. Even they can convince their relative from both sides to lay down weapon and keep their trust on each other so that peace prevails in the society (McCarthy, 2011, p. 31).

Second function of peace building is rebuilding inclusive and economic institutions. When the government is incorporating all the factions in the society, then there is legitimacy for it. In addition to political institution like, parliaments, ministries, economic institutions should be inclusive too. Employments and work in industry should not be discriminatory where one specific group of citizens are privileged to work in. even when women participate in the countries' industry by going to work, they are in fact contributing toward peace building in the country. Since their work and contribution will ultimately affect others and provide them with better economy in the country as whole. Throughout this research, it will be shown how women in post conflict societies contributed in rebuilding inclusive political and economic institutions(McCarthy, 2011, p. 35).

Third function of the peace building is reconciliations. Reconciliations refer to the idea that the warring functions start to leave their long held hostilities and start peacefully living together in the same society. Reconciliation can be accomplished through mechanism such as transitional peace or amnesty. As it will be shown in next chapters, women have done a lot to contribute toward reconciliations too. Transitional peace refers to idea that in a post conflict society, the priority should be given to bringing the criminals into the courts and then after that work which lead to construction should follow. Amnesty refers to the idea that in post conflict society in order to put a stop on continuation of hostilities, amnesty law isissues and all the previous crimes and

hostilities are forgiven for sake of achieving endurable peace. Here, since women usually are more victimized during wars, they have a bold role in transitional justice and amnesty law(McCarthy, 2011, p. 38).

Fourth function of peace building is fostering civil society. Civil society refers to a sphere of volunteer actions, which is distinct from political, economical sphere, but it has a close interaction with them. Civil society is instrumental in maintain enduring peace, where a third neutral group can mobilize masses to pressure on the warring factions to stop fighting. Civil society as it is shown in cases of Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan played a significant role in mobilizing women groups to protest for their rights in the societies. Civil society can play multiple jobs in increasing the role of women in peace building. Most, noticeably civil society can act as a supervisor in implementation of peace deals between the warring factions in different societies(McCarthy, 2011, p. 40).

Civil society is widely assumed to be an important factor for peace building. As such,substantive focus has been given towards building and strengthening civil society, especially in countries experiencing or emerging from situations of armed conflict. In such environments, civil society is understood as playing an important role in reducing violence, and in facilitating the conditions necessary for building a sustainable peace.

Overall, my study stresses that civil society has the potential to play an important and effective role in peace building during all stages of conflict, and has often contributed positively to the peace building process. However, a careful look at the engagement of civil society – compared to the involvement of other actors – reveals that the role played by civil society is not necessarily decisive in building peace, but rather supportive in most instances. The central impetus for peace building comes mainly from political actors, and above all, from the conflict parties themselves. The supportive role played by civil society can make a difference when performed in an effective way at the optimal time. Civil society groups often have contributed effectively to the reduction of

violence, the negotiation of settlements, and the facilitation of peace in post-conflict environments.

To sum up this chapter, so far I have presented the main literature review about the role of women in peace building issues. Four functions of peace building- addressing fear and mistrust, rebuilding inclusive political and economic institution, reconciliations and fostering civil society- were explored. In the following chapters, I am going to apply these ideas to the situation of women in Iraq (Kurdistan), Afghanistan and Sudan. Through these ideas, I will present you with the role of women in peace building and their efforts to bring endurable peace in the societies.

3. OBSTACLES FOR WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN PEACE-BUILDING PROCESS IN IRAQ

This chapter is presenting the work of Iraqi women especially the Kurdish women in north of Iraq that were directed to contribute toward the peace building process in the country. It explores how women contributed to functions of peace building especially in fostering civil society and in rebuilding inclusive political and economical institutions. The women fought for their rights of political participation and approval of their legal rights.

3.1 Background

Iraq has been in a devastating state of war for almost four decades. First, a war was fought between Iraq and Iran between 1980 until 1988. The reason why the two countries entered into war was due to the progressiveness nature and export of the Iranian Islamic revolution ideas into the Arab world. Saddam, who had formed his own dictatorship in Iraq, was not ready to lose the power at any prize. Therefore, he fought a devastating war against Iran, which resulted in killing of half a million soldiers and civilians in both countries (Moghadam, 2005, p. 66).

As the Iraq- Iran war was moving toward a halt at the end of 1980s, Saddam decided to destroy the Kurdish fight for freedom. Kurdish people were trying to stand on their feet and like any other nation in the world, have their own racial and geographical identity where their freedom for life, speech, and expression was guaranteed. With notorious brutalities, Saddam managed to suppress the Kurdish separatists. By the use of brutal force, hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed, and thousands of village were put on fire and completely destroyed. Kurdish people were forced to deport their homes. The usage of chemical weapon in the Kurdish population took a huge toll especially

from the women and their kids who found it difficult to be protected(Moghadam, 2005, pp. 66-67).

With all these wildness, the war was not ended. Saddam decided to invade Kuwait in 1990, which resulted in gulf war when the USA and its allied forces attacked on Iraq at the beginning of 1991. Following that year, the UN put military and economic sanctions on Iraq. These sanctions worsen the economic status quo of the masses in Iraq and resulted in an economic and political breakdown in the country. The civilians now suffered from poverty, although the country had large-scale natural resources beneath the surface. Due to the sanctions imposed by UN, Iraq found it so difficult to find an international market for its oil(Moghadam, 2005, pp. 66-67).

UN also approved a no-fly zoon on Kurdish area, which proved very instrumental in betterment of Kurdish situation. Since the time of no-fly zoon, peace prevailed in Iraqi Kurdistan. After that, Kurdish people took fundamental steps toward democratization and economic growth. The life of Kurds started to be prosperous and especially women were allowed to take part in politics and participate in decision-making processes(Moghadam, 2005, pp. 66-67).

In 2003, Saddam was ousted by American invasion of Iraq, and the reason for invasion was access of Saddam to chemical weapons which assumedly posed danger to the region and the world as a whole. During the American occupation of Iraq, which lasted from 2003 to 2011, the sectarian extremist power increased in the country. The amount of violence and political instability also escalated. Opposite to the mainstream belief, the amount of violence increased more with US withdrawal and put the situation of women in a more dangerous position than any other segment of Iraqi society(Moghadam, 2005, pp. 69-70).

3.2 Iraq between War and Peace

Building a gender-equal peace in Iraq has faced some significant challenges. Since the occupations of Iraq by American forces in 2003 until the end of withdrawal of foreign

forces in 2011, there has been a direct struggle between the secularism and religion. This harsh struggle of the two opposing points of the spectrum has made the issue of women rights so contentious. In this struggle, the religious political actors are getting closer to the traditionalist concept of the society and thus the circle of women activities shrinks and they are exposed to large amount of violence on daily bases (Mannergren, 2011, pp. 54-56).

It was estimated that US occupation of Iraq would put an end to the existing widespread violence against the women (Mannergren, 2011, p. 55). Despite the bold presence of the international community and US forces in Iraq who were asserting to work toward improvement of women rights and mainstreaming gender issues within different frameworks of the newly-built-political system in Iraq, the amount of violence against women increased day by day. According to a report done by Ceasefire Center for Civilian Rights, 14000 women killed as of early 2015 and thousand more abducted in Iraq (Tom, 2015).

In 2011 when the US forces withdrew, it was feared that violence would continue in large scale and the possibility of conflict and civil war to occur war so high. With all these skepticism about the future instable situation, the women status remained low in government and other high level institutions. Women were not included to share power and participate in decision-making processes. Therefore, participation of women in decision-making and inclusion of them in national process like peace negotiations were remarkably discouraged throughout Iraq (Mannergren, 2011, pp. 55-58).

An exception is worth to be mentioned here. Iraqi Kurdistan (IK), which is located in north of Iraq, has developed its own sovereign regional government. During 1990s, Kurdish people managed to develop their own regional government, which is autonomous in making laws and in many other aspects. Iraqi Kurdistan has provided a relatively fairer atmosphere for women participation and their inclusion in decision-makings compared to the other parts of Iraq. Iraqi Kurdistan supports women activism

and provides them opportunities to raise their voice and present the women segment of society in all level decision makings (Mannergren, 2011, p. 59).

Despite these restraints, women throughout Iraq managed to gain remarkable achievements in the area of rebuilding inclusive political and economical institutions. Although most noticeable in Iraqi Kurdistan, the women in general succeeded to take significant steps toward issues concerning legislation on domestic violence, gendered quotas in parliament, support for victims of violence, and support for a plural society. The women organizations in Iraq managed to successfully use formal and informal mechanisms to put pressure and influence on government so that they present and raise the voice of all women loudly in all events including the negotiation talks with the warring groups. They also managed to develop a number of skills to negotiate well with different stakeholders in a politico-religious context (Mannergren, 2011, pp. 55-56).

3.3 Iraqi Women and the Conflicts

The continuous conflicts have affected the status of women in Iraq. It has a very huge backlash against women rights. During 1970s, there was the best hope for improving women rights and passing the legislations that protect and include women largely in public sphere. At this time, women's literacy rate was one of the highest rates in the region. Women also won the right to vote and participate in working outside home. However, when Saddam started to lose its legitimacy, the improvement for women rights stopped. Saddam turned to the religious fundamentalists to win their support for his own political survival and thus the circle for women activism and women rights started to remarkably shrink (Sideek, 2008, pp. 1-5).

During the American occupation of Iraq, religious tension rose hugely and the religious fundamentalist started to grasp more power in the society. Women situation was not satisfactory. Abduction and killing of women became common. A report from OWFI indicated that the honor killing of women was on rise since 2003 (Mannergren, 2011, pp. 55-56). It also stated that rape is used in some neighborhoods as a method of ethnic

cleansing especially in southern part of Iraq. The women who were victims of rape and abduction had to leave their family, since they were thought to make the family name infamous. In addition, since prostitution is illegal in Iraq, some of the raping victims are executed by the religious militias to warn the other women in the society to abide by the rule of strict description of Sharia law (Mannergren, 2011, p. 57).

Great amounts of violence against women occur inside home. Domestic violence is considered one of huge and widespread problems in Iraqi society. According to a survey conducted by WHO in 2008, 83 percent of the women participants said their husbands had a controlling behavior over them while 21 percent of the women participant said they had been imposed to physical violence by their husbands (Sideek, 2008, pp. 1-6). Now in 2015, that the American troops withdrew, the violence has increased by the religious militia leaders especially ISIS which has a very strict and primary interpretation for women status in the society. Woman activists expressed their concern about the bad situation of women and the hopelessness of achieving a sustainable peace where the women are already excluded from decision-making arena (Sideek, 2008, pp. 1-6).

3.4 The US Mistake in Iraqi State-Building Process

The positive point about US occupation of Iraq was putting in place a democratic government and funding free and fair elections (Mannergren, 2011, pp. 55-58). The government was first including all the religious and tribal segments of the society. It also provided opportunities for women to present on public arena and protest for their rights. However, the negative point or the wrong decision of US in Iraq started when they supported the sectarian forces; the aim was to improve inclusion, though. Support for sectarian forces strengthened dividedness. The dictatorial way of Saddam's rule but by another actor was allowed on Iraqi society under auspices of western power.

During the American occupation, efforts were not put to improve gender equality in the society. Although UNSCR 1325 was adopted before the occupation, but still both the

military rule of Saddam and the newly democratic US-backed government of Iraq ignored it largely and didn't implement it (Mannergren, 2011, pp. 55-58). Even the US forces didn't make the resolution as a national action by UN mission in Iraq, UNAMI. As a result of this ignorance, women situation didn't improve enormously and there was not any political will to do so. If women were supported to occupy big positions in government, the sectarian extremists would stand against it and would have endangered the long held policy of US Sectarian empowerments. Little was done to include women in politics. At the eve of establishing the interim administration in 2003, for instance, the first US appointed member of administration met with 250 people who were representing different parts of the country but only six of them were women. Another example is when the first Iraqi governing council was set up; only 3 seats were allocated to women from 25 seats (Mannergren, 2011, pp. 55-60).

3.5 Women's Legal Rights

Personal status law which is concerning with marriage, divorce, child custody and inheritance has been a point of contention in Iraq history. Two times in 1959 and 1978, the act was revised due to the large lobbying and protest of women activists. In 2004, when the interim legislation is formed, personal status law, which identifies the space and level of women activism in society, was brought on discussion. The committee introduced Sharia law into the personal status law, but it was largely contented. Heavy protests against the act by women activists repelled the law after one month. In 2011, Iraqi Kurdistan, which is a more democratic environment and providing more space for women participation, passed the national law against the domestic violence. It was also targeting force marriage, women genital mutilation, child marriage and subsequently criminalized honor killings (Omar, 2009, p. 2).

3.6 Women Political Participation and Civil Societies

Women managed to lobby for a gender quota system on political parties in Iraq. In 2005, during the first parliamentary elections, women were assured to occupy 35

percent of seats (Omar, 2009, p. 2). Although this policy of gender quota system was not much supported by US, other western powers especially the British put remarkable pleasure so that the gender quota system is put in place in the coming elections and in any other elected body. In the first parliamentary election of 2005, women won 31 percent of seats which transcending the women quota law. However, in 2010 election, this number decreased from 31 to less 25 percent. The decrease of women political participation in the election was due to the increase of insecurity and violence against women throughout the country. Sectarian groups threatened most of women who wanted to run for elections and thus they left the ground and refused to endanger themselves (Omar, 2009, pp. 1-4).

The number of civil society organizations along with NGOs has increased in Iraq and they cover a very large bulk of the population by their humanitarian services. Lately, the Iraqi government has brought some restricts on civil societies activities. The effort of women to raise their voice for gender equality issues in the society has met with some attack by the media and politicians. It is publicly refused to help the women who fell vulnerable to domestic violence, and they are always stagnated with infamous titles like "unfaithful women". Furthermore, the extreme sectarian leaders who are so powerful in Iraq see the organizations working for women rights as the western run centers who are trying to introduce their western ideas and believe in the Iraqi Islamic system. Therefore, women working with such organization are usually either harassed or threatened to death (Omar, 2009, pp. 1-5).

Iraqi women face with a lot of socioeconomic challenges too. One of the most concerning issues is the high number of widows. According to a report by Widows for Peace through Democracy (WPD) around one to one and half million widows (almost 10 percent of all adult women) exists in Iraq from Iraq-Iran war and onward (Castellan, 2013, pp. 4-5). These widows are entitled to get fixed amount money as salary monthly. But due to the existing war and dictatorial way of governance, one out of four widows managed to get her salary. Health situation for women is so unsatisfactory and maternal

and infant mortality rates are so high. Education for women has ruined too. Although Iraqi system of education was one of the best systems in the region, currently 20 percent of the young women in Iraq are illiterate (Omar, 2009, pp. 1-4).

3.7 Insecurity as a Problem for Women Exclusion

The increasing insecurity in the country is considered as the number one obstacle toward women participation. When women go out of home, they face a number of challenges (Amman, 2004). They are at risk outside and they need to take some precautions about what they wear and how their bodies look so that they don't arouse anger in the public. They usually fear being raped harassed and abducted if they are trying to attend a public event. Police is frequently stopping them and asking where they are heading. They are sometimes harassed and threatened if they are raising their voice in the public too (Amman, 2004).

Insecurity creates violence in the society for women. Women in Iraq are exposed in two types of violence - domestic and public violence (Amman, 2004). In domestic area, women are victim of the traditional concept of bearers of family honor. If a woman in a family is transcending the accepted norms and laws, then she is affecting the name of the family too. Therefore, there is mostly the control and surveillance by a male sibling inside home and this creates violence against women. By this system women must follow man- predesigned path and if they trespass the border, they will face resistance in form of violence by their male family members.

Public violence against women in Iraq is a concerning issue too. The sectarian extremist leaders are using the concept of women as the bearers of family honor to form the bases of their strategy of terror. They restrict human activism and increase insecurity and violence against the women who are crossing the predesigned strict and limited borders inside which the activities of women are defined (Amman, 2004).

A group of women activists has created some centers for the women who are victim of violence. They created a hotline for calling and providing services for the victims too.

But mostly it has been observed that women fear to contact with these centers due to the common negative stigma carried with these western supported centers. The women activists believe that "working against domestic violence is working toward peace. Raising awareness is raising confidence and women who have high level of confidence can be good peace makers too" (Amman, 2004).

3.8 Iraqi Occupation and Transition without Women

American occupation of Iraq brought new hopes for women to claim their political rights (Katrin, 2014). Unlike the commonly believed idea, occupation didn't bring any noticeable achievements for women activism. The only positive part was felt in Iraqi Kurdistan. By help of occupation, Kurds in northern Iraq could run their autonomous rule and promote women rights and women participation. The Kurdish women were living in relative peace and expressed their concern that the sectarian violence, which is common in other parts of Iraq, would spread in Iraqi Kurdistan, which will have negative consequences on women freedom here.

Outside Iraqi Kurdistan, American administration didn't do any effective work for women inclusion. In an interview, a women's right activist stated that during occupation the Americans failed to support women in two crucial issues (Katrin, 2014). The first was adoption of Article 41 in constitution. This article states that women can choose between the secular and religious courts regarding the issues concerning with family law. This article is brining the religious identity before the state identity and thus creates a lot of violence for women. The second issue was the support for gender quota. Although it was approved that women should occupy 30 percent of seats in parliament and other elected bodies, it was not much implemented and this law stayed more on paper rather than practice (Mannergren, 2011, pp. 55-60)

Therefore, during American occupation of Iraq there was not a political will l to support women to claim their political rights. The reason for that was most probably due to the American concession to have sectarian group's aside them on negotiations. So women

were excluded to participate in significant national process especially peace negotiations (Katrin, 2014).

3.9 Women Lobbied Law and Norms within a Religious Framework

Women organization in Iraq developed sophisticated skills to take part in public space (Khalil, 2012). Their focus was the law and norms that shaped the circle around which the women activities revolved. Especial success is given to Iraqi Kurdistan where major victories for women legal rights were achieved. One of these achievements was the Marriage law in which the women age for marrying in 2007 was change from 14 to 16 years old. Another achievement in 2001, after extensive lobbying from women, was passing the first law against domestic violence, which was one of the pioneers of its kind even in the region (Khalil, 2012).

Women activists had started from 2005 to lobby for passing this law. But first it was rejected by the parliament. However, women protests didn't faded and thus in 2011, due to the extensive lobbying of women organizations the law against domestic violence were passed in Iraqi Kurdistan. This law empowers women and promotes them to participate in decision-making. By this law, the perpetrators of women violence are considered and treated as criminals in the society (Khalil, 2012).

3.10 Socio- Economic Aspect of Participation

The Iraqi women have suffered from economic hardships due to the ongoing recent conflicts. There is a direct correlation between poverty and peace. A society with rich, prosperous people will have a more peaceful environment that a society with widespread poverty and lack of natural resources(Sam, 2010, pp. 7-14).

Poverty is considered the second boldest factor of women exclusion in decision-makings in Iraq. Poverty has caused widespread illiteracy among women, who don't have enough knowledge on how to survive and rise up their children. Socio economic issues are very important in women participation. If women are helped to be independent, it is not only

they made independent, but also all the society at the end. Women activists always argued that if there is a political will to decrease the violence committed against women as a result of traditional concept of honor killings, government and international organizations have to focus on elevating poverty from the society (Sam, 2010, p. 8).

The large number of widows in the society is living with poverty. Working to eliminate poverty among the widows is in fact working for integral peace building. The one million widows are having more than a million children, if the government is not helping with them, their children are raised to oppose the state and turn into insurgent groups in future. Another concerning issues is the law legalize that girls should attend school. But there is no any supervision throughout the country and there are a lot of girls who are not attending schools and even the parents in some areas refuse to let them go to schools too (Sam, 2010, pp. 9-10).

3.11 The Religious Divide Versus Secular

Iraqi women activists have always been skeptical about how to treat with religious leaders who have huge power in Iraqi society. Some of the activists argue for confrontation while the others advocated for dialogue. Women organization doesn't observe any need to use any secular perspective to push for women protection and participation in decision-makings. The women activists put forward that Islam is a religion of peace which provide enough opportunities for women if it is interpreted properly within the society (Coleman, 2006, p. 5).

Some women activists have achieved credible success using the religious perspective. Kurdish women have long developed a friendly relation with the Imams of mosques. This friendly relation has benefited in a great way. For example, cooperation of women activists with Imam has resulted in convincing the Imams to talk about the women issues during the Fridays' prayers. In Iraqi Kurdistan, there exist around 5000 to 7000 Imams and they all reach around one million people every Fridays. Therefore, their

speeches on women rights and issues have brought remarkable effect on the behavior of men with their wives and women siblings (Coleman, 2006, p. 18).

3.12 Peace Process and Reconciliation in Iraqi Context

Iraqi society is so chaotic. There are many factors working toward this chaos. Divisions run very deep in Iraq and they are multifaceted. The underling division is between religions, between religion and secularism, between religious groups, between men and women, and between different insurgent groups (Mannergren, 2011, pp. 55-60).

Islam and Christianity form the two most dominating religions. There is a tension between the Muslims and Christians now. Before, the American occupation, the issue of religion was not bold. Muslims and Christian were working at the same place without knowing which one was Christian or Muslim. But now the religious identity has become so contentious that sometimes results in hostilities even in workplaces(Mannergren, 2011, pp. 55-60).

Religion and secularism is creating another division in Iraq. There are some religious leaders who see the women empowerment activities as alien concepts imported from western countries. Therefore, they are resisting improving women rights and their inclusion in making decision. On the other hand, a new generation of seculars especially among the women has lately emerged. During the last decade, they were trying to put secular norms and laws into the constitution and remove the religious laws which have the potential to limit women activities like the article 41 which talks about secular and religious courts for family issues (Coleman, 2006, p. 19).

Even the groups within the same religion have created some division in the society too. Within Islam, the two branches of Shia and Sunni have disunited the masses remarkably. It was the policy of American to give support to sectarianism to have more of the people on their side in negotiation processes. But this policy of support for sectarianism has contributed to a bigger gap in the society. Insurgent groups in some parts of Iraq are supported only because their sectarian background is the same as the

local people. There is sympathy for ISIS in the south, for example, since they share the same sectarian background with the local people (Mannergren, 2011, p. 55).

The division in the Iraq is strengthened by nationality difference and no acceptance of women by men as a whole. Kurds are treated not well in other parts of Iraq except the north part, which is mainly Kurdish dominated area. The same Arabs are not seen with a respectful eye in Kurdish territories and such division is continuing to effect on the Iraqi's everyday tasks (Amman, 2004).

So mentioning all of these deep divisions among the Iraqi society, it is impossible to negotiate with one group. There are a lot of stakeholders involved. Iraq, unlike other warring countries, which have specific insurgent groups, faces with multifaceted challenges to maintain sustainable peace in the country. The role of women can be effective in peace negotiations, but the question is if you want to have peace, with whom you should hold talks and set on negotiation table? Is it the ISIS, the sectarian Shia or Sunni groups, or the Kurds or Arabs? Therefore, there is not a specific peace process in Iraq due to the multiple dimensions of existing conflicts among different groups. And women find it very difficult to lobby for a specific peace process. The only activity to contribute toward a sustainable peace in the country is that women protest for their legal, political and social rights. Women organizations in Iraq play a crucial role in restoring the social fabric, which was torn in the ongoing wars (Mannergren, 2011, pp. 55-60).

The increasing divisiveness and less contact between identity groups have affected women's possibility to participate in a fix peace process group, which never existed in Iraq. The insurgency in Iraq is so much into the society context that even it is difficult to bring all the fighting groups on the same negotiation table where women can lobby for peace building. Due to the existing ongoing violence among the fighting factions, it was deemed impossible for women to confront violence militias and act as bridge makers. An exception here is made with Iraqi Kurdistan women organizations. Recently in 2010, Kurdish women organizations managed to be part of constructed peace commission

between the Kurdistan regional government and the oppositions. Women efforts could convince the opposition to parallel their policies as the Kurdish regional government (Mannergren, 2011, pp. 55-60).

3.13 Local Initiatives

Iraqi women have taken some practical steps toward creating initiatives that contributes towards women empowerment. Women's Alliance for a Democratic Iraq (WAFDI) and Women empowerment organization (WEO) are example of such women Iraqi and Kurdish initiatives. Both of these organizations worked toward improving women stand in the society. WAFDI in 2003 funded to send 13 Iraqi to Washington for studies and when they came back three of them make their way to parliament and this way they proved helpful to each other. In 2008, WEO implemented training in area of obtaining skills of democratic elections process in local and municipality councils. They program facilitated the women participants to run for local provincial council and guarantee seats for them (Amman, 2004).

To sum up, Iraq is a country where violence continues after presence of international forces in the country. The ongoing violence in the county has affected the status of women and it also limited their possibly to participate in peace negotiation efforts. Insecurity and poverty have crashed women abilities to function fruitfully in the society. Insecurity and poverty created violence both domestically and publicly against women in the society.

With exception of Iraqi Kurdistan, which has developed a relatively good situation for women to live and to participate and be included in decision-makings, the other women around the country are highly excluded from politics and decision-makings. Iraqi Kurdistan supported the women organization to help women claim their rights. Their activities in legislation are so bold. Iraqi Kurdistan passed the law against domestic violence; they removed the article 41 from their family law, which was in large scale discriminatory against women.

Women organization lobbied for their political rights too. During the transition period, the law was passed to include 30 percent of women in parliament. In Iraqi Kurdistan the women quota is 35 percent in the parliament. However, due to the lack of security and political will, women are not supported adequately to occupy the quota in the elections. American forces had focused on sectarian and tribal empowerment as a strategy for peace consolidation. But the support for sectarianism limited the women activities in a great deal.

Women efforts is more noticeable in two rebuilding political and economic institution and also in fostering civil society. In north of Iraq, Women attempted to shout their voices through a strong civil society. They also contributed toward political and economical institution through their presents in governmental institutions.

Iraqi society is so much divided on religious, sectarian and nationality lines. This deep division has made it so difficult for women to play an important role in peace negotiations, because they're not any specific peace negotiation process. And women organization always asks with whom they should talk, since there is a lot of stakeholder involved in the process. Thus, women focused on their empowerment and participation efforts. They tried to pass laws that allow women to claim their rights and lobby for removing the ones that limits their activities.

4. AFGHANISTAN'S WOMEN IN THE PEACE PROCESS

This chapter is going to analyze the work of women done toward achieving peace in Afghanistan. With short information about the nature of Afghan social fabric, the efforts of women toward peace building process and the obstacles standing toward their way will be explored. Women local initiatives aimed to contribute toward substantial peace indicates that women in Afghanistan have also not surrender themselves to the patriarchal traditional society where very less space is left for women incorporation in the decision makings.

4.1 Background

In 2001, 5000 Afghan girls were attending schools, while now the number has reached five million children, more than 30 percent of who are girls (Loden, 2002, pp. 1-4).In an interview with Nargis, an Afghan girl studying in Turkey, she stated that the last 15 years has been the golden era for women empowerment. Statistics demonstrate that the situation for women has improved in the last decade. Now women are working as nurses, doctors, and teachers along the men in the cities. Afghan women showed up in the national elections boldly, while a large number of them competed for parliament and provincial council positions. Despite of great improvements, there still stands a lot of large barriers in front of them. Still, insecurity, violence and cultural resistance to women participation in the public are threatening their lives remarkably (Aliyar, 2015).

Afghan women under Taliban regime in Afghanistan experienced the worse type of life (Ahmadzi, 2009, p. 6). Taliban grasped power in 1994 and ruled most of the country until 2001 when they were ousted by international community forces. Taliban were religious extremists who had a very strict and extreme view of Islam. They applied a tough interpretation of Sharia law on people. Their stand on women was so primitive and they considered them only confined inside homes. Therefore, they refused to include women in public sphere and put a lot of restriction on their behavior. Women

were not to attend schools, forbidden to work outside homes, and prohibited to get out of home unless they were accompanied by a male relative (Ahmadzi, 2009, pp. 4-8).

Taliban lost power and thus the movement dismantled. The Afghan new democratic government was established with support of international community (Loden, 2002, pp. 5-8). In the first years, Taliban were so weak that they could not lead to appear as an opposition or insurgent group against the western force and newly afghan established government. However, with the invasion of Iraq, attention from Afghanistan was escaped away and thus created a political gap by which Taliban movement recovered again. They started to mobilize as an insurgent group and fomenting lethal attacks on both the Afghan government and the western forces (Loden, 2002, pp. 5-8).

In recent years, Taliban reappeared as a formidable force fighting the western forces presence in the country. At first, Afghan government and international community were inclined to use military action to eliminate the insurgents. But both sides, in 2008 came to believe that use of force and military action is not the solution for sustaining peace in the country. Thus, the Afghan government took steps toward reconciliation with the Afghan insurgents to put an end to the ongoing hostilities (Wardak, 2014, p. 20).

Appearance of peace and reconciliation talks frightened women, because of the dark and difficult life women were forced to live under Taliban regime. Women activists and Afghan peace advocates are skeptical about the situation of women if a peace is to be dealt with Taliban. The women organization are concerned that Taliban will not stay away from their strict, fundamental stand regarding the women position which potentially brings the destructive life women under Taliban period back. With all these worries, women also feared about women exclusion in the peace talks and advocating their rights on negotiation table. The position of women is not still clear and it is doubtful if the role of women is going to be substantial or symbolic in the process which creates a lot of worries for the women peace advocates and women organizations (Wardak, 2014, p. 22).

A recent report by Afghan People's Dialogue on Peace (APDP) confirms that a large number of Afghan men and women are concerned that women rights would be the causality of peace. APDP held around hundred discussion groups throughout the country and mostly the interviewee feared about the women position if a peace is made with Taliban (Karima, 2011, p. 11).

4.2 Peace Negotiation and Taliban

Government of Afghanistan decided to welcome any peace talk with Taliban in 2008. The government claimed that it had held long talks with Taliban in the past decade and now it was inviting them to publicly sit with people on negotiation table. For this to happen, Hamid Karzia, former president of Afghanistan, convened the National Consultative Peace Jirgar or great assembly in 2010. People from every corner including the women representatives were invited to discuss and decide about the prospects of the peace negotiation and a potential political settlement with Taliban. One month after the great assembly, the president held Kabul conference and in the conference he introduced the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP). APRP was putting the benchmark for reintegration of the insurgents in the government and subsequently achieving sustainable peace in the country (Nijssen, 2012, pp. 1-6).

Government of Afghanistan speeded its peace related activities in 2010. It also established Afghanistan High Peace Council. High Peace Council included in its structure the provincial and district level to manage the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program. High peace council members were choosing from different ethnical and regional background to better facilitate to talk with Taliban. Since President Karzai had chosen its key members, the insurgents considered it as a governmental organ rather than a neutral institution. The High peace council activities came to halt when Taliban assassinated the Head of the Council, Rabbi the former president of Afghanistan, in 2011 (Nijssen, 2012, pp. 1-6).

After a year of stallment of the peace talks, Taliban requested to resume negotiations with Americans directly by UAE middling. Taliban also requested to open their political office in Qatar in 2012. Afghan government was excluded from the negotiation talks, because Taliban wanted to negotiate with Americans. The Government of Afghanistan protested against the inauguration of Taliban political office and announced it was a trick to establish a parallel government with Afghan government. Taliban had requested the release of their detainees that were kept in Guantanamo bay in exchange. The bilateral peace talks didn't resulting in putting an end to the destructive attacks happening in Kabul and other provinces of Afghanistan (Nijssen, 2012, pp. 1-6).

4.3 Women Place at Negotiating Table

Afghanistan High peace council is the only and most significant institution regarding making peace in the country. Since its inception in 2010, from seventy members, nine of them are women. GulalaiNor is one the women members. She argues that women in Afghanistan are never against peace negotiations if the women rights enshrined in the constitution are protected. She furthers added that peace is the ultimate desire for women, since they give the largest toll for it. Women are the main victims of hostilities, insecurity and widespread violence. The women members are putting all of their energy to protect and advocate well for the women rights during the negotiations. The women members are putting their lives in danger to travel around the country and to collect ideas, concepts and data about the women concerns regarding the peace process and the insurgents (Zyck, 2012, pp. 1-4).

There is a concern about the inadequate number of women members compared to large number of males in the High Peace Council. In 2012, the women members were side lined in consultation with the insurgents. In order to prevent, being outnumbered and outranked by the male members, women formed a special committee within the High Peace Council to ensure their concerns are addressed in the negotiation process. But still, mostly the women peace activists criticize the government for not including adequate women members in the process. They put forward, that women are not enough

presented to put any influence on the negotiations. They assert that their role is mostly symbolic(Zyck, 2012, pp. 1-4).

In 2012 due to the large lobbying by peace women advocates, the government issued a gender policy within the peace process. The aim was to establish a gender balance in peace negotiation and reintegration process. Women advocated for the gender policy, because there was not a close monitoring and supervision method for women in the peace process. Especially, there were some reports that when the low level insurgents were integrated in the system, and when they came back to their region, they repeated violation of women rights again. Or they were posing direct threats to the women who were working outside, and participating in public events. With this gendering policy, women could influence more on integration of the insurgents and thus it would give more power for women in the peace process (Zyck, 2012, pp. 4-8).

4.4Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program

Afghanistan peace and reintegration program (APRP) is the main national process for making peace with the insurgents in Afghanistan. It was endorsed in 2010 in Kabul conference to process and initiate formal framework for peace talks with the insurgents. APRP aims to promote peace through a political approach. It also encourages local and international cooperation, and will provide the judicial framework for return of the previous combatants and insurgents to embrace peace and reintegration (Zyck, 2012, pp. 4-8).

Afghanistan peace and reintegration program involve three stages. The first stage is social outreach, confidence building and negotiation. In this step, the government is trying to promote peace-building capacity in the government institution and foster its strategic communication at the local village levels. In addition, the government is urging to have a better analysis of the local people grievances and finding a solution for them. In the second step, demobilization is implemented. During this step, government starts to collect biometric information and vet the insurgents and find out why they were

41

fighting, how they were fighting and where they were fighting. Furthermore, government starts to collect the weapon from the community. At the last step, government starts to work on peace consolidation and community recovery. It provides the local people and the insurgents with religious, literacy and vocational education inside the village or invites them to come to the cities. It also supports the farmers by giving them agriculture facilities and funds to get better harvest from their farms (Zyck, 2012, pp. 4-8).

4.5 Women in Afghan Peace and Reintegration program

The perception of women about Peace process in the country is generally positive. They connect getting a sustainable peace to positive developments in local economies, improvements in the security situation and getting a sense of national unity in the country (Nijssen, 2012, pp. 1-5).

Women awareness about the peace program is so weak and in many places doesn't get to the women in the remote areas. Mostly media, like radios, TV channels and newspapers provide information in the main cities. But in periphery provinces and remote villages where such sources of information are not available, women in the communities observe mosques, local preachers and imams and community leaders as the main source of information. Women organizations express their concern about the weak system of information distribution about peace issues among the women in the remote areas. They urge that information on the peace process must be given to people by religious leaders, and the mosques (Nijssen, 2012, pp. 1-5).

Women peace advocates observe the lack of distribution of peace related issues among the women as the failure of the program. Women in Badgis province also expressed their concern about the nepotism and the corruption involved with peace program. They are mostly trying to appoint their own women relatives to the potential peace institution positions in the villages and that is why the dissemination mechanism is not intentionally promoted (Nijssen, 2012, pp. 1-5).

4.6 Women's Role on Reintegration

Reintegration is the process of vetting the formal insurgents and welcoming them back to their society to resume a normal life (Wardak, 2014, p. 8). The role of women in integration is primarily within the family unit. Women are playing a significant role in domestic sphere of reintegration process. For example, a lot of women in Toniyan village were forming peace forums and committees. By these forums, they were mobilizing the women members of the village to go and talk with women member of the Taliban families. Although it faced very huge barriers in some cases, in most other cases women succeeded to bring the insurgents on negotiation table with the government. Many women, whose husbands or immediate siblings were fighting against the government, were convinced by the women peace forums to encourage their relatives to put down their weapons and stop fighting (Wardak, 2014, p. 8).

Women peace advocates also expressed their concerns about some of the integrated insurgents who were posing threats to the women status in their villages. They ask for recognition between the criminals and the insurgents who want to make peace with government. In some cases, women activists worry that the local criminals disguise themselves with the insurgents, and then join the peace process and after that they resume committed the same crimes again (Wardak, 2014, p. 8).

4.7 The Afghan Government and Women Rights

The Afghan government has taken remarkable steps toward protecting and equalizing women rights. During writing the institution in 2004, women activists lobbied that women should be presented as equal to men and should be legally allowed to participate in decision-makings. Women were given the equal rights in the constitution and in addition to this; the constitution established a quota of 25 percent for women inclusion in parliament and provincial councils. Afghanistan is also a signatory to the UN Convention on Elimination of Violence against Women (CEDAW) and also it has signed the declaration of human rights (Rafei, 2014).

Afghanistan adopted a National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan in 2008 (Rafei, 2014). This national plan is laying down the root basis for women empowerment in the country. To better improve the women equality and empowerment, the government formed the ministry of women affairs (MOWA) in 2001. Ministry of women affairs is mainly charged to manage the formulation and implementation of government-wide gender policies. Ministry of women affairs has connection with large number of NGOs who are working to improve the women status quo in the country. Furthermore, Human right commission in the country also provide supports for women and it monitors the government actions and also come up with effective approaches to deal with past war crimes (Rafei, 2014).

Although Afghanistan has taken a lot of gains in incorporating women in its governmental framework, Women organizations criticize the activities of the ministry of women affairs and Human rights commission. Ministry of women affairs is delivering limited services at the center of the urban areas only and Human rights commission is so politicized. It is not independent enough to take unilateral make decisions about gender issues in the country. For example, it is a long time that the government adopted the law on the elimination of violence against women. But it is never fully implemented. Human rights commission is just mentioning in monthly reports but not putting any pleasure to implement it and never took any proper and tough measure against the women rights abusers. There is not a political will in the country, due to the traditional nature of the Afghan society. Whoever is putting pleasure on the related institution to implement the law; he/she will lose its support from the traditional society and thus lose its prestige and power.

UNSCR 1325 was introduced in 2000, during this time Afghan women were living the worst life ever with all the barriers created for them by the Taliban regime (Rafei, 2014). UNSCR 1325 reached Afghanistan after the collapse of the Taliban Regime. First there was a high energy for implementation of it and the international community planned to support the resolution largely. However, there has never been any national action plan

44

for UNSCR 1325 in the country until 2013. Ministry of women affairs had developed a national action plan for women empowerment. It was believed that this national plan is enough for implementing UNSCR 1325 in the country too. But due to huge frequency of resistance against women participation in the country, the ministry of women affair failed to claim the women rights and support their empowerment in a satisfactory way. Therefore, Afghanistan ministry of foreign affairs due to the widespread complaints by women activists initiated a national action plan for implementation of UNSCR 1325. UN Women in Afghanistan announced its support for the new action plan and urged that UN Women is going to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Afghan women until they are given the rights enshrined in the Afghan constitution (Rafei, 2014).

As the peace talks with the insurgents moved on, different concerns about women rights flamed. In 2012, a group Islamic scientist in Kabul held issued a statement requiring women to wear veil, forbid them to mix with men in workplace and prohibit them from travelling without accompanied by a male sibling (Rafei, 2014). Although their points are not legally binding, their edict was influencing on the traditional society of Afghanistan. Women organizations protested against the Islamic scientists' statement regarding the women status and expressed their concern that such statements are like the idea of the Taliban who didn't allow women to participate in the public life. The government of Afghanistan endorsed the statement to a bid align itself to show sympathy toward Taliban so that they come and set on negotiation table (Rafei, 2014).

Amid the long negotiation process with Taliban, Afghan government declined its commitment to women rights in the country. Three recent events put the position of the Afghan government if it is still committed to women rights and women inclusion in decision makings (Rafei, 2014). First, sideling the women in two international conferences of London in 2010 and Bonn in 2011 raised anger among women. Women were not given space to participate in these two significant conferences, which were providing the dire discussions for recovery of the state. The second event was about the renewing the five-year term of three commissioners of the Afghanistan international

human rights commission (AIHRC). As a result of it, suspicions were raised to about exclusion of women from the commission. The third event was that women were subjected to invasive vaginal searches when they were entering to the prison to visit their relatives. Such intrusive search of women was a direct attack on women rights (Rafei, 2014).

4.8 Religious versus Secular Division

Due to the extreme religious societal structure of Afghan society, the women failed to transcend the religious extremists who oppose any sign of women empowerment in the country. Little place is lift for women to take part in activities done outside of the home. The traditional society of Afghanistan observes the bold presence of the women outside of home as a taboo and it is highly resisted. Women activists in the country have attempted to normalize the situation of women with the religious leaders. but the women have failed to get near to success, let alone convincing the fanatic extreme religious leaders who believe on a very traditional and fake concept of women activism in the country (Kuehnast, 2012, pp. 4-6).

Women groups tried to treat religious leaders as allies. But their attempt of friendship has frequently failed. They tried to reach out to religious leader, but then it is observed that such attempt find its way to failure. Afghan National Ulema Council has not supported women rights. In early 2012 the council passed a decree stating that women were subordinate to men, and should not mix with men in work or education and must be escorted by male relatives when they travel. However, opinions among the religious leaders differ significantly on the role of women in the society. Of course there are some religious leaders who are not hostile toward women empowerment. Women activists in the Afghanistan tried to reach them to convince them for allocation of more place for women freedom and participation in public sphere. They choose their terminology cautiously and did their best to approach issues of child marriage by emphasizing the need for safe marriages and to characterize the issue of violence against women as

forming healthy family relationships from an Islamic perspective (Kuehnast, 2012, pp. 4-6).

Another problem is the issue of low number of women religious leaders in the country. Women failed to achieve higher education generally and that causes a gap between the society and lack of women clerics. If the adequate number of women religious leaders exists in the society, women participation would not be resisted as it is now by the male dominated cleric society of Afghanistan. It is seen in many cases that Afghans reach out to other Islamic countries like Morocoo to either undergo education or solve their related religious ideas (Kuehnast, 2012, pp. 4-6).

4.9 Fostering Civil Society

In addition to the Afghan government, there were some other stakeholders who influenced the debate over women inclusion and participation. Non-governmental organization and civil society organizations started to appear on Afghan society largely. The international community believed one effective way to improve the women situation in the county is through establishing different civil society organizations. Civil society in the country became so active and mostly they are focusing on promoting women rights. Throughout the last decade, the women civil societies have extensively lobbied the government to protect women rights and include them in the reconciliations talks. The civil society has managed to mobilize the masses and ask them to come on streets for demonstration to support women rights (Nijssen, 2012, pp. 10-11).

Due to the strong appearance of different civil societies in the country to protect women rights, it is seen that Taliban has also shift side on their previous stand on women rights. Now, the insurgents came to believe that women are now strong enough to claim their rights. So Taliban in the previous negotiations have shown some level of flexibility in regard to women rights. Three groups of insurgents, Taliban, Hizeislami and Haqqani networks, expressed during the previous negotiations that women will be allowed to participate in schools, and work outside homes, but they stay on the position that there

must be a separation of sexes in the society (Nijssen, 2012, p. 17). The women civil society activists observe this position of women as positive for women situation in the country but still urged more freedom for women. Therefore, the bold presence of the civil society has brought positive changes to the women status in the country.

4.10 Barriers In Front of Women Participation

The foremost challenge on the women way to participation is the issue of widespread insecurity in the country. In 2009, a survey conducted by WFWI indicated that 62 % of women observe insecurity as the main concern (Coleman, 2006, p. 14). Despite a lot of work by the government, still violence against women is high and the state failed to properly protect the women. There are reports of hostile reaction to the women participation in politics and according to Khama Press, women were threaten with night letters by the insurgents in the mostly Taliban controlled areas. Women were asked to either leave their job or they will be attacked by the Taliban. Insecurity has also prevented women to better participate in the negotiation talks. Women members in high peace council couldn't travel to remote places to gather the ideas of women from different backgrounds about peace issues. In addition, the civil society organizations couldn't manage to raise their voice for women rights in remote province, since there was a serious threat by insurgents there (Wardak, 2014, p. 12).

The other serious challenge toward women participation is corruption in the Afghanistan legal institutions. According to the Afghan constitution, government should take measures to eliminate negative practices that endanger the well being of the families. But due to the high level of corruption, legal system remained under reformed and lacked capacity to provide legal protection for women. Women rights cases are directed to the informal legal system like tribal and village councils for justifications. These informal legal systems unlike courts are linked with violation of women rights like force marriages, or Baat, which is the trade of women for marriage to end hostilities. Therefore, women rights are widely violated in the informal legal systems of Afghanistan due to the widespread corruption in the system (Jawed, 2014, pp. 1-3).

48

The cultural constrains against women also poses a serious challenge to the women empowerment. In a survey, 79 percent male and women participants in the urban areas agreed that women should be allowed to work outside home (Wardak, 2014, p. 14). But in rural area where mostly the insurgents are practicing social control and own the means of production, women's freedom is restricted. The traditional culture of the country provides little space for participation and that is why mostly women are resisted to work with male counterparts in the same work place. The issue of cultural constrain prevent women participation to negotiation talks too. Insurgents when they are seating at the same table with women representative, they are embarrassed since they don't want to talk with them. It is like a taboo for women to be active at public life and participate in national processes like peace talks (Wardak, 2014, p. 14).

Education posed another threat to women participation too. According to the ministry of education in Afghanistan, the insurgents yearly in the south part of the country put 49 percent of women schools on fire. Some of the Afghan families, due to the wide spread threats, they don't allow their children especially daughter to attend schools. This phenomenon keeps the women's life desperate. Women are kept weak to get out of homes and participate in decision-makings. Even schools girls are attacked on faces by acids. Hundreds of girls lose their lives or their faces become crippled by acid attacks perpetuated by insurgents. Illiteracy of women prevents them to claim for their rights and thus they can't mobilize to raise their voices for protection of their rights(Zyck, 2012, pp. 3-5).

4.11 Recent Peace Negotiation and the Women Involved

Afghanistan experienced the first ever-peaceful transformation of power from one president to another one in 2014. As a result of the lengthy process of election, the national unity government was established with mediation of USA. Mr, Ashraf Qani, the newly elected president put the negotiation talks with the insurgents on its priority list. The peace talks were immediately restarted with new hope (Vait, 2014, pp. 2-4).

The president wife, RolluallhQani, unlike her previous counterpart appeared on public and media boldly. Although Lebanones, she is so committed at promoting the Afghan women rights and fostering women participation in decision-makings including in peace talks. In her exclusive interview, RoullahGani advocated for women role in peace negotiation and urged the government to provide more space for women participation. She believed sidelining fifty percent of the society from national peace process is a true insanity(Vait, 2014, pp. 2-4).

The Afghanistan peace process was resumed in 2015 and the representatives of the Afghan government met with the Taliban leadership council in Pakistan to achieve a sustainable peace. Shortly after holding peace talks, new trends started which overshadowed and doomed the negotiation talks. It was announced that Taliban supreme leader, Mullah Omar, died of a natural disease two years ago in a hospital in Pakistan. The news about the death of the Taliban leader created some cracks among the Taliban insurgents and different groups emerged to claim the leadership. Due to the absent of a unified leadership within the Taliban groups, the peace negotiation came to a halt. But as usual, the destructive attacks on civilians by Taliban didn't stop, which raised the doubts about Pakistani government in steering the Taliban destructive actives (Vait, 2014, p. 5)

After the years of lobbying for improving women status in the country, still women are hugely sidelined. In the recent negotiation between Taliban and Afghan government, there was not included any women in the Afghan delegation. Women organization observed the absence of women representatives from within the negotiation delegation as the fact of deterioration of women situation in the country. They observed that the last decade efforts to promote women rights are overshadowed by the uncertain security situation due to the increase in the Taliban attack on the government. It is believed; that Government has gave concession for the insurgents so that they set up on shaky and damaged negotiation table.

4.12 Local Initiatives

Kabultec and National Democratic Institute are the two-afghan local initiative (Vait, 2014, p. 6). These local women run organizations are working toward empowering women in area of peace negotiation and governance. Kabultec during 2005 elections provide toolkit called the "women's' Guide to Winning an Elections" proved so helpful for women to find place in the elections. Kabultec also with help of international donors contributed toward sending women from Afghanistan to different European countries to participate in training in area of leadership, governance and democracy. In addition to such activism, Kabultec also focuses deeply on literacy issues. Considering the high rate of 80% illiteracy in the country, it found the solution toward all the problems in promoting women education (Ayo, 2010, p. 51).

The national democratic institute has also contributed toward women empowerment issues. It has provided women with training in different areas of budgeting, media, and legislative processes. In 2009 elections, it organized a program named "women in politics campaign school" for women of all provinces in Afghanistan (Ayo, 2010, p. 51). Such training helped women to occupy seats in the local councils and parliament and women became able to understand a better grasp of their rights and were better able to fight for their right on the negotiation table. Such initiatives empowered women in the traditional Afghan society where the men were considered the main power holders in the society and women were treated as secondary to men in power sharing.

To conclude this chapter, women in Afghanistan have put a lot of effort contribute toward peace building in the country. The women supported civil society organizations as a tool to raise their voice and fight for their rights. Despite of large-scale discrimination in Afghan patriarchal structure of the society, women attempted to rebuild inclusive political and economic institutions in the country. That is why; they mobilized women groups in different times to fight for passing legislations that guarantee their rights. They also protested for their incorporation into the peace talks that were held between Taliban and the government. However, due to the large scale

discrimination against women and due to the existing barriers like insecurity women efforts have not been satisfactory.

5. SUDANESE WOMEN'S STAND ON PEACE- BUILDING ISSUES

This chapter is exploring peace-building process in the traditional society of Sudan. This study is considering Republic of Sudan and South Sudan as one country due to the similarity of women role they played toward achieving peace in the country. Women in Sudan face incredible difficulties like harassment, sexual abuse, and violence if they decided to participate in social and political events. In spite of these barriers, the women didn't give up to fight for bringing stability and peace in their countries.

5.1 Background

Sudan is an Arab majority country located in the Nile valley of North Africa. It used to be the largest Arab state and the largest state in Africa until 2011. In 2011, the south Sudan separated from Republic of Sudan by conducting a national referendum. Since then, it was believed that emergence of new south Sudan as a sovereign state would decrease the long lasting violence and conflict that had hit the Sudanese people for decades. Unlike the mainstream belief, the situation not only healed but also worsened in both sides (Ittau, 2014).

Women situation in Sudan is not satisfactory. They make up 60 % of the population. The level of illiteracy among the women is so high; almost 50 % of women are illiterate according to a report by United Nations Population Fund. Women are also disadvantaged in most communities and the majority of them are unemployed or engaged in unpaid work and in informal sector activities. Genital Mutilation / Cutting and early marriage are so common. It is estimated that Genital Mutilation rate stands at 65% despite intensive campaigns to eradicate it (Majidi, 2014).

Before 2011, frequent conflicts used to break down between the government and the separatists groups. These conflicts were so fatal that claimed the lives of millions of Sudanese. Now, there is no violence generated by the separatists of south Sudan, since

they have their own state now. The violence is now mostly driven by the inside factors now. There is lack of social services to the masses, lack of security, high unemployment rate and high political and religious grievances, which increase the chance for a more desperate life for the people(Ittau, 2014).

But Sudan and south Sudan are more than only neighbors together now. The two neighboring nations share a legacy of women braving boundaries to help build war and build peace. As a result of the wide spread existing violence, it is mostly women who fell highly vulnerable to the dangerous and fatal effects of war and conflict. Therefore, the women from both sides have formed bridged among their communities to find the grassroots peace accords. As a united group, they broadened political discussion and policy conversations among themselves to raise their underlying drivers of conflict, such as security, livelihood, and unbalanced access to resources. The followings in this chapter are the analysis of the work of women done to achieve a sustainable peace and a better life to live as a whole (Ittau, 2014).

5.2 The Complex Role of Women

Women in Sudan were never guests at the negotiation table. The roles that played as a combatant, supporters of fighting forces and peacemakers very well qualify them to take an active role during the implementation of negotiation between the warring factions. Thousands of women left confront and security of their homes not to only accompany their husbands in the struggle for southern liberation but also to fight for democracy, freedom, dignity and justice. The role of women in fighting ranged from directly participating in fighting as combatants to indirect fighting forces as providers of supports including feeding and caring for sick and wounded soldiers. Although women are usually the main victims of atrocities committed during an armed conflict, it is not correct to portray them as innocent victims. For example, women in Kharttoum gave away their gold in support of jihad and encouraged their sons to join up the conflict. The same is true with southern Sudanese women who contributed periodically food to their

fighters and encouraged their siblings and children to join the struggle for southern liberation (Itto, 2014, p. 56).

On the other hand, Sudanese women have also played constructive role in keeping families and communities together during the conflicts. By singing peace songs, persuading their family tostop war, risking dangerous peace missions across enemy territories, or even marrying across enemy lines to unite or reconcile warring, women contribute toward maintenance of peace in their societies. For example, Dr. Enne family who live in a region where was populated by two warring factions, their daughter Seto agreed to marry a boy whom she loved from the opposite faction. By this marriage, both the hostilities between the two groups started to become mild and ultimately former enmity changed into friendship and love between the two fighting groups (Itto, 2014, p. 57).

There were times also that women in order to stop the war from escalating, they defied or opposed decisions by male members of their family and community to go to war. Some reports assert that women in some communities have threatened not to comply with their conjugal obligations, until their husbands stop killing each others. For instant, Matibi a young south Sudanese woman threatened to expose her nakedness, which is a curse in Sudanese customary belief unless his husband stopped, join in the warring factions. The same examples were repeated in many parts of Sudan to protest ethnic conflict in the country (Itto, 2014, p. 57).

In addition to this, Sudanese woman have also taking a leading role in creating links and forums for resolving inter-ethnic deputes. These effective works of women have resulted in many grassroots of peace accords. For example, WunlitConvenat between Nuer and Din and Lilir Covenant between Nuergroups that are kind of people-to-people processes, were all leaded by women activists. It is reported that when a peace delegation from Dinka community decided to be sent to the hostile Nuer community, it was the wife of a Dinka chief who demanded that his husband would lead his people to Nuer land, even though she was aware of its high risk. Another example can when there

was a split in SPLM, women stood in solidarity against their husbands' political positions. Women from both sides of the split continued to maintain their communication and built forum to discuss issues that affected their communities, something that no man was capable of (Itto, 2014, pp. 57-60).

5.3 United Nations' Stands on Women, Peace and Security

UN Security Council passed a resolution dealing with women, peace and security in October 2000. This resolution, 1325 UNSCR, is considered as the icebreaking and a significant benchmark for women peace activism around the world the resolution resulted in establishing two different groups, peace activists working on fields and the groups, which are working within the framework of UN and other distinguished international organizations. These groups were destined to develop coherent policies to foster and develop women's inclusion in a wide array of issues related to peace and security. The activities of these two groups have formed a remarkable impression on governments, donors and other local institutions. However, its impact has been more remarkable on those who had already supported women as agents of peace and security (ICG, 2006, pp. 1-4).

It makes it difficult to progress and prosper in countries where women are treated hostile if they choose to play a greater role in peace making and peace building issues. In Sudan, it is usually problematic for women to enter into the most male dominated security sector, and women continue to experience big level of physical and emotional insecurity. Women fall vulnerable to the frequent sexual violence perpetrated by men. UNSCR 1325 was passed to explore to see what can be done to dismantle the barriers that stand on the way of women to occupy leadership levels in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peace building and post conflict governance (ICG, 2006, pp. 1-4).

Throughout Sudan, without any support at all, women peace builders are doing their best to contribute toward bringing security in their community, country and the region as a whole. But for many policy makers considering women problem is a sub issue, and

it is usually neglected to recognize and support the role and capacities of women in preventing conflicts. Due to the existence of widespread violence, exclusion and out of date social services, women issues are dealt as a secondary issue and usually they are left to be addressed in time of peace. However, this argument should be toughly challenged since if women status quo is satisfactory in the society, then it will remarkably contribute toward achieving sustainable peace in a shorter period of time (ICG, 2006, pp. 4-5).

Women role in peace agreements and post conflict efforts can be so significant. Women have the potential to make the peace agreements more viable, effective and practical by engaging in a wide range of activities. These activities may include participating in peace negotiations, to rehabilitate children associate with armed groups, to convey people across conflict lines to discuss issues of concern like access to clean water, and to advocate budget priorities that emphasize social service rather than military expenditures (ICG, 2006, pp. 4-6).

The work that women do in Sudan is so risky. Women peacemakers are trying to challenge the dominance of militarized solutions to violent conflict. Women effort to solve the conflict through peaceful means has great potentials but is seriously constrained. The women peacemakers expose themselves to numerous threats and dangers in their daily work to make their society safer. In addition to the existence threats in front of them, they don't receive enough resources to support their efforts. Nonetheless, policy makers often ignore their advices and experience that they got in exchange of their potential risk of death on dangerous fields. The women who succeed to leadership positions are frequently faced with backlashes especially when they try to continue to advance gender equality (ICG, 2006, p. 7).

In Sudan, women's role in peace building should not be seen as uniform or women in general as an undifferentiated group. What I mean by this is that most women here are focusing on survival, which means to remain out of sight in a great extent than publicly opposing or criticizing politicians and military officials. If they do so, they are mostly

resisted by male dominated security sector. In contrast to this, there are handful women who made it to hold leadership positions and they play as catalyst in peace building issues. These few women leaders are distinct minorities but they are not elites although they are generally more literate and organized than the usual women in Sudan (ICG, 2006, p. 8).

UNSR 1325 is only known for the women's peace groups. There is very little education of this resolution in the corridors of powers. It has proved that there have not been large-scale, organized efforts to describe and elaborate the content of this resolution to the government or the civil society organization that are engaged working with women. Therefore, this resolution has shown little impact on development of new policies and security sector reforms. Still, in Sudan there is no measurable commitment to support women participation and inclusion in different areas such as; prison, wildlife services, armies, defense ministry and other institutions of relatively significant value (ICG, 2006, p. 8).

South Sudan has neither ratified, has acceded to nor has succeeded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against women (CEDAW). That is due to the traditional structure of the society where religion is perceived as the priority for describing rules. CEDAW is considered hostile and it is believed it is destroying the essence of traditional Islamic practices and replacing them by the imported western practices (Aziz, 2014).

5. 4 Women Engagement in Peace Related Issues

Women are significant players in contributing toward bringing peace and fighting war, although their importance of role is undermined in most peace processes. Women's experiences and expertise can effectively help to bring about a very sustainable and durable peace settlement in the community. They are adequately involved in the society that they know what is going on around them and in the society. They can contribute a lot especially by building trust, sharing information, and contributing toward discussion

and preventing the escalation of violence, which is the main ingredient, bulk of a prosperous and peaceful society (Samir, 2015).

One of the major recent activities of women, which brought together the women activists, was the Taskforce on the Engagement of Women. In the event, which happened in January 2015 in Ethiopia, a group of 20 women peace buildings came together for the purpose of promoting inclusive, effective peace and transition process in the country. The taskforce was tasks with connecting the women activists with women in civil society organizations and senior officials in the government. The women in the taskforce did their best to ensure the peace process is more effective and credible by ensuring that women inclusion along with gender sensitivity in the process is well considered(Samir, 2015).

In 2014, women activists in Sudan and south Sudan took remarkable steps toward achieving sustainable peace in their region too. The taskforce for engagement of women which is made up 20 women peace activists also expressed their concern immediately after the conflict that occurred between the government of republic of south Sudan and the Sudan People Liberation Movement (SPLM) which have been in frequent fighting together for last decade (Samir, 2015).

Women activists through the 2014 Taskforce leaded civil society activists and government officials to increase inclusivity and effectiveness of peace deals among the fighting groups. They expressed their grave concern about the crisis in Sudan and highly recommended the signing of cessation of hostilities between the fighting groups. They raised their voice that despite the fact the women contribute in bringing peace to the country, they continue to be poorly represented in formal peace processes. A report by UN women states that women account only for 9 percent in 17 peace processes reviewed since 1992 (Ahmad, 2014, p. 5). They harshly denounced the exclusive nature of negotiations especially when the key stakeholders like women are sidelined on the negotiation table (Ahmad, 2014, pp. 1-5).

In November 2014, women activists also got together and represented a paper, which focused mainly on Sudan National Dialogue (SND) and women participation in it. Within the paper, they put forward that the mandate should reflect the principles of Sudanese ownership, inclusivity of diverse population, transparency and accountability. SND should bring about solutions to put an end to the long lasting Sudanese conflict, whose victims have been mostly the women (Ahmad, 2014, pp. 1-5).

Having observations from their society, and their everyday experiences in the Sudanese micro societies, they suggested some preconditions for having a successful national dialogue to have subsequently a sustainable peace in Sudan. Among their stated preconditions was freedom of expression, ceasefire agreement ad release of political detainees the most vocal ones (Ahmad, 2014, pp. 1-5).

5.5 Women Engagement in Peace Related Issues Before 2011

Sudan is a militarized society. Except for few opportunities such as power sharing deals and peacemaking areas, the main bulk of decision-makingis highly centralized. Inequality and intolerance against the diverse groups are the two main defining factors of Sudanese society. The utilitarian system of decision-making has affected the women situation too, although the situation of women changes dramatically by region. In part of Islamic North, for instance, where Sharia law is more strictly observed, the situation of women is different in compare to south part of Sudan, Darfur, which is secularly unsettled. Therefore, due to the large scale of conflict within different parts of Sudan, women should be fully included in all efforts to contribute toward the persistent conflict (ICG, 2006, p. 21).

Some of these key women leaders who had played a significant in contributing toward peace process in the recent decade are the following. Rebecca Garand, she was the minister for transport and roads in the government of Southern Sudan. Dr. Anne Iota, she was the minister of state agriculture in the Government of national unity and Mary Kiden she was the minister for gender, social welfare and religious affairs. Awut Deng

also participated in the Sudanese people's liberation movement delegation of the intergovernmental authority on development peace negotiations and consequently she was an adviser on gender and human rights to Vice president SalvaKiir (ICG, 2006, pp. 8-16).

The above mentioned women activists played a very crucial role in women empowerment issues. They were first grasped by the international organization working toward empowering women in the conflict societies. It was their hard work and efforts, which played them, back to contribute toward women issues. Each of these, along with other women activists attempted to their best to fight for women rights and empowerment by any mean they had available.

Case of Lubna Hussein is worth to be mention here. Lubna Hussein was a Sudanese journalist working a local media. She was arrest in 2009 for the crime of wearing trousers. Mrs. Hussein soon attracted international attention as a symbol of women's oppression in countries with strict interpretation of Islamic law. When police arrested her, she was beaten in a police van and held with 12 other trousers wearing women who had also been arrested. Ten of women pleaded guilty and were given 10 lashes and fines. But Mrs. Hussain asks to go to trial. Although as press officer for UN she was offered immunity from prosecution, but she resigned so that she face prosecution. Despite death threats, Hussein continued to speak out about women right in Sudan (Saner, 2011).

These leaders along with other women activists have cooperated with international community to help foster a strong participation of women in all aspect of peace process if a stabilized country is aimed to achieve. The work of these Sudanese key leaders had paid off in some points. For example, UNSCR 1590, which basically formed (UNMIS) United Nations Mission in Sudan, become parallel and consistent with UNSCR 1325. Women also participate in April 2005 Oslo Donor conference, which focused mainly on raising funds for supporting women empowerment programs (ICG, 2006, pp. 16-18).

Women peace activists organized an event to lobby for large-scale participation of women in Darfur Peace Agreement that was signed in May 2006. They protested to make sure women are well represented at all stages of implementing the peace initiative. To achieve a strong agreement, the international community had to ensure women's participation in all preparatory committees and also women were participating in general consultations. But still societal barriers in Sudan are so large to allow and guarantee women's inclusion and safety within the country (ICG, 2006, pp. 16-17).

One of the pressing issues facing Sudan's uncertain peace process is harassment. The population especially women who undergo through very hard time due to the widespread poverty, drought, hunger, imprisonment and degradation impassionedly looking for elimination of women harassment as a common crime in the society. All the other issues including gendered equality and wider political participation come after harassment in importance for the population (ICG, 2006, p. 25).

Sudanese women have developed a strong culture for civil society and they proved be very active too. They have been aware of their political importance partly through exposing to international peace activities and women rights movement. They began to organize and form NGOs and civil society organizations since 1980. In spite of extensive pressure from the dominant National Congress Partly, they managed to develop a relatively strong social fabric through which they could perform their activities. They were doing basic activities and offering basic the most basic support such as sharing food or helping to care for children of women who are routinely imprisoned. As a result of these basic activities, women learned how to participate in public arena and political processes, some of these women ended up occupying key positions and contributing highly to peace efforts and post conflict reconstruction (Ittau, 2014).

There is not uniformity in activities of women activists in Sudan. That is most probably because of the large gap and difference between the two different geographical divisions of territory. South part differs from the north part in a great deal. Muslim dominates

north and strict application Sharia law governs it. Therefore, woman activists in north part who have the membership of National congress party can only contribute to policy implementation defined strictly by Sharia law. They incline to oppose laws that discriminate against women and argue that western style secularism destroy the family and exploit the women in a great deal. For example, (CEDAW) international Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is observed against Sharia law and is believed to destroy family values by allowing abortion and prostitution within the family (ICG, 2006, pp. 28-29).

On contrary, this view is not shared in south part of Sudan. Here in south, sharia law is not of importance to people. Here, adoption of CEDAW is not a problem at all, but they can't ratify it since this is national issue. Having said all of these, people in Sudan believe Sudan is a country with two systems. Furthermore, it is mostly believed that few handful women who are in the National Congress Party are deliberately chosen to be there. It is a policy of divide and rule game by government that wants to use two few women in the party to prevent the activities of other in around the country (ICG, 2006, pp. 28-29).

South Sudan due to its more traditional social structure, women are more vulnerable to affects of conflict. In 2010, only 16percent of women over age 15 in south Sudan could write read and write and only 37 percent of girls were enrolled in primary school. This low level of education among the women has caused them to be more marginalized. In addition to his, women are not aware of their rights. According to a report by Women for Women organization, 79 percent of Sudanese women feel that a husband beatig his wife is a justifiable action (Majidi, 2014, p. 1).

In 2006, the government started to promulgate some of the laws that might undermine the women peacemaking efforts. One of the bold government activities on this issue was regarding the Volunteer and Humanitarian Work Act in 2006. Government argued that it wants to prevent money laundering and to prevent terrorism, so it had to supervise the activities of NGOs. Most of these NGOs were supervised by a committee of government

and as a result most of one's which were working to develop women issues in wider issues were refused to giving the right of registration or were faced with numerous barriers in front of their humanitarian actions (ICG, 2006, p. 30).

5.6 Women and Peace Agreements

One of the milestone events that brought hope among the people in Sudan was the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the central government and separatist opposition groups in 2005. The status of women in CPA was largely ignored during the negotiation processes. However, Sudanese women succeeded to take a comparative more active role in implementation of post conflict projects and peace building efforts (Sudhakar, 2011, pp. 12-14).

New Sudan Women's Federation (NSWF) was the one of the professional organization, which marked the peace building activism of Sudanese as one of the strong parts of their life and culture. In addition, there was a growing awareness of need to include women in peace making issues by the international community. Despite of all of these efforts, two militarized groups dominated the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). They didn't allow any space for woman civil activists so that they could protest and protect their rights and grievances amid the existence violence among the fighting groups. As a result of women exclusion from the peace talks, there was not any sign of gender impacts on substances issues in the peace documents that was signed in November 2005 (ICG, 2006, pp. 30-31).

Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) ended up having remarkable gaps from gender perspectives. In the Protocol of Peace, there was a mention of good governance by insuring that power and wealth is equally shared and human rights guaranteed. But focusing close on the protocol, it is clearly observed that there is no mention of any women specific need in the sharing criteria. The impacts of war were more usually analyzed through geographical determinants rather than gender. Therefore, this notion

of sideling gender issues would weaken the agreement and subsequently fails to foster a sustainable peace (Mahmodi, 2013, p. 12).

Despite the active role that women played at various levels to bring peace to the country, their overall role is underestimated or ignored during the negotiations. This underestimation of women role in Sudan might have been originated from the misconception that women are passive victims of wars, forgetting the very important role they have played in negotiating keeping and building peace in their communities. One of the most disappointing aspects of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement CPA that negotiation for an equitable share of power and resources were premised around political forces and regional interest. Neither mediators nor drafter gave much thought on other constituencies or dimensions such as gender, along which power and wealth could be shared (Itto, 2014, p. 58).

Conflict in Sudan is not just a matter of political rivalry but also triggered by many forms of marginalization. The first wise president of Sudan and leader of SPLM, late Dr, Garang, in 2008 publicly recognized women as the "marginalized of the marginalized". Long before negotiation, he used affirmative actions such as quotas and training aimed to create a critical mass of women capable of influencing policies and decisions (Itto, 2014, p. 57).

5.7 Implementing the Peace Deal

As it was mentioned previously, women were not included in the process of negotiation for CPA; however, they played a significant role in peace building process. What made women involved in the peace building process was the indirect force of UNSCR 1325. Strengthened by the resolution, the UN development fund for women (UNIFEM) hired two gender experts and advisors to work with women activists so that they finally develop comprehensive analysis and recommendations for a gender sensitive sustainable peace. As a result of this, 100 Sudanese women activists from north and south were trained to play key roles in CPA implementation. In addition, 50 women managed to

participate in Oslo donor's conference. In the conference, they were trained to the ideas of solidarity across communities, introduced with women's agenda for post-war reconstruction and they choose two women to argue and lobby for more gender responsive budgeting and projects (ICG, 2006, p. 36).

Southern Sudanese women lobbied successfully their government to include new pro-women policies and laws in the constitution. After this, the interim constitution gave a 25 percent of position for women in southern part. Here now one problem is more observable than any other thing. There are not enough qualified women to occupy the positions. Due to the large level of insecurity and lack of social services, there are a lot of women displaced to north or out of country. Therefore, the large Diasporas were called on to send their qualified women in so that they fill up the women quotas in the government (ICG, 2006, p. 36).

The government of Sudan along with help of international community had the task of planning, financing and implementing the return of the displace population. This return of population, especially the women will reinforce the southern capacity and thus economy and social welfare would be in a better stand. Furthermore, the women put pressure on the government and it should revise the legislations and customs that undermine the women rights and prevent them to participate in social and political arenas (Sudhakar, 2011, pp. 10-11).

5.8 Darfur Agreement

The government of Sudan decided to do a crackdown on the insurgents in Darfur, a major city in Sudan. During this counter insurgency, which was highly indiscriminate, millions of people had lost their homes and ended up to flea. Hundreds of people lost their lives and got injured. Among these, women were more vulnerable, they had to undergo through very harsh situations, like raping, and sexual violence. They also had to leave homes for the sake of keeping their young sibling from going into wars. They felt a great amount of discrimination, suffering and deprivations (ICG, 2006, pp. 33-35).

With the help of UNIFEM, and international community, the Darfur women managed to have an international NGO with them to protest for their rights. By the help of the partners, the women made team and gathered all women from all three Darfur states and variety of tribal background to form a unified platform for women issues and priorities that should be fought for. They ask for more support of the international community to press for women's engagement at the negotiations. Therefore, they finally succeeded to have representatives in Abuja negotiations, where the team presented a paper that focused on the women's' priorities in the peace process and reconstruction in Darfur. The paper addressed the core issues being dealt with security arrangement, power sharing and wealth sharing. They also requested that women should be included to take part in discussion regarding resource sharing and land reform. On security, they consented that complete disarmament of militias should be processed that women find the chance to move around freely (Mahmodi, 2013, p. 15).

5.9 Civil Society and Search for Peace

Until 1980s Sudan had a relatively strong and well organized civil society. However, politically engaged civil society organizations like trade unions have increasingly been restricted the state. The origin of modern civil society is the semi formal trade unions and regions groups of the early 20th century in Sudan. But current civil society groups in Sudan have been active in trying to promote a peaceful settlement to the conflict (Itto, 2014, pp. 20-21).

Civil Society's influence on important events like Comprehensive peace Agreement was limited. It faces challenges to contribute toward peace in the country. Civil society can bridge the gap between what the Sudanese people want and what the negotiating parties and the international community perceives they wanted. Civil organization in Sudan have found ways to contribute to the broader peacemaking process through public lectures, workshops, newspaper articles, and training session on peace. Civil Societies can encourage dialogue and promoted peaceful coexistence and cooperation between ethnic and religious groups, they promoted civic education and democratic values to

name a very small contribution of civil society toward peace building (Itto, 2014, pp. 20-21).

5.10 Sudanese Local Initiatives for Peace Building and Political Participation

Community Development Association is one of the Sudanese women initiatives for peace making. There was shift in increase of the number of women who were included in peace negotiation after adoption of inter-Sudanese peace talks on Darfur. The increase in number of women involved in the decision-making was due to the creation of Gender Expert Support Team (GEST) by the initiative, which provided advice and expertise to the mediation teams. GEST with help of other partners formed a document named "women's priorities for peace and Reconstruction in Darfur". The document underlined the urgent need of women participation in peace negotiations (Ayo, 2010, pp. 17-20).

After the occurrence of Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, women activists established another organization named Sudanese Empowerment in Peace (SuWEP). This organization has indented to promote women empowerment in south and north Sudan. Therefore, in 2009 election, it provided its women affiliates with amount of grand to run for elections. Besides, it has dialed a lot of sessions of capacity building for women who plan to enter in the government (Ayo, 2010, pp. 17-20).

To conclude the chapter, Republic of Sudan and Sudan experience a great number of events in which women were called to set under the same roof and ask for their rights and participation in political arena. Since the country has been raged by frequent wars, the women were the only ones who suffered the most. Therefore, it's also the women who try their best to normalize the situation and put efforts to replace sustainable peace by existing wars. To this extend, the women took very significant and effective steps. These steps include their frequent gatherings, protests and public demonstrations for the support of their rights and support of their inclusion as an effective factor in peace building processes. They also raised their voices by attending conferences, presenting

papers and participating in formal governmental events. Nonetheless, women are not given the adequate opportunities to participate in large-scaledecision making processes. This lack of women inclusion in decision-makings especially in peace-related issues has caused to achieve a shaky and weak peace in the country.

6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I am summing up the content of the study. I present the main argument that the role and impact of women on peace building remains low despite the international loud rhetoric for empowering women in local communities. Except for some handful number of achievements, women in post conflict societies have failed to play a constructive role in peace building process of their communities.

6.1 Women Participation

In March 2000, the Security Council president Choudburymentioned "members of security council affirm that the equal access and full participation of women in power structure and their full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflicts are essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security (Ayo, 2010, p. 12). This statement serves as a milestone in empowerment of women in different areas. it might include political, such peace building agents or economical such as the work active workers in the industry and market who contribute toward the overall wellbeing of their communities.

As I mentioned in the previous chapters, women are considered the major stakeholders in making and building peace in conflict and post conflict societies. Sudan, Afghanistan, and Iraq are my focus point form the other post conflict societies, are showing a great scene for women play in peace issues. Women participation is not solely counting how many women fill the quotas. It's that though different groups of women from different social and political backgrounds are able to access power structure and what differences they can bring with their participation. Women participation is not merely to creating opportunities for elites, but for women who directly affected by conflict such as refugees, internally displaced persons and survivor of violence.

Equal participation and gender equality are the two universally accepted rights, which properly why women should be allowed to participate in decision-makings and peace talks. In addition to this, when war and conflict breakdown in a society, women are the most vulnerable objects of direct and indirect violence. Women also have more responsibilities due to their gender roles in the societies, and their labor, strength play a significant role in maintenance of their family and communities during a civil war. With all of above mentioned and that women make up 50 percent or more of the population, overlooking their capacity to peace building is a sign of mere mistake.

As I have previously indicated in the previous chapters, women capacity and commitment in the post conflict societies including Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan is remarkably undermined. Women exclusion from the peace talks has increased the social, and economical and political problems and played as a catalyst for graph of violence in the communities. Women are victims of raping, social harassment and defamation in Afghanistan while the peace talks are still not giving proper results between the Afghan government and the Taliban insurgents. So to talk generally, as this paper focused on three post conflict societies, the role of women is generally undermined and women remain isolated when they decide to participate in peace issues.

Security Council Resolution 1325 is the landmark for women participation and their inclusion in decision-makings. It provides the first legal and political framework recognizing the disproportionate effect of war and conflict on women and the role of women in peace building. SCR 1325 also provide guidance for international community to incorporate gender perspective into the peace issues.

As it was showed in case of Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan, SCR 1325 is playing a tremendous effective role in regard with women issues due to the four reasons. First, the resolutions recognize the women as the equal participants as their male counterparts in peace making issues. Second, with its 18 provisions, SRC 1325 provides a framework for women participation in area of negotiations, planning humanitarian operations, and rebuilding war-torn countries. Third, the resolution also place obligations on the

member states and the non-state actors to protect women rights and perform their duties through a gender perspective lenses. And fourth, SCR 1325 also recognizes the establishment of civil societies with regards to peace making issues where women are focused to participate.

SCR 1325 and other important resolutions are the results of several decades of advocacy by the civil society and several international treaties. One of the treaties with proved so effective with creation of SCR 1325 was CEDAW (Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women). CEDAW, which was adopted in 1979, is usually referred as the bill of rights for women. Right now 168 states have membership to CEDAW and thus they are legally bound to take measures to promote women participation in their decision-makings. Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan have also adopted CEDAW and SCR 1325 in their constitutions.

Besides states, the regional organizations have also make a number of commitments to support the SCR 1325. The African Union has adopted a policy, which puts women at the head of all levels of peace mediations. European Union has also recognized that women participation is the key to advancement of women rights. In addition to these, SADC (Southern African Development Community) has guaranteed women equal representation in decision-makings.

SCR 1325 was adopted in Sudan in 2002, but it never was considered as an obliging law. The military governments of Sudan had this resolution on paper rather than on action. In Iraq, SCR 1325 was adopted in 2001, but the same as in Iraq, the dictatorship of Sadam had already inclined toward the religious wing and thus women were given the minimum space to occupy in the government. In Afghanistan, after the collapse of Taliban regime, SCR 1325 was incorporated into the constitution. In 2008 due to large advocacy by women, the government developed a national plan for SCR 1325 by which women participation in decision-making was largely supported.

CEDAW is largely controversial in the countries like Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan. Sudan has a very traditional society in which anything that opposed sharia law is not accepted by masses. This is true especially in north Sudan where people are living a more traditional and religious life than south of Sudan. Iraq is contentious toward CEDAW too. But in north of Iraq, Kurdistan where people and women are more open minded and educated and lately has not been affected by war and conflict has adopted CEDAW in their own laws. But since Kurdistan is still a federation in Iraq, it can't approve the law unless it's not from the center. Afghanistan has adopted CEDAW in its laws but it was a couple of times rejected by the parliament. Due to the large amount of women who came on streets and raised their voice for women empowerment, the CEDAW is now into the national plan and applied in the country.

After many years of passing the SCR 1325 and intervention treaties like CEDAW, still the progress toward women full participation in peace building issues and decision-making issues has been turbulent. For sure, there have been victories in the women efforts like Afghanistan, Iraq and Sudan, but overall speaking, the realities of women experience in post conflict societies reveals exclusion, marginalization and limited decision making power.

United Nations has understood the effective role of women in bringing peace in the societies. UN through its multiple resolutions has recognized the importance of women participation in all states of conflict, and that is why it is largely argued that women should not only be supported during conflict but also before commencement of conflicts. In this thesis, I showed that women in post conflict societies has take some strong actions in area of Peace making, political participation, Security and justice.

Women in post conflict societies overcome some of the barriers standing on their ways to participate in peace making issues. Involving women participation in peace process means access to formal peace structures. These formal peace structures are getting women in peace table as an equal participant, giving women the key roles as mediators

and using from the expertise of the women who make up 50 percent of the whole population.

Women place in peace making issue is usually contested in the traditional societies of the post conflict societies. This contest is also deriving its origin from the discriminatory activities of the powerful international organizations like United Nations. To some extent, one can argues that there is not any will for improving women participation from the above.

Despite of these fundamental discriminations, women in post conflict societies accomplished incredible success too. They mobilized protests to seek place to present women issues at the peace table or influence peace negotiation in Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan. In these countries, women who got the chance of being on the peace table, they done much to ensure that the voice of the victims and the excluded ones are heard. For instance, Sudan women advisors protested for the inclusion of humanitarian, social and economic consideration in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Another example is in Afghanistan, when women participated in unofficial talks and brought together member from the two opposite sites to embrace peace in the country.

In Sudan, creation of Community Development Association (CDA) was one of the local women innovative. Through CDA, the women activists formed Gender Expert Support Team (GEST), which provides advice for women mediation teams. By establishing such initiatives, the number of women in 2005 participating in local peace negotiations ascended and thus women empowerment improved. With Help of GUST Sudanese women formed a document called "women's Priorities for Peace and Reconstruction in Darfur". This document proved so helpful in putting women participation in peace talk as a priority and guaranteeing them more security.

Political participation for women in post conflict societies is one of the dangerous tasks where they are usually competed and bitted by their male counter parts. Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan as the post conflict states have experienced this scenario. However, women

activists in the countries have raised their voice to get their voice heard by the masses so that they are given the chance to participate in the decision-makings.

Support for women's leadership in governance and political participation has increased largely. With resistance of the international aid in the post conflict societies it is emphasized that women should be given the chance of political participation through voter education, quota systems, constitutional revisions and leadership trainings. A recent study by Institute for Inclusive Security shows that inclusion of more women in governance increase the legitimacy of the government institution during conflicts.

In post conflict societies, like Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan economic and individual security deficiencies are considered as the main barriers toward women participation in public arena. The police males on the public harass women in Iraq and women in Afghanistan are not considered morally fine if they participate in public events. Women have face with lack of economic resources to run for elections or mobilize supporters for their public events in post conflict societies too.

In regard to political participation, Women's alliance for a Democratic Iraq (WAFDI) and Baghdad Women's Association (BWA) are two examples of women innovative by Iraqi women. With the deteriorating situation of Iraq after 2003, women managed to accomplish a lot of success with WAFDI and BWA. In 2003, WAFDI sent 13 Iraqi women to Washington for education and then when they came three of them managed to become parliamentarians. In 2008, BWA conducted training for elections and as a result of those three women managed to become members of Baghdad provincial council.

Barriers toward Iraqi women participation in politics are due to the political and economic insecurity. Iraqi women also face an incredible amount of violence by gender oppressive familial responsibilities. A survey "women for women" in 2008 stated that 88 percent of women despondences expressed that they or someone in their family would become victim of violence in their household. Due to this lack of security, women are deprived to take part in political events.

In Sudan, too, women activists designed some initiative for improving women political status in the country. Sudanese Empowerment in Peace is one of the successful achievement of Sudanese women through which they undertaken programs to promote women political participation. Sudan Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005 put an end to the continual civil war between North and South. As a result of this agreement, Government of National Unity was formed. Sudan Empowerment in Peace also conducted a couple of capacity building trainings to educate women who participate in different areas of governance.

Afghan women also had hard time to improve the situation of women in the country. Poverty, lack of education, and security are the main concerns ahead of Afghan women. In a survey in 2009, 66 percent of women responded that security situation was their main concerns. With such tough situation for women, Afghan women developed KabulTec as an innovative to fight the barriers that stand in front of their way. Kabultec has provided trainings and campaigns to contribute toward women participation in the country. During 2005 presidential elections, Kabultec developed a toolkit called "women guide to Winning Election. Through these instruments, women were able to lean about fundraising, and organizing effective campaigns to mobilize more votes for them.

6.2 Obstacles Ahead of Women Participation and Peace-Building in Post-Conflict Societies

I found the following obstacles as the main problems ahead of women participation in post conflict society including Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan.

First, ethnic divisions and polarization is one of the main problems toward peacemaking in post conflict societies. Arabs, Kurds, Muslims and Christians make up the main bulk of Iraqi society. With such a polarized society, the personal interests of the women activists groups defer. The same is true with Sudanese women whether they are from south, which means a bit close-minded or from the north modern and open-minded.

Second, lack of formal place for women at the mediation table is another barrier. The place of women for participating in negotiation table is not institutionalized in the post conflict societies. Women in Afghanistan are mostly marginalized from participating in peace talk due to the traditional view of women as the housekeepers. Women are mostly conceived as the inside home keepers rather than involving themselves in out-of home issues.

Thirds, traditional gender roles and cultural barriers are considered as another barrier toward women participation in peace making issues. Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan have traditional social fabric in which exclusively men dominate the affairs. With such a patriarchal structure, women are being barred from accessing information or expressing opinions. In traditional society of Sudan, mostly women are denied to be involved in local peace initiatives. In Afghanistan, too, changing the men views on women is also considered an effective key toward women empowerment in the society.

Fourth, lack of cultivation of local women leadership is also another barrier. There are not enough educated women in the societies to take the leadership. This is due to the discriminatory policy of education in post conflict societies where elite urban centers receive a great amount of educational funds. In Iraq, for example, women have more educational facilities than a remote city in the north of Kurdistan, which is unfair for equal women empowerment.

6.3 Recommendations

I found out in this study that women in post conflict societies including Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan have been vulnerable to the impacts of continuing conflict and civil wars, their role to contribute toward sustainable peace have been limited too. In order that women in Iraq (Kurdistan), Sudan and Afghanistan to play a more constructive role in the peace building process, I propose the following suggestions.

First, Education for women should be promoted. Women generally in post conflict societies are unable to read and write, let alone undergoing and higher education. Due to

the widespread level literacy among the women, they don't know about their rights and when they don't know their rights, they can't fight for it. For example, in South Sudan, women make up 60 percent of population but only 10 percent of those are literate. This illiteracy makes the women to victims of violence and also marginalizes them to take part in decision-makings.

Therefore, international donor and domestic governments should pay close attention to promotion of education especially among the women. Women should be encouraged to enroll their daughters and sibling into the schools. Governments should work to remove some stereotypes that exist in post conflict societies that if girls go to school, this action of her would be against the traditional and religious of the masses in the communities.

One effective policy for improvement of women education is through increasing the scholarship quotas for women either to study abroad or to the local universities. The policy should support giving priority for women when it comes to higher education.

Literacy and education must remain a key component in empowerment efforts. In addition to this, educational opportunities must target girls in particular to address their unique challenges and disadvantage. Increase in women education would affect substantial peace in the communities, since the educated women as mothers would teach their children that war is devastating phenomena and it should never transcends peace. Educated mothers would raise educated children and ultimately resulting in a peaceful community where peaceful life prevail conflicts.

Educated women understand the impact of maintenance of peace on their life. They have a better idea and more strong commitment to contribute toward peace building process in their societies. Four functions of peace building, which are eradication of mistrust from the warring conflicts, political and economic development, reconciliation and fostering civil society, educated women contribute to each of these functions more that illiterate population. The most educated women in communities can contribute toward peace building is through fostering civil society. As it is seen in case of

79

Afghanistan, that the few Western educated Afghan women returned back home and establish organization to improve women situation in the country.

Second, women economic improvement is another key to promote the impact of women on peace building. As it was defined before, the second function of peace building is political and economical developments. Women can take a constructive role in bringing peace in their societies through participation in industrial sector of their communities. When women go out of homes to work outside, they are guaranteeing a contribution toward the costs of daily life though the salary that they receive. Their husbands and father might not feel so much stressed about the money for the daily spent of the family since the women is also giving a contribution. This encourages the husband or the father to leave the societal grievance, which may potentially lead him to take part in hostiles. Or in some communities like Southern Afghanistan, men are stimulated to join the insurgents who fight against the government in exchange of a good offer money monthly. If women were working and she had revenue to support the family, the husband would not be force to join the warring factions.

Therefore, I believe economic prosperity in a family that can be achieved when women go to work is the key to maintenance of peace in the communities. Governments and international donors in post conflict societies like Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan should focus on implementation of micro finance projects which can make the women economically prosperous. An attention should be given to the promotion of women handcraft products in the remote communities where fighting is in a strong fire. A tremendous number of women in Afghanistan and Sudan are working at their homes to make rags, gloves, socks and other type of small handcrafts. Governments and donors might invest and establish factors exclusive for women to work in. this way, the women in post conflict societies can be economically empowered and thus would contribute toward peace building in their societies.

Third, I suggest that development of a friendly sphere between women and the religious leaders can contribute tremendously toward women role in peace building. As it was

mentioned in case of Iraq and Afghanistan, religious leaders are hostile toward women empowerment. They believe on a traditional view about women who should be given little space for participation in decision-makings. Women in Kurdistan-Iraq succeeded in convincing the religious leaders to foster women rights and address lyrics of women empowerment ideas during the Friday mosques. They to some extent succeeded however still the religious sect is hostile to women empowerment issues in other part of Iraq. The Same, Afghanistan's Islamic council announces more limitation on women in 2012. They announced that women cant travel unless they are accompanies by a male sibling.

Therefore, government and organization for women empowerment should work toward a friendly sphere between the women and the religious leaders. Religion in post conflict societies is practiced fanatically and religious leaders are considered as the source of legitimating public activities. Therefore, governments should work toward religious and cultural dialogue with facilitated the relations between women and religious leaders. Women should also be supported to foster a community of women religious leaders. When women groups have their women clerics, then this would facilitate the relation and communication of women activists with religious leaders. When gender mainstream is not observed in the male dominate religious sector of the communities, it is creating discrimination. Women, who don't make up any significant bulk of the religious sect, are more marginalized in fighting against their rights and raising their voice in their communities.

Thus, in order to foster the impact of women on peace building, government, international donors, and the organization working for women empowerment should focus on dialing religious dialogue and conferences where woman issues are given the priority. Through dialing such religious dialogues, religious leaders and women activists pave their way toward making an alliance with each other.

Fourth, networking is another suggestion I give for improving the role of women on peace building process. Due to the traditional sphere of communities, it is very difficult

for women to build a network out of their village or community. Women in Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan rarely travel out of their village unless there is a need like weddings, funeral and so on. With this point it mind, women have less acquaintances out of their immediate village and community. This causes problem when it comes to the efforts of peace building. Women attempts to organize events or to mobilize women around the society are troublesome due to the lack of networking among the women. Women leaders become disappointed when they hardly can reach the out of their village women to promote their idea or event.

Networking among women leaders should be expanded. In addition to this, a Roaster of women leaders should be established. By such initiative, women leaders know each other and can easily community together to disseminate their idea among the other women nearby or far from the community. Establishing a network among the women leaders can contribute toward sharing the women empowering "best practices" between the communities. By sharing the best practices of women empowering, other women in other communities are encouraged to work toward bringing new changed toward their societies. In fact, sharing ideas of women leader of a specific community among the women of other communities mobilize them to take actions to contribute toward peace building process and ultimately toward a prosperous life.

Setting up "model village" to encompass political, economical, and justice issues is a deliverable worth pursuing. Such initiates can foster a strong network among the women leaders in post conflicts societies. By identifying model villages whose women's attempts toward maintenance of peace were constructive and noticeable, women start to be encouraged to work toward betterment of their life and society as a whole.

Fifth, improving security situation would also affect the impact of women on peace building process. Since peace building not only includes conflict time, also includes post conflict setting, a secured situation would enable women to boldly attend peace building process which include addressing fear and mistrust among the warring factions,

promoting political and economical development, reconciliation and fostering civil society.

Unfortunately, women are victimized to a tremendous number of crimes during conflicts and after conflicts when security is fragile. Women in Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan fell victim to war time crimes, included but not exclude to sexual harassment, domestic and public violence, kidnapping. In such a situation where security is fragile, women are not encouraged to attend in public events or participate in decision-makings. This might cause them two barriers. The first barrier is that they would be exposed to violence or any other type of wartime crime. The second barrier is that whatever happens to them is not only affecting them individually, rather it would be considered as a disrespect or dishonor to the family and the tribe as whole.

With these points in mind, government and international community and the women empowerment organization should play an active role in dialing seminars, and events to educate the security forces about the issue of women rights. Mostly in Sudan, for example, the crimes committed against women are perpetrated by police officers as it was shown in case of Sudan. Although large number theses harassments goes unreported, women have faced a lot of harassment done by the police officers, soldiers and the military in addition to the militia groups who can't be held responsible for the crimes due to their unidentified identity.

I represented my five suggestions for improving the impact of women on peace building process in post conflict societies. The issue of empowering women is a slow process especially in patriarchal societies of Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan. Still women attempts to empower women such societies are resisted in a great deal. But as I found out in this study, women can play a central role in maintenance of peace in their societies. Therefore, in women are kept marginalize, endurable peace would not turn into reality.

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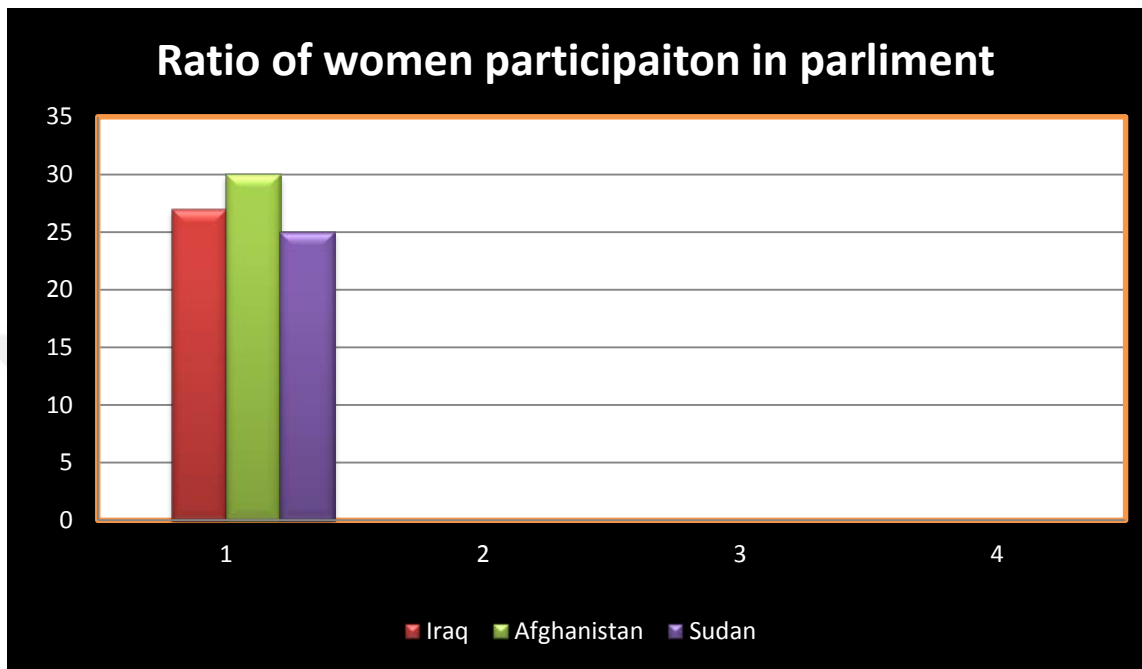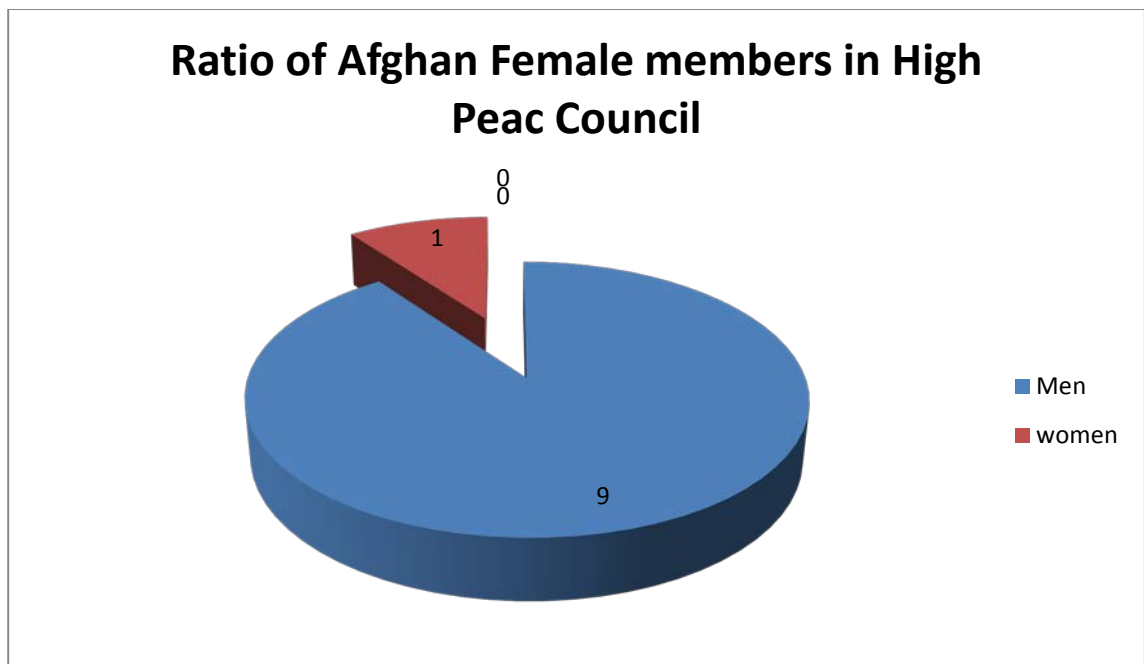
Figure: 1

Figure: 2

RESUME

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- **Bachelors**   : 2008, Arts in geography (SalahaddinUnivestiy)
- **Master**   **:**2016, Istanbul Aydin University, Social Sciences, Department of International Relations and Political Science, International Relations and Political Science Program

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND REWARDS

2010 till Present

Kurdistan Regional Government/Department of Foreign Relations

Responsibilities include:

a. Assisting with VIPs consular cases

b. Receiving official delegations to/from the Kurdistan Region

c. Accompanying senior delegations during official visits

d. Focal point for VIPs and their consular cases

e. Assisting locals with application forms and with visa procedures

f. Following up consular cases with diplomatic community in the region and with the Embassies in Baghdad and in neighboring countries

g. Arranging for documents from locals to be authenticated by our department

h. Making meeting arrangements with visiting officials with the Kurdish government

March 2009 to July 2009

Zozik Airline Company (Assistant Manager)

Responsibilities included:

a. Assisting with VIPs flight requests

b. Arranging special flights for VIPs in Kurdistan

c. Dealing with customer complaints and following up with service providers

d. Responsible for key clients and acting as a focal point

e. Booking flights through IT systems and company applications

OBJECTIVE

Secure a meaningful position, which utilizes my skills and experience and helps me to Succeed in my career and enable me to pursue other opportunities. I began my career in the Public service at an early age and I'm committed to continuing my service to ensure I met my goals. I intend to pursue further academic studies abroad to broaden my skills and Knowledge.

KEY SKILLS

- Over 2 years of government service at the KRG Department of Foreign Relations

- Solid administrative skills, including communication skills with a proven track record

- Fluent in three languages, allowing me to work closely with the diplomatic community In Kurdistan and with frequent visitors

- Computer literate and able to learn and adapt in a quick and efficient manner

- Very good skills in Microsoft Office products, including with Word, Excel, PowerPointAnd with Publisher
- Good experience in documentation team, ensuring all confidential documents are storedCorrectly and that only authorized individuals have access to those documents
- excellent experience from the private sector, allowing me to use the skills I gatheredInto my current role in the public sector

LANGUAGE SKILLS:
- Arabic: reading, speaking and writing (advanced)
- English: reading, speaking and writing (Advanced)
- Kurdish: native speaker (fluent)
- Turkish: (good at speaking)

REFERENCE

Available on your Request