**MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY**



**THE ROLE OF CHURCH BASED ORGANISATIONS IN PEACE BUILDING CASE STUDY OF CCJP MASVINGO DIOCESE 2008-2013**

**BY**

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# Dedication

My dedication to the completion of this project goes first to the Almighty God who has made everything possible through his everlasting grace. Also I dedicate this project to my parents Mr and Mrs Manavele and my two sisters Ivy and Kulisiwe.

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I’m grateful to the contribution made by CCJP Masvingo Diocese and respondents from Masvingo in coming up with research findings of this project, their cooperation and commitment made it possible.

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# ACRONYMS

CCJP Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace

ZLFHR Zimbabwe Lawyers For Human Rights

MDC Movement for Democratic Change

ZANU PF Zimbabwe African National Unity People’s Front

CRS Catholic Relief Services

Zimstat Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency

# Abstract

*This study seeks to find out the role of church based organizations in peace building using the case study of CCJP Masvingo Diocese from 2008 to 2013.The study takes a look on the nature of political violence that occurred in Masvingo in 2008 which was characterized by the use of hate speech, beatings, torture, murder, destruction of houses and property. Violence hotspots are also highlighted in the study which includes Zaka, Bikita, Chiredzi and Nerupiri. The study goes on to look into the peace building initiatives introduced by CCJP after the 2008 violence which includes peace building training for peace committees, peace events, youth voices forums, community visioning workshops and outreach strategies for youth leaders workshops. The successes and challenges of peace building are highlighted and successes include increase in political tolerance, reduction in cases of political violence, collaboration from different political parties in community projects and active participation of women and the challenges include budgetary constraints, antagonism between the state and civil society and poor state of roads in rural areas. A conclusion was drawn and some recommendations were made out by the researcher basing on the research findings of the study.*

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# 

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Conflict has been a common problem in Africa and the causes of conflict are both internal and external. Most of the conflicts have been civil and this has affected development. To foster post conflict resolution and peace building civil society organisations such as church based organizations from different religious denominations have been active through their initiatives. However, a challenge has been realized through the recurrence of conflict after efforts at conflict resolution and peace building.

In Zimbabwe achieving sustainable peace has been a difficulty. In 1983 a crackdown was launched in Matebeland against dissidents in an operation called Gukurahundi launched and carried out by the North Korean trained 5th brigade. The government led by Robert Mugabe believed that the dissidents wanted to overthrow the government. The dissidents were former ZIPRA forces who had fought in the liberation war. According to the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe and Legal Resource Foundation (1999) two thousand civilians had been murdered and hundreds of households burned within a short space of time after the 5th brigade was deployed in Matebeland. Also violence increased in late 1984 towards elections as ZANU PF youths were attacking ZAPU supporters and forcing them to attend their rallies.

After the formation of the opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 2000 Zimbabwe experienced an increase in cases of political violence in the run up to elections. Opposition supporters have been the main victims of the political violence they are abducted, murdered and their households burned. During the run up to the 2002 Presidential elections known and suspected opposition party members were targeted by the ruling party ZANU PF supporters.

During the March 2008 harmonised elections the political climate was relatively calm but after the stalemate in the Presidential elections a rerun was called for in June the same year. During the run up to the June presidential runoff elections Zimbabwe experienced intense violence which was the worst in Zimbabwe’s election history, ZANU PF and its supporters launched a crackdown on the opposition party, MDC in an operation known as ‘wakavhotera papi’ a lot of people were murdered mainly known or suspected opposition party supporters and according to the Solidarity Peace Trust (2008) one thousand one hundred and seventy five incidences of political violence were recorded in the run up to the 2008 elections. A lot of people had to flee their homes in search of safety mainly at churches and urban areas where the violence was low as compared to rural areas. After the annunciation of Robert Mugabe as the winner of the 2008 June runoff elections cases of violence dropped across the country as ruling party supporters who were the main perpetrators of the violence celebrated their victory against MDC T. Hence after conflict has ended it was important to make efforts at peace building and reconciliation to restore relations in a community .In a bid to promote reconciliation the unity government formed the Organisation for National Healing and Reconciliation (ONHRI). JOMIC was also created to monitor the implementation of the GPA and it also managed to source funds for peace building. Also civil society groups engaged in projects of peace building and tolerance and amongst them were church based organisations. Hence this research seeks to find out the role of church based organisations in peace building case study of CCJP Masvingo Diocese after the 2008 June runoff presidential elections.

# 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Soon after independence Zimbabwe made attempts at national healing and reconciliation. A government of national unity was formed which comprised of the Rhodesian Front, PF ZAPU and ZANU PF and Robert Mugabe was the Prime Minister. Mugabe adopted a policy of reconciliation by openly encouraging those who had fought on opposite sides during the liberation war, the blacks and the whites to work together in a statement he issued on national television.

The period after the Gukurahundi saw the formation of organisations to promote reconciliation. The UMTHWAKAZI Reconciliation Group was one of the groups formed. The primary objective of the UMTHWAKAZI was to promote healing, development and reconciliation. Various civil society organisations were affiliated to this organisation and these included Zimbabwe Project Trust, Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Legal Resources Foundation, World Vision, Imbovane, Zimrights and Amani Trust. Also the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference created a task committee to encourage healing in Matebeleland. The committee went about collecting information in Matebeleland with the idea to get views and ideas of people on what they felt wanted to be done in their region to promote reconciliation after the Gukurahundi. A lot of people had been affected and there was need for reconciliation to promote peaceful relations between victims and perpetrators of the violence.

After the signing of the Unity Accord in 1987 a clemency order was issued in 1988 which pardoned all human rights violations committed between 1982 and 1987.A Gukurahundi had been launched in Matebeland and Midlands to fight the dissidents whom were believed wanted to overthrow the government led by Robert Mugabe of ZANU PF. The dissidents were composed of former ZIPRA forces that had deserted the National Army. Also another clemency order was issued in 2000 to pardon violence and human rights violations after the 2000 parliamentary elections.

After the disputed presidential elections of June 2008, the Global Political Agreement was signed to form the unity government between the three main political parties which included ZANU PF, MDC T and MDC N. Article vii of the Global Political Agreement allowed the formation of the Organisation for National Healing and Reconciliation (ONHRI) tasked to promote national healing, cohesion and unity. Among the mandates of the organisation was to reconcile political enemies to live together in peace and harmony and enjoy the rights enshrined in the constitution such as freedom of association and speech.

**1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Zimbabwe experienced increased electoral violence since 2002 after the formation of the opposition party the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC).The social fabric in community mainly in rural areas has disintegrated, people from the same community no longer trust and relate to each other well due to political affiliations. Victims and perpetrators of violence have hostility towards each other. In rural areas of Masvingo roving gangs of youths torched homesteads, slaughtered cattle, beat, raped and murdered people in the name of party politics .Hence Some of the perpetrators of violence still walk free and no legal action has been taken against them whilst victims of violence have reported their cases to the Police and expect them to be brought to book. Hence it is important to promote reconciliation and peace building to bring back people together and the church played an important role in this process. The study will also find out whether the peace building initiatives employed have been successful or not.

# 1.3 SIGIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Peace is the new term of development and it is important to promote peace building to restore social cohesion after the disturbing violence experienced in the June 2008 runoff presidential elections. In this endeavour the role of the church is important in that religion brings people from different backgrounds together and bible teachings promote forgiveness and reconciliation. The Roman Catholic Church has a doctrine of social teachings of the church which promote the development of just and peaceful societies. Also church based organisations are neutral organisations that seek to promote peaceful relations and foster development in societies.

# 1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research seeks:

* To establish the nature of the 2008 political violence in Masvingo.
* To establish the role that CCJP played in peace building initiatives in Masvingo.
* To establish the extent to which peace building initiatives have been successfully implemented by CCJP.

# 1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

* What transpired during the 2008 political violence?
* What kind of initiatives was made by CCJP towards peace building after 2008?
* How effective has been peace building in Masvingo Diocese?
* What are the challenges to effective peace building?

# 1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

**Peace Building**

Refers to the post conflict actions of building peaceful and stable communities .Mudzingwa (2010) argues that peace building is the long term process of dealing with the causes of conflict and promoting justice. It is a broad term that can include human rights protection, promoting reconciliation, promoting non violent conflict resolution methods and preventing the recurrence of violent conflicts. However peace building is a process that addresses the underline causes of conflicts, promoting reconciliation, restoring relations and creating systems that can be able to deal with conflicts non violently.

**Church Based Organisation**

Refers to organisations that are affiliated with, supported by or based on a religion or religious group. Church based organisations are found and controlled by churches. However church based organisations are commissions of churches to promote a certain agenda such as development for example CCJP is a commission of the Roman Catholic Church promoting human dignity in accordance with social teachings of the church.

**Political violence:**

Refers to the organized of use of force with the idea of influencing political outcomes. United Institute of Peace (2011) argues that political violence can include terrorism, rebellion, war, conquest, revolution, oppression, and tyranny. However political violence refers to the use of force to purse political ideologies or clashes between people from different political parties as a result of conflicting political ideologies.

**Peacekeeping:**

Refers to the action that is carried out to promote peace and preserve agreements after conflicting parties have stopped fighting. United States Institute of Peace (2011) argues that peacemakers can be deployed in areas where fighting is going on and their role is to position themselves between conflicting parties. Peace keeping is also done to protect civilians from harm and also allow the operation of civil societies and NGOs to provide aid to people.

**Peace -making:**

Refers to actions taken to stop conflict and bring conflicting parties to an agreement. United States Institute of Peace (2011) argues that peace making involves the process of negotiating an agreement between conflicting parties. A Global Political Agreement was reached between ZANU PF, MDC T and MDC M under the mediation of SADC which culminated into the formation of the inclusive government in Zimbabwe.

# 1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory will help the study in informing the framework in which the research will be conducted.

THEORY OF CHANGE: CULTURE OF PEACE

Theories of change explain how conflicts are prevented, mitigated, managed, resolved or transformed. Theories of change have two parts. First is a theory about what factors are driving or mitigating conflicts, second is a theory about what can be done about conflict which is going to be the focus of this study. A theory of change is about how some driving or mitigating factors of the context can be changed with peace building action to achieve an impact that builds peace, Schirch (2014). If enough people change their behaviour towards groups with which they are in conflict then more people will adopt nonviolent means to resolve their conflicts with opposing groups and insist that key actors do the same. If people have the opportunity to collaborate across the political divide on addressing issues of mutual interest then they will increase their trust with members of the opposing group and confidence in their ability to interact with them without resorting to violence.

# 1.9 LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of peace building was first used in the 1970s and the concept began to be familiar internationally in the 1990s. Peace building has seen a shift of view from focusing on international to local peace building. Peace building initiatives have seen an increase in the support of local peace builders.

Hwanda and Mudzingwa (2010) notes that peace is important in that it enables people to make informed decisions, brings people together to find ways of improving society, facilitates planning and the reaching of goals and it liberates the minds of community members so they can live in freedom. Hence peace is important for development to take place because peace without development is short lived.

In Northern Ireland church based organisations played an important role to prevent cases in the increase of violence. Morrow (1991) cited by Catholic Relief Services (2008) argues that, the Ecumenical Corrymeela community organised meetings bringing people together from conflicting sides including paramilitary members. Some church leaders also performed mediation roles between conflicting parties. In 1974 a four month cease fire was reached after the Irish Christian Council managed to bring together representatives of the British Government and Irish Republican Army.

According to Steele (2003) cited by Catholic Relief Services (2008) a Serbian orthodox Priest Father Sava called for the trial of perpetrators of merciless killings in the former Yugoslavia by the International tribunal. He denounced violations of human rights such as body harm and ethnic cleansing. He also supported the need for free and fair elections in that country.

The church has played an important role to engage the international community to end local conflicts. The Catholic Archbishop of Uganda John Baptist Odama in 2012 called for the international community to end the conflict in Northern Uganda. According to the Catholic Peace Building Network (2006) cited by Catholic Relief Services (2008) ,the Archbishop called upon the United Nations to mediate talks between the Government and the Lord Resistant Army Rebels to end the war and a corridor to be opened for humanitarian aid to the civilians.

The World Conference of Religions for Peace works to promote conflict transformation in over fifty five countries and the organization has worked in countries such as Liberia, Kosovo, Bosnia, the great lakes region of Africa and Iraq. Bouta etal (2005) argues that, the organization promotes peaceful existence in societies through facilitating collaboration from various religious denominations to mediate on peace negotiations between conflicting parties. The organization mobilizes religious communities to take a leading role in peaceful co existence. After the war in Kosovo the organization facilitated a meeting between leaders with top leaders of major religious denominations to promote peace building. After America’s intervention in Iraq the organization organized a meeting with religious leaders which saw the creation of an Inter religious council that worked to counter terrorism.

Haynes (2009) notes that Sant Egido a Catholic church based organisation played an important role in peace building in some of African countries affected by civil war which includes Burundi, DRC, Sierra Leone , Algeria, Mozambique and Cot d’ivore .During the Mozambican civil war the organisation was successful in making peace efforts between 1989 and 1992.The organisation managed to be successful in its efforts due to the fact that both RENAMO and the government perceived the organisation as a neutral entity without other interests besides ending the conflict and restore peace. The organisation has played a role in mediation and dialogue between conflicting parties and in Kossovo the organisation led to the signing of the schools Agreement in 1988.

According to Whetho and Uzodike (2011) church based organisations are strong entities and are the most recognised civil society actors in DRC. During the peace process in DRC the Church of Christ offered assistance to internally displaced people in North Kivu. Peace committees from church based organisations engaged in peace education to local communities and also mediated conflicts such as land disputes.

Dodo etal (2014) argues that, religious groups and churches traditionally play vital roles in society when it comes to peace building. They act as advocates, intermediates, observers and educators. However church volunteers have faced a number of challenges in building peace such as persecution by state security agents.

The church is in a better position to understand underlying causes of conflict and Katunga (2008) argues that the church controls 60% of schools in DRC. Schools can be used as training institutions for peace education and this puts the church in an important position in peace building work.

The Muslim Christian Dialogue Forum (MCDF) trained peace makers who began restoring mutual relationships that had been broken by violence in Kaduna and Catholic Relief Services (2008) argues that this helped to reduce violence between conflicting parties. Peace makers also mediated on common conflicts such as land disputes and they managed to be successful in mediating a lot of conflicts. Their emphasis was on spiritual values, preaching and referring to both the Bible and the Quran. Due to the efforts of the MCDF a peace agreement was signed known as the Kaduna Peace Declaration between the Governor and top spiritual leaders. The declaration encouraged the community to resist violence and promote tolerance. Also in 2003 MCDF managed to mediate a settlement between conflicting parties in the Platue State which acted to reduce violence.

Catholic Relief Services (2008) argues that the voice of the church is strong and can be used to denounce violence and encourage peace. Bishops of the Episcopal Conference in Togo wrote pastoral letters which carried massages of tolerance, non violence and reconciliation. These pastoral letters were distributed around Togo and reached the majority of the population. Also to help resolve the Togolese social-political crisis peacefully the Catholic Bishops Conference of Togo coined a peace prayer which helped to promote peace.

In 1996 the School for Peace and Coexistence (EPC) was formed by Caritas Columbia and the Jesuits to educate and train people on the need for peace after series of violence in Columbia. Catholic Relief Services (2008) argues that peace education is important in that it gives people awareness on both indigenous and conventional methods of ending conflict such as mediaton, negotiation and mediation. Peace education has enabled Columbians to promote the culture of peace.

After the conflict in Northern Uganda the Acholi Religious Peace Initiative was formed in 1997 to work for peace. The organisation is involved in the organisation and facilitation of peace workshops in communities. The organisation also organises mediation sessions to deal with land disputes and other common conflicts between community members. The organisation has worked to bring people from different faith denominations to restore peace in Acholiland. Catholic Relief Services (2008) argues that, since the organisation carried out civil military dialogue it has improved relationships between the civilians and military.

Dodo etal (2014) alludes that, religious practitioners promotes non violence through training communities in methods of non violence and promoting reconciliation. Churches are usually the first to respond after violence and they remain part of the community after humanitarian workers depart. Hence the church plays an important role in peace building as it is part of the community in conflict and religion acts as social cement that bonds people together.

Churches and church based organizations are connected to rural communities and have a vital role to play in peace building. Macaulay (2013) notes that, giving support to church based organizations to be involved in peace building can be crucial to create sustainable grassroots reconciliation and community cohesion. Grassroots reconciliation is important in that it creates a home grown solution which is likely to create durable peace in communities.

The International Center for Religion and Diplomacy works to resolve identity based conflicts. The organization works to promote mediation, education as well as interfaith dialogue. The center has been working in conflict affected countries such as Sudan and Pakistan. The organization has worked with leaders to promote peace in Kashmir by conducting reconciliation workshops in the resolution of conflicts between various religious denominations. Bouta (2005) argues that the center organized a meeting in Sudan with religious leaders of Muslims and Christians to promote religious tolerance and end the conflict in the country. The organization also created a platform where Christian and Muslim leaders meet to solve their conflicts through the creation of the Inter religious council which was also supported by the Sudan Council of Churches.

The Inter-faith Mediation Centre in Nigeria has promoted mediation and dialogue between parties in conflict in Nigeria. The organization has collaborated with other organizations in peace building and has also acted to provide necessary resources for preventing conflicts and mediation of peace agreements. According to Bouta etal (2005) the organization was active in the peace agreement between Christians and Muslims in Kaduna State. After the conflict between the Biron and Fulani communities, the organization worked to facilitate a peaceful co existence among the communities.

The Inter Religious Council of Sierra Leone which was established in 1977 by religious leaders promotes mediation and dialogue. The organization promotes social justice on the bases of religious beliefs. Bouta etal (2005) argues that, in 1996 the organization was active during the Abidjan peace talks which saw the drop in the cases of violence.

Sentamu quoted by Clerical Whispers (2008) argues that, the Catholic Church has always played a pivotal role in prioritising the needs of the people and will continue to do so for the betterment of people’s lives. Hence CCJP is working with bipartisan peace committees and peace clubs in Masvingo and Chinhoyi to bring people on opposite sides together to restore social cohesion. They organise events such as concerts and sports tournaments.

Macaulay (2013) also notes that, supporting church based organizations to work in peace building is a team work that requires attention and sensitivity to building trust and relationships. Hence CCJP which is a commission of the Roman Catholic Churches has been able to encourage other faith based actors to be engaged in peace building work.

Church leaders and church based organizations are vital for conflict prevention and peace building. They act as neutral bodies in conflict and can easily facilitate intervention activities in communities. Hwanda and Mudzingwa (2010) argues that they can also mobilize local peace efforts through community based civic education .During the 2008 political violence churches such as the Roman Catholic Church offered shelter and food for victims who were running away from political violence in their communities.

However church based organizations face numerous challenges in their peace building work that include lack of human resources and lack of resources. Macaulay (2013) notes some of the challenges include lack of skills and knowledge. However CCJP organizes capacity building workshops for peace promoters to increase their knowledge and skills.

# 1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research the researcher used qualitative methods. According to James (1997) Qualitative research refers to the generic term to investigate methodologies described as ethnographic, naturalistic, anthropological, field or participant observer research. Under this type of research methods of data collection include observation, interviews, participation, immersion and focus groups. The advantage of qualitative research is that is you are able to get detailed information about the study. Steer (2013) argues that qualitative research gives the research any design to work with and the ability to be able to do what comes to the researcher.

# Research Design

Research design refers to an outline of how research would be carried out. The researcher for the purpose of this research used the descriptive design where the researcher reports what happened or what is happening. The researcher collected information from respondents and their views about the role of CCJP in peace building in their communities

# 1.12 Study Area

The study was carried out in Masvingo and areas under the study are Berejena, Nyika, Nerupiri, Mashava, Makambe, Nyika, Chiredzi, Chikombedzi, Bondolfi, Gono, Jerera and Rutenga.

# 1.13 Population

Population refers to people relevant to your study. The population for this research included key informants which are representatives from CCJP and peace committee members as well as a few community members in the communities under study.

# 1.14 Sampling

Sampling refers to the process of obtaining information about a population by examining part of it; Haque (ND).For the purpose of this research the researcher used purposive sampling. Black (1999) argues that purposive sampling involves handpicking subjects on the purpose of specific characteristics. The researcher would select people from the population to be sampled according to his knowledge. The researcher would handpick people who have participated in CCJP activities before such as volunteers.

# 1.15 Data Collection

The researcher used focus group discussions to get in depth data from respondents. The researcher also used questionnaires which were distributed to community members in Masvingo Diocese. The researcher also used interviews to collect data from relevant authorities at CCJP about their work in peace building and also interviews were used to collect information from the community which are the beneficiaries of peace building initiatives by CCJP. Also the researcher reviewed reports from CCJP to collect in depth data from the Organisation on their peace building initiatives.

# 1.16 Data Analysis

For the purpose of analysing data collected the researcher used tables, graphs and charts.

# CHAPTER ONE:

# THE NATURE OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN MASVINGO PROVINCE, 2008.

# 1.17 Introduction

This chapter is going to give an overview of the nature of political violence that occurred in Masvingo Province in 2008, giving a detailed account on the incidences of political violence as well as accounts of human rights violations.

In 2008 Zimbabwe held harmonized elections on 29 March and a run off presidential elections on 27 June after a stalemate in the march elections and according to amnesty international (2009) Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC T garnered 47.8% of the vote, Robert Mugabe of ZANU PF garnered 43.2% of the vote while independent candidates got less than 10% of the vote. According to Sachikonye (2011:45), the 2008 election was the most violent in the annals of Zimbabwe’s post independence history. A Lot of violence was experienced in the run up to the March 29 harmonized elections as well as the run up to the June presidential run -off elections. Most of the perpetrators were ZANU PF supporters and the victims of the violence were MDC supporters as well as their relatives and friends. The violence experienced was characterized by the use of hate speech at rallies, torture, beatings, murder, intimidation, looting of personal property, destruction of houses and property and some human rights were violated through the selective distribution and access to food. Tools used during the violence included logs, sjamboks, machetes, steel rods, knobkerries, knives and chains. Masvingo province was one of the provinces with high rates of political violence experienced throughout the country and Zaka and Bikita were some of the hot spots of the political violence experienced in 2008.

After the defeat of ZANU PF presidential candidate, Robert Mugabe in the first round of the presidential elections war veterans and other ZANU PF supporters began setting up bases which were centres were they held their meetings especially at night. These bases were set up in areas where people had strongly voted for the opposition party, MDC in the first round of the harmonized elections especially in the rural areas. These bases became torture camps for known and suspected MDC supporters. Community members were ordered by war veterans to gather at the bases to witness the punishment of MDC supporters.MDC supporters would be beaten heavily at base meetings and some could have their hands amputated as a punishment for voting for the opposition party. Revolutionary songs which were sung during the liberation war struggle were sung at these base meetings while beatings were taking place. Beatings were a method employed to instil fear to the community to vote for ZANU PF in the run -off presidential elections as well as a method to educate MDC supporters not to vote for MDC and defect to the ZANU PF party. According to the Catholic Commission for Justice and peace in Zimbabwe (2009) MDC supporters were forced to supply food that was eaten by ZANU PF youth and war veterans at the bases as a punishment for voting for MDC in the March harmonized elections.

The period in the run up to the presidential run -off elections was characterized by an increase in the use of hate speech as way to encourage a crackdown on the opposition supporters to discourage them from voting for their party in the elections. According to the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (2009) the politics in Zimbabwe is characterized by the use of hate speech which has caused the occurrence of violence amongst people of different political affiliations. Hate speech was used by political party leaders when addressing rallies where people would be emotionally charged. During the run up to the presidential elections the leader of ZANU PF who had lost the first round of the elections openly encouraged his the leadership of ZANU PF to adopt a military style campaign and launch a crackdown on the opposition party .According to the standard(2008) quoted by the Catholic Commission for Justice and peace in Zimbabwe (2009:46) the leader of ZANU PF Robert Mugabe , reiterated a threat of returning to war if voters rejected him, declaring the pen will not defeat the bullet. The period which followed after the sentiments saw a heavy crackdown on opposition party supporters in an operation which was called operation “wakavhotera papi” meaning where did you put your vote in the March 2008 elections. The slogan down with the opposition was used during the campaign. In the rural areas of Zaka and Bikita where villagers had overwhelmingly voted for the opposition party, gangs of ZANU PF youths, war veterans as well as army personnel moved around beating opposition party supporters and a lot of known MDC supporters had to flee the violence and seek refuge in churches notably roman catholic parishes which offered accommodation to victims of political violence and some had to seek refuge in Masvingo urban where the situation was relatively calm.

The violence also saw a crackdown on white commercial farmers who are accused of supporting the opposition party. According to Ansell (2008) a slogan called defending our land and sovereignty was coined by ZANU PF after the March elections which they lost to MDC T which saw a fresh farm invasion after the fast track land reform of 2000 which saw the invasion of commercial white farms by the war veterans. It was perceived and reported that former white commercial farmers were returning to the country to repossess their land after the lead by Tsvangirai in the first round of the presidential elections. White commercial formers farmers are accused by ZANU PF for bank rolling funds for the opposition party, MDC T in their operations and campaigns and are regarded as agents in reversing the gains of the liberation war struggle of which one of the causes of the war was land. John Borland a commercial farmer in Masvingo received intimidation by a gang of ZANU PF youths and war veterans in April 2008.The gang ordered Borland to return to his country, Britain and they told him that they wanted to take his farm as he was accused of supporting the MDC party. The gang also looted some of Borland’s personal belongings. Farm workers were forced to resign from their duties and leave the farm to pave way for new ownership of the farm. The war veterans went on to set a base near Borland’s farm where they would hold their meetings denouncing the opposition party and calling for Borland to leave his farm and return to his home country. The war veterans would loot food from Borland’s farm for their personal use.

Burning of houses and the forced closure of suspected MDC supporters was a common tactic used by ZANU PF supporters during the 2008 political violence in Masvingo. ZANU PF supporters would burn houses of opposition party supporters to deprive them of shelter and that they will not participate in the June run off presidential elections. According to the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (2009) sixty four houses were burnt in Bikita. One Mapare lodge in Bikita which belonged to Bikita East MP for MDC was burnt down by suspected army and security agents. The lodge was housing for people who were running away from violence in Buhera. One of the leaders in the instigation of violence in Buhera against the MDC supporters was Joseph Chinotimba who had lost the seat to the MDC T candidate in the Buhera South Constituency. In Zaka a priest’s house of the Roman Catholic Church at St Antony’s Mission was burnt down by ZANU PF supporters after he had preached a sermon denouncing violence the very same day. The ZANU PF supporters came during the night at his homestead demanding him to come out of the house so that they can deal with him as they regarded him as a sympathizer to the opposition party, the priest was not present at the house when the gang arrived and after there was no response the ZANU PF supporters went on to burn the house destroying every property in it. One business men in Zaka ward 16 was ordered to close his grinding mill by ZANU PF supporters as a punishment for supporting the MDC party in the March 2008 harmonized elections.

# 1.18 Violence Hotspots:

ZAKA

Zaka was a hotspot of political violence in Masvingo province in 2008 known and suspected MDC supporters were targeted by ZANU PF supporters mainly youth and war veterans who moved in groups instigating violence against opposition party supporters. At one disturbing incidence occurred at Jerera growth point when a group of suspected armed soldiers attacked MDC offices at night, shot and set ablaze seven opposition party supporters who were in the premises during the night of the attack. However three people managed to survive the attack and the survivors include Edison Gwenhure, Isaac Mbano and Kudakwashe Tsumele, Daily News Live (2012).Also two MDC councilors who won in the March harmonized elections had their houses burned and property destroyed by a group of suspected ZANU PF supporters. Also a Roman Catholic Priest’s house at St Anthony’s Mission was attacked and burned by a group of ZANU PF supporters. Despite being beaten those who were accused of supporting the opposition party were fined and according to the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (2008), those who were MDC agents in the March harmonized elections were fined a goat or five chickens each.

BIKITA

In Bikita officials of the opposition party, MDC such as aspiring candidates for parliamentary and local government seats as well as MDC polling agents were the main victims for the political violence experienced in the area. Perpetrators of the violence included war veterans and ZANU PF youths who moved around forcing people to denounce the opposition party and support the ruling party ZANU PF. People were forced to attend meetings at bases where opposition party supporters were forcibly converted to the ZANU PF party. According to the Zimbabwe Peace Project, on 12 June 2008 Bikita South MDC MP elect, Jani Makuku was attacked by a group of war veterans and ZANU PF youth at his home and he was left with broken legs, his house was burnt and his goods were stolen. Also in Bikita South a farmer in ward 28 was attacked by a group of ZANU PF supporters who accused him of supporting the opposition party and his livestock and property were looted, his house was left burnt and he was also ordered to leave the farm.

CHIREDZI

In Chiredzi the violence was concentrated in the sugar cane farms as well as rural areas such as Makambe and Chikombedzi. Farm workers were targeted by perpetrators of the violence especially in the Mukwasine Estates. People who were suspected of supporting the opposition party, MDC and also MDC officials were targeted during the course of the violence perpetrated most by ZANU PF who sought to have an outright victory over MDC in the run -off presidential elections. Suspected MDC supporters were ordered to vacate their houses in farm compounds and sometimes they were forced to resign from their jobs as a punishment for supporting the opposition party. Farm workers are paid their wages according to the number of days worked and their displacement due to violence deprived them of their normal wages as they could spent a lot of days missing from their duties as they fled violence to the nearby Chiredzi town where cases of violence were relatively low. Also people were forced to attend night meetings at bases and those who failed to attend were labelled as opposition party supporters who should be dealt with. In Chiredzi north officials of MDC were targeted by ZANU PF youths and war veterans who were the main perpetrators of violence and a particular example was when the house of the MDC secretary was attacked by group of ZANU PF youths during the night and goods were looted from the house ([www.kubatana.net](http://www.kubatana.net)).

In Makambe and Chikombedzi violence intensified after the march harmonized elections where Robert Mugabe of ZANU PF had lost Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC T. Suspected, supporters as well as polling agents of the MDC were targeted by ZANU PF supporters who included mainly youths and war veterans. Known and suspected supporters of the MDC were beaten and some would have their houses burnt and their property looted. At one incidence an MDC supporter and his friend were ambushed by a group of suspected ZANU PF supporters while they were going home after attending an MDC rally, he was beaten with a log in his head and a report was made to the police and no arrest was made despite identification of the suspects. The victim developed a tumour in his head after the attack. Another MDC supporter was also attacked by a group of suspected ZANU PF supporters during the night at his homestead and no arrests were made.

NERUPIRI

In Nerupiri there was tension between ZANU PF and MDCT supporters after a ZANU PF candidate, Mahofa had lost the parliamentary seat to an MDC candidate. The hostilities between the two political parties led to a crackdown on the opposition party supporters by the ZANU PF supporters who had lost the parliamentary seat to the opposition party. Previous elections had shown that Nerupiri was a ZANU PF strong hold and those whom then for the MDC in March harmonized elections were regarded as traitors and to avoid another win by the opposition party in the presidential run -off election ZANU PF began to launch violence against MDC supporters and most of the victims were beaten using logs. In one incidence a community member who was suspected of voting for the MDC was attacked and beaten with a log on his head whilst he was having a beer drink with his friends at Nerupiri Business centre.

# 1.19 Murder cases

People were also murdered during the violence that occurred in Masvingo province in 2008 and according to the Zimbabwe Peace Project (2008) Masvingo is home to high incidents of murder. Some people were burnt in their houses during attacks and some died of injuries sustained from torture and most people were tortured at bases established by ZANU PF for the purpose of dealing with the opposition party supporters. In Nyajena an MDC supporter was attacked at his house during the night and his house was burnt before he was abducted and shot dead by a group of suspected ZANUPF supporters. In Zaka a school teacher at Zaka Secondary School was attacked and murdered as he was accused of supporting the MDC and the perpetrator was a fellow teacher who supported ZANU PF. Also at Chitenderano at school teacher was died due to sustained injuries he received due to torture he received at bases which were set by ZANU PF supporters at Portgieter farm. The perpetrators also included MDC supporters and according to the Zimbabwe Peace Project (2008) a war veteran and a ZANU PF councillor were axed to death by a suspected MDC supporter after they had tried to disrupt an ongoing MDC rally. In Bota, Zaka West an opposition party activist was found dead in a stream and it was alleged that he was murdered by ZANU PF supporters.

# 1.20 Human Rights Violations

In Masvingo province food related violations were wide spread during and after the 2008 elections and opposition party supporters were the victims of the violations. In Masvingo Urban at Tsungai and Mutema stores where the owners are known ZANU PF supporters, war veterans, army personnel as well as ZANU PF supporters were granted access to buy scarce commodities such as sugar in the stores and the majority was denied access due to the fact that they had voted for the MDC T party candidate for the parliamentary seat and the majority of local government seat. ZANU PF lost fourteen parliamentary seats to the MDC T in the March harmonized elections. At one occurance in Runyararo west in Masvingo urban mealie meal which was a scarce commodity at that time which was being sold at a grinding meal was personalized by ZANU PF supporters who began distributing the mealie meal amongst themselves at the expense of the wider community and one had to produce a ZANU PF card to get the mealie meal. The logic behind was to starve MDC supporters as a punishment for voting for the MDC in the March harmonized elections. Also MDC supporters in the rural areas were blocked by ZANU PF supporters from buying subsidized GMB maize which was being sold at low prices and at Mazambara business centre and in Chivi in the Mawarire and Muvhundusi villages those who were suspected or known for supporting the opposition party were not allowed to buy maize from GMB and this served as a punishment for their support to the opposition party. Villagers were told by ZANU PF supporters to join ZANU PF or die of hunger and this was done in order to discourage people from supporting the opposition party MDC. At Mushagashe Teachers at Staukans primary school who were accused for supporting MDC were not allowed to purchase GMB maize by soldiers who were monitoring the sale of the maize

**CHAPTER TWO:**

**THE ROLE PLAYED BY CCJP MASVINGO DIOCESE IN PEACE BUILDING INITIATIVES.**

# 2.0 Introduction

This chapter is going to give a detailed account on the role of CCJP in peace building initiatives in Masvingo after the 2008 political violence. Peace building activities organised by CCJP include Peace building trainings for peace committees, youth voices forums, outreach strategies for youth leaders workshops, peace events and community visioning workshops.

To begin with, after the 2008 electoral violence CCJP sent a task committee in conflict affected areas to carry out a survey on what had transpired and also to collect peoples’ perceptions about peace building at local level. Perpetrators of violence included youths mainly ZANU PF supporters who were mobilised to instigate violence in communities against known and suspected MDC supporters. Women were used to identify opposition supporters, would sing songs to encourage perpetrators of violence and would also verbally encourage violence. Local perceptions on the role of women, youth and leaders in local peace building were also collected. Local leaders are important agents in peace building in that one of their mandates is to maintain peace and order in their communities. Women are important in that they give moral support to their families and are responsible for the behaviour of their children. Youths are important in that they resemble the future of the community and thus it is important to include them in peace building initiatives at local level. The data collected by the CCJP task committee provided the basis in which CCJP was to direct its efforts towards peace building in conflict affected areas to promote the concept of beneficiary participation.

CCJP also took another step to revive peace committees in conflict affected areas. As a Catholic Organisation CCJP already had peace committees in Roman Catholic churches around Masvingo Diocese, each Parish has a peace committee. Peace committees are important in that they know their communities very well and are in a position to mobilise people for peace building initiatives. To revive local peace committees in support of CCJP peace building initiatives, CCJP teams moved around Masvingo Diocese facilitating the election of peace committee leadership and representatives in most parishes in Masvingo Diocese. The leadership of the peace committees was composed of the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Secretary. The chair person would lead the peace committee in carrying out any activity organised by CCJP and would be responsible for community mobilisation and the secretary would take minutes in meetings held at local level and would give announcements of CCJP activities to be carried out in their respective communities.

To engage the community in peace building CCJP carried out activities known as informing the community. Informing the community was important in that it aimed at mobilising the community in CCJP peace building activities .CCJP began by approaching community leadership such as Chiefs, village heads , councillors youth leaders and church leaders or their representatives. Community leadership is important in peace building efforts in that they are also responsible for the prevalence of peace in their communities. CCJP teams moved around visiting community leaders in areas where they intended to carry out their peace building project. Community leaders welcomed the peace building project which they said had been long anticipated after the disturbing political violence experienced in their communities in the run up to the June 2008 elections. Apart from engaging community leaders CCJP also organised community meetings to engage the wider community through the local peace committees. At these community meetings CCJP introduced the peace building project to the people and also outlined some of the objectives which included increasing trust across the political divide after differences created by the 2008 political violence. Also to promote inclusiveness in its peace committees dominated by the Catholics, non-Catholics were called to voluntarily join the peace committee at these community meetings and response from the community was very good. Participants at meetings welcomed the initiative by CCJP at peace building and they promised to take a role in engaging the wider community.

After informing the community CCJP went on to carry out major peace building activities which include community peace events ,Peace building training of peace committees, peace building training of youth leaders, youth voices forums, outreach strategies for youth leaders and community visioning workshops.

# 2.1 COMMUNITY PEACE EVENTS

Peace events were held in the form of concerts and sports. In peace concerts community members would showcase activities such as dramas, dances, poets and songs that promote tolerance and peace. Through peace tournaments, sport would be used as a tool for promoting peace and tolerance, community members would come up with teams mainly for soccer and netball composed of people from different political backgrounds and they would compete with each other on the day of the peace tournament and this gave an opportunity for people from different political backgrounds to interact thereby increasing tolerance in the community and promote peace. The objective under which the peace events were held was to overcome political differences in communities after the 2008 political violence. Community peace events were held in Berejena, Nyika, Nerupiri, Mashava and Makambe.

A peace concert was held in Berejena and it attracted a total of four hundred and thirty four participants and one hundred and twenty four were males and three hundred and ten were females. The peace concert was held at Berejena High School and participants were drawn from areas around Chivi district. The concert was graced by the presence of community leaders such as chiefs, village heads and church leaders from various denominations. Participants showcased dramas, poets, dances and choirs. Dramas brought out some of the conflicts experienced in communities such as land disputes and how they are solved traditionally. Some of the poets had well crafted messages of the importance of peace in communities. The dances category showcased traditional dances such as mhande and church and community choirs took the advantage of the day to sing about peace and notable about them was a song sung by the Roman Catholic Choir titled ‘mambo ndiiteiwo mudziyo weruagre rwenyu’ Lord make me an instrument of peace.

Another peace concert was held in Nyika at St Mary’s Parish and it attracted a total of one hundred and eighty six participants and one hundred and fifty four were males and females were thirty two. Participants were drawn from various church denominations and these included Roman Catholic Church, Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, ZAOGA and the apostolic sects. Through the organisation of this concert people from different political affiliations managed to meet either to participate or watch the proceedings of the concert. On showcase at the peace concert were poets, dramas, dances, choirs and comedies. Most of the poetry recited at the peace concert encouraged the need for peace and harmony in communities to foster development. Majority of the dramas acted at the peace event highlighted how conflicts had divided the community and called for peace and unity. The dances category saw the showcasing of both traditional and church dances done by various church denominations namely the apostolic sects. At the end of the peace event prizes were given to participants who had done exceptionally well.

A peace concert was also held in Nerupiri and a total of two hundred participants managed to turn out for the concert, eighty nine were males and one hundred eleven were females. Organised for the peace concert were dramas, poets, dances and bible sharing. Chief Nerupiri was present at the concert and also people from various church denominations which included Apostolic Faith Mission, Roman Catholic Church, Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, ZION Christian church and the apostolic sects. Someone at the concert shared a Bible verse from Mathew 5 vs. 9 which says that, blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called children of God. This signifies that Christians should take a leading role in peace building by leading with example. Most dramas acted at the concert highlighted family disputes and how they affect peace in the community. Children tend to learn from their parents and if their parents are violent they tend to be violent also. Dances showcased were mainly traditional dances and most poets brought fought the importance of peace in the community.

Another peace concert was held in Makambe at Makambe Primary School and three hundred and twenty eight participants turned up and one hundred and eighteen were males and two hundred and ten were females managed to turn up for the concert. The concert attracted the presence of community leaders such as village heads and a school head .Also people from different political backgrounds managed to attend in line with the objective of the peace concert to overcome political differences in the community. Dramas, poets and dances were showcased at the peace concert. Shangani dances were showcased such as chinyambela at the event in appreciation of the local tradition of Makambe which is largely shangani. Dramas managed to expose common conflicts in communities such as family disputes, disputes over land, disputes over hand outs as well as political disputes. Poets brought fought messages which encouraged the need for peace and co existence in the community.

In commemoration of the world peace day CCJP organised a peace tournament held in Mashava at Mashava Primary school grounds. To participate at the event were netball and soccer teams from Mashava community. At the tournament CCJP took the opportunity to deliver peace messages to the participants gathered at the event highlighting that the community should put aside its political differences and work towards building of peaceful societies. The social fabric in the community was broken down by the political violence that occurred in the run up to the 2008 June elections and people from different political backgrounds no longer had trust for each thus the society was divided along political lines. CCJP highlighted that peace is the hallmark of development and without peace no meaningful development can take place. Sport is important in that it brings people together and when people come together they interact and thus increasing trust across the political divide. Participants were put into groups and they competed against each other and those who emerged winners were given CCJP branded t-shirts carrying peace messages.

# 2.2 PEACE BUILDING TRAINING FOR PEACE COMMITTEES

Peace building training for peace committees were organised by CCJP to capacitate peace committees in Masvingo with conflict management skills such that they would be able to teach other community members how to manage their conflicts non- violently to reduces cases of violence and promote peaceful co existence in communities. Peace communities were composed of people from different political backgrounds and different church denominations. The objective under which the peace building trainings were held was to capacitate peace committees to engage in conflict resolution at local level and these peace building trainings were held in Masvingo, Nyika and Chiredzi.

A three day peace building training for peace committees was held in Masvingo at Bethany House of Hose of Prayer and thirty two participants were registered for the training and twelve were males and twenty were females. Participants were drawn from Gokomere, Charumbira and Bondolfi. A chief and four pastors managed to register for the training. CCJP invited Silveira House to facilitate the training of the workshop. Participants were exposed to non violent conflict management skills and topics covered by the facilitators included understanding conflict, kinds of conflict, responses to conflict, conflict stages, conflict analyses, conflict resolution strategies. The facilitators clarified the difference between conflict and violence as some of the participants confused the two. Most participants were not aware of conflict analyses and the facilitators highlighted conflict analyses tools which include conflict mapping and conflict tree. The facilitators also covered on conflict resolution strategies which included negotiation, mediation and arbitration. By the end of the workshop participants had been capacitated with conflict analysis and conflict resolution skills at local level.

Another three day peace building training for peace committees was held in Nyika at St Mary’s Parish and it was attended by fifty participants and twenty were males and thirty were females. For the purpose of facilitation CCJP invited Silveira House. Nyika is one of the areas hit by the 2008 political violence and CCJP chose to hold the workshop in that area so as equip the local peace committee with relevant conflict management and mitigation skills to help to resolve conflicts non- violently. Participants at the workshop were exposed to kinds of conflict, conflict analysis and conflict resolution strategies. Participants highlighted that sources of conflict in their communities were mainly politics and land. Hence participants were then equipped with conflict resolution strategies with include mediation and negotiation. At the end of the workshop participants were better able to identify sources of conflicts and as well resolve them using non violent conflict resolution strategies.

Also a peace building training of peace committees was held in Chiredzi at Good Shepherd Parish organised by CCJP. Participants were drawn from Chiredzi, Chikombedzi, Makambe, Bangala and Triangle. A total of fifty two participants attended the workshop and twenty eight were females and twenty two were females. Participants were selected members of peace committees who would then be tasked with training other peace committee members and the community on non violent ways of conflict management. Topics covered by the facilitators at the workshop included kinds of conflict, responses to conflict, conflict stages, conflict analysis and conflict resolution strategies. When the workshop came to an end participants were better capacitated with non violent conflict management skills.

# 2.3 YOUTH VOICES FORUMS

Under youth voice forums CCJP would work with peace committees to create a platform whereby community leaders and youths would meet to discuss ways of dealing with conflict non- violently in their communities as well how can youths use their energy to participate in community development. During the 2008 political violence efforts of youths were directed towards the instigation of violence and after the violence there was need to map a framework to direct the efforts of youths to community development. Youth voices forums were held under the objective to better connect youth to their communities, to enable them to meaningfully participate in designing frameworks in responding to conflict non -violently with the community.

A youth voices forum was held in Chikombedzi and twenty five participants turned up for the forum and thirteen were males and twelve were females. The forum was held under the background to enable youths to interface with community leaders in designing frameworks for responding to conflict collectively as well as participating in development projects collectively. Among the participants included village heads and councillors and selected youth leaders. CCJP took the opportunity at the forum to give a brief overview of their peace building activities and also highlighted social teachings of the church which include dignity of the human person, participation, association, subdiarity, promotion of the common good, option for the poor and stewardship of creation. The forum presented an opportunity for youth to interface with their community leaders and youth were discouraged to instigate violence by their leaders and also pleaded with their leaders not to coerce them into acts of violence to pursue their political agendas as the scenario which happened during the run up to the 2008 June presidential elections when youth members were coerced by political leaders to instigate violence along political identities. CCJP also took the opportunity to encourage the youth to register to vote and vote peacefully and accept election results peacefully. By the end of the forum participants managed to map framework to engage other community members in peace building activities.

Another youth voices forum was held in Bondolfi at Bondolfi Teachers College and participants were composed of youth, men and women from communities surrounding Bondolfi Mission. Forty one participants turned up for the forum and fifteen were males and twenty six were females. The community leader present at the event was a Roman Catholic Parish Priest of Bondolfi mission. Participants explained how conflict especially the 2008 political violence had affected their community through the loss of life and properly. Participants who had been involved in peace building activities by CCJP before took the opportunity to explain to others how they can use the people to people approach in engaging the wider community in peace building through utilising church gatherings and holding informal discussions with others about peace building. CCJP also urged the participants to campaign and vote peacefully in the July 31 harmonised elections and also distributed soccer and netballs to the youth such that they promote peace building through sports.

A youth voices forum was held in Gono and it presented an opportunity for youth to interface with their leaders, elders and parents at communal level in designing frame works to end conflict collectively. A total of twenty seven participants turned up for the forum and fourteen were males while thirteen were females. Among the issues discussed at the forum included the socio-economic and political environment in Gono, challenges being faced in communities, preparedness of peace committees to mitigate conflicts in the face of the July 31 harmonised elections and what community leaders are doing towards peace building .Youth members present at the forum raised that unemployment was the major cause of them being coerced to instigate violence as they are promised handouts after carrying out acts of violence and they called for the setting up of income generating projects for youth to curb unemployment. Participants pointed out that, community leaders such as chiefs should lead by example in shunning violence as done by one chief called Hunduza who barred politicians from coercing youth in his area to cause violence during the 2008 presidential runoff elections and minimum violence was recorded in his areas. Participants also raised the notion that community leaders must give room for peace builders to operate in their areas such that more people are enlightened and engaged in peace building. At the end of the forum CCJP distributed soccer and netballs to be used by youth for peace tournaments.

CCJP also held a youth voices forum in Makambe and was held at Makambe primary school and forty nine participants turned up for the forum and twenty seven were males while twenty two were females. Participants were drawn from villages such as Makusha, Takawira, Makondo and Matiza. Present at the forum were village heads, a school head, youth, men and women. CCJP facilitated dialogue between the youth, community leaders, men and women. Participants highlighted that the peace concert earlier held in their community organised by CCJP managed to bring people from different political backgrounds together peacefully either through participating in the peace concert or watching different activities which were lined up for the concert such as dramas which brought forth the message for the need to live in peace and harmony. CCJP also encourage the participants to desist from hate speech during campaigns for the July 31 harmonised elections and also vote and accept the outcome of the elections peacefully.

CCJP also organised a youth voices forum in Nerupiri and present at the forum was chief Nerupiri, youth, men and women from surrounding villages. Forty two participants turned up for the forum and twenty were males while twenty two were females. Discussed at the forum included the impact of CCJP activities towards peace building to the community of Nerupiri such as peace concerts, youth voices forums and peace building trainings and also the challenges faced by peace committees in implementing peace building activities. Participants pointed out that the use of sports in peace building is important in that it sporting activities such as soccer and netball brings people especially youth from different backgrounds together and as they play they get to know each other building friendship. Sports also keeps youth occupied and have less time to engage in violence. Peace building trainings are important in that it allows community members to be exposed to non violent ways of resolving conflicts such as negotiation and mediation. Youth voices forums are important to the community in that they promote dialogue between people of different ages in creating a community vision peacefully.

# 2.4 OUTREACH STRATEGIES FOR YOUTH LEADERS WORKSHOPS

During the 2008 political violence youths were used as tools for perpetrating violence and through outreach strategies for youth leaders CCJP aimed at creating a platform for youth leaders where they would map ways of engaging youths in peace building and prevent the use of youth in perpetrating violence in communities. The outreach strategies for youth leaders workshops were held under the objective to capacitate youth leaders to engage youth that are vulnerable to be co opted into violence.

CCJP organised an outreach strategies for youth leaders workshop that was held at St Anthony mission in Jerera. Participants were drawn from Ndanga, Jerera, Nyika, Mativore, Nerupiri and Gono. Forty participants attended the workshop and twenty two were males and eighteen were females. To facilitate the workshop CCJP invited Silveira house. Interestingly one of the participants gave a conviction that he was one of the perpetrators of violence in the 2008 political violence and the workshop presented an opportunity for him to reform from his old ways and participate in peace building activities in his community and he expressed his willingness to do so. Participants raised the notion that youth are likely to be co opted into violence due to the lack of formal employment. However participants agreed on a roll out strategy to encourage shunning violence such as taking advantage of church and community gatherings to deliver peace messages and also organising sports tournaments where youth can interact.

Another outreach strategy for youth leaders’ workshop was organised by CCJP in Rutenga at All Saints Mission. Participants were drawn from Rutenga, Neshuro, Beitbridge, Matibi and Berejena. Thirty nine participants were registered for the forum and nineteen were males while twenty were females. The workshop was held under the background to capacitate youth leader to analyse different tenets of conflict and also to capacitate youth leaders to carry out outreach strategies in their communities to engage other youths that are likely to be co opted into violence. The expected outcome of the workshop was that youths collaborate across the political divide to benefit the wider community .A Roman Catholic parish Priest was invited to offer spiritual guidance to youth leaders. Participants deliberated on the role of the church in peace building and they believed that the church should organise peace prayers, promote reconciliation in conflict affected areas and also religious leaders should mediate conflicts and offer counselling to victims of political violence. On a roll out strategy participants suggested to organise peace tournaments in the form of sports to improve the interaction of youth in their communities and also to make formal presentations in schools on conflict management and mitigation.

# 2.5 COMMUNITY VISIONING WORKSHOPS

Through community visioning workshops CCJP would create a platform where community members would meet together with their leaders to create a vision of the kind of community they would like to live in after the 2008 political violence that caused loss of life and property as well as the breakdown of social fabric in communities. Through these workshops people from different political backgrounds would meet to discuss a common cause and this acted to increase tolerance. The community visioning workshops were held under the objective to increase trust across the political divide and map out a community vision.

CCJP organised a community visioning workshop that was held in Nerupiri. Present at the workshop was chief Nerupiri, men and women from surrounding villages in Nerupiri. Forty six participants registered for the workshop and twenty two were males while twenty four were females. The workshop presented an opportunity for the community to share on their perspectives, ideas on areas of concern and development related issues in their community. CCJP expressed gratitude to the community for showing unity despite their different political backgrounds. Participants highlighted that the causes of conflict in their community included double allocation of pieces of land by village heads and political differences and politics was a major challenge to sustainable peace. On mapping their vision participants wanted the improvement of health services, improving of education services through the building of more schools in their community, an improved state of roads to improve their access with other communities as well as a peaceful community.

**2.6 CONCLUSION**

Peace building initiatives introduced by CCJP included peace events, peace building training for peace committees, outreach strategies for youth leaders, youth voices forums and community visioning workshops. The peace building initiatives were held in Berejena, Nerupiri, Nyika, Mashava, Makambe, Chiredzi, Chikombedzi, Bondolfi, Gono, Jerera and Rutenga. Through peace events participants managed to share peace massages , through peace building training for peace committees participants were exposed to peaceful resolution strategies, through outreach strategies for youth leaders participants managed to map a framework to engage youth that are likely to be co opted into violence, through youth voices forums youths managed to interface with community leaders in mapping strategies for peaceful resolution of conflicts and through community visioning workshops participants managed to map a vision of the community they desire after the 2008 political violence.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES OF CCJP PEACE BUILDING INITIATIVES**

**3.0 Introduction**

This chapter is going to give successes scored by CCJP in peace building as well as the challenges faced in peace building. The successes scored include collaborative projects, capacity building of peace committees, elections monitoring, incorporating gender in peace building, increase of political tolerance in target communities and bringing people from different church denominations together. The challenges faced include confusion over the link between CCJP and the MDC, budgetary constraints, political leaders demanding time to address people at CCJP organized meetings, antagonism between the state and civil society and the poor state of roads in rural areas.

# 3.1 SUCCESSES

The Successes of peace building initiatives are measured by the outcomes that were realised through the organisation of various activities such as peace events, peace building trainings, youth voices forums, outreach strategies for youth leaders and community visioning workshops. The successes can be drawn from the realisation of desired objectives such as promoting political tolerance in the communities.

To begin with, after the introduction of peace building community members from different political backgrounds and peace committees with the consultation of the community leadership such as chiefs and pastors proposed to work together in promoting tolerance through collaborative projects in their communities. Community members identified common problems in their communities such as poor state of roads, for example and they proposed to maintain the roads through use their human labour and materials sourced from CCJP. Collaborative projects are important in that they bring people from different political parties together to work for a common purpose for the community and as they work together they increase trust upon each other and there is a high possibility of burying past differences as people come together for a common community interest. The proposal of collaborative projects signified the increase in political tolerance. A total of fifteen peace committees submitted their proposals to CCJP to get funding to carry out collaborative projects and the below table shows the peace committees and the nature of collaborative projects they intent to carry.

Table 1.1

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| PEACE COMMITTEE | DISTRICT | NATURE OF PROJECT |
| Makambe | Chiredzi | Finishing construction of a teacher’s house |
| Runyararo | Chiredzi | Fencing water well |
| St Francis Xavier | Chivi | Cleaning and painting clinic |
| St Anthony | Zaka | Repair of bridge |
| Matsai Kuwirirana | Bikita | Repair of church building |
| Matsai Rugare | Bikita | Repair of bridge |
| Bondolfi | Masvingo | Repair of bridge |
| Sipambi | Masvingo | Repair of borehole |
| Huyai mose | Chivi | Construction of water hole |
| Simudzanai | Bikita | Garden |
| Nerupiri | Gutu | Construction of a play centre |
| Chikombedzi | Chiredzi | Poultry |
| Farai | Gutu | Construction of a toilet |
| Renco mine | Masvingo | Poultry |
| Berejena | Chivi | Road maintenance |

Environmental compliance is an important part of the projects adopted by CCJP to ensure that the proposed projects does not harm the environment and for the purpose of environmental screening CCJP has engaged the technical support from EMA.

Women are important in peace building and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security is of the idea to support the involvement of women in peace building and the prevention of conflicts. According to Kuehnast (2012) women in Sudan played an important role as peace activists in the Sudan civil war. In line with international obligations such as the UNSC resolution 1325 CCJP has managed to recognize the important role that women should play in peace building initiatives in the Zimbabwean context. Out of nine peace building training workshops organized by CCJP ,55.2% participants were women ,out of four peace events organized by CCJP 68.38% of the participants were women, out of five youth voices forums organized by CCJP 61.29% of the participants were women. The needs of men and women are different after conflict and women have been given an equal opportunity with men to participate in peace building initiatives in their communities. Women have played an important role in peace building through activities organized by CCJP in their communities, through their dramas at peace events they managed to call for a peace environment in their communities ,they have managed to contribute meaningfully to engage youth in peace building, encouraged their children to attend activities organized by CCJP such as youth voices forums and outreach strategies for youth leaders and also have provided logistical support through cooking for participants at CCJP organized events.

CCJP managed to engage the Zimbabwe Lawyers For Human Rights to facilitate a risk management workshop for peace committees in CCJP target communities after numerous reports that peace committee members and volunteers for peace building were receiving threats from state security agents and ZANU PF supporters to pull out of peace building initiatives organized by CCJP. The state security agents and ZANU PF supporters perceive that CCJP is aligned to the opposition party, MDC. In Nyika a peace committee member was interrogated by state security agents for her involvement in CCJP peace building initiatives and in Chikombedzi a group of ZANU PF youths came looking for Chingumbe a volunteer for peace building and threatened him with displacement if he continues to work for CCJP. The risk management workshop was important as it enlightened people of their basic human rights and it capacitated the participants on the channels to take in reporting when they receive threats about their work in peace building. Peace committee members were encouraged to seek consultation with CCJP of any activity they intent to carry in their communities to guard against victimization. The risk management workshop capacitated the peace committees to deal with threats and gave them confidence t to carry on their peace building work in their communities.

CCJP peace building initiatives such as peace events, and youth voices forums increased trust across the political divide and it acted to reduce cases of violence and promoted political tolerance and according to the Herald (2013) representatives from the three political parties in the inclusive government was happy with the peaceful co-existence and good levels of political tolerance in Masvingo. Villagers in Gono at a youth voices forum credited CCJP through their peace building initiatives for the reduced cases of politically motivated violence in their community.

CCJP also managed to covert some of the perpetrators of the 2008 politically into peace builders in their communities .At a youth an outreach strategies for youth leaders organized by CCJP at St Anthony in Zaka, one of the perpetrators of the 2008 violence acknowledged his wrong doing during the violence and narrated how it all happened in his community and he pleaded with the community to forgive him of his actions. He also called upon CCJP to come to the rescue of some of the youths in his community who are regretting of their actions in the 2008 violence. He also volunteered to join the group of peace building volunteers in his community. Also one of the perpetrators of the 2008 violence volunteered to join the local peace committee in Chikombedzi and was instrumental in inviting participants for a youth voices forum held in Chikombedzi organized by CCJP.

CCJP peace building initiatives managed to attract the attention of the church. Churches are important agents in peace building in that they preach the gospel of peace and reconciliation such as love, justice, love and freedom. Churches are also important in that they are a centre where people from different political affiliations meet for a common purpose. A youth voices forum held in Nerupiri managed to attract the presence of representatives from Reformed church in Zimbabwe, Seventh Day Adventist, Anglican, Apostolic Faith Mission in Zimbabwe, Church of Christ, Methodist, Members in Christ and Zion Christian Church. Another youth voices forum held in Rutenga managed to attract the presence of a Roman Catholic Priest at All Saints Mission in Rutenga.

CCJP through peace building initiatives also managed to attract the attention of community leaders such as chiefs and village heads who are important agents in peace building. Chiefs are important in peace building in that they are responsible for peaceful existence in their communities. Chief Nerupiri joined the peace committee in his area and he has been instrumental in the organization of peace building activities held in Nerupiri such as peace concerts, community visioning workshops and youth voices forums. At all activities organized by CCJP in Nerupiri the Chief managed to address the participants shunning violence and calling people to live together in peace and harmony. The youth voices forum held in Makambe attracted the presence of five village heads that included Mapimele, Chauke, Mabhikwa, Mupapa and Munyuki. Chief Madhlangove in Chivi welcomed peace building initiatives by CCJP in his area.

CCJP also managed to recruit election observers in the July harmonized elections in 2013.A total of three hundred and sixty five election observers in Masvingo were recruited .The observers received training from CCJP before being accredited by ZEC to observe the elections. The observers were tasked with monitoring and collecting information in their communities about the political environment in their communities such as acts of violence and coercion. They would attend rallies observing cases of hate speech as well as coercion. On the polling day they were responsible for observing and recording any irregularities that might occur at polling stations and notify the CCJP authorities. The observers noted that the elections were relatively calm and few cases of violence being recorded as compared to the previous elections of 2013 which was the most violent election in the history of Zimbabwean elections. During the run up to the elections CCJP went about encouraging people to campaign, vote and accept election results peacefully and the community responded positively to their call and CCJP can be credited to the holding peaceful elections in Masvingo.

# 3.1 CHALLENGES

There was a general confusion in the community over the link between CCJP and political parties and CCJP was seen as a sympathizer to the opposition party, MDC by some community members. Some peace committee members in Nyika had to pull out of peace building after they were interrogated by state security agents over their involvement in CCJP activities. One participant who was a victim of the 2008 political violence after a peace building training workshop in Nyika told his counter parts that peace building was a project of the MDC and this caused confusion in target in the community. At one incidence in Makambe a peace building volunteer was approached at his house at night by ZANU PF supporters being accused of working to support the MDC. During an outreach strategy for youth leaders workshop held in Zaka at St Anthony’s Mission some of the participants widely believed that CCJP was aligned to the MDC and all its peace building efforts were directed in support of the opposition party. This confusion caused panic in the community especially in Nyika where people distanced themselves from peace building activities for the fear of victimization by ZANU PF supporters and state security agents. However CCJP had to clarify to people that the organization is apolitical and it was a commission of the Roman Catholic Church working towards peace building to restore social cohesion in communities.

Another challenge that CCJP faced is budgetary constraints. The available funds are not able to cater for all organized activities such as peace events, youth voices forums, peace building trainings and youth voices forums in all target communities in time. CCJP need funds to travel to venues for peace building activities of which some of them are remotely located away from Masvingo such as Makambe and Chikombedzi which is about three hundred kilometres away. Funds are also needed to pay for the travelling staff for their food and accommodation and also funds to cater for the food of participants at peace building activities. At one incidence in Berejena four hundred and thirty four participants turned out for the event while CCJP had anticipated two hundred participants there by posing a challenge in catering for the participants. Also some winning participants at peace concerts expect expensive prices for their efforts at the concerts. During the run up to the July 2013 harmonized elections CCJP had recruited eight hundred observers which were later trimmed to three hundred and sixty five due to the lack of funds to pay all the election observers. Financial challenges have also been realized in funding collaborative projects by communities and CCJP does not have the capacity to finance all the fifteen collaborative projects and this has resulted in a selection process to finance a few of the most outstanding projects.

A poor state of roads in the rural areas has been a challenge when travelling for peace building activities. The roads to rural areas are dust roads and during the rainy season it is difficult to use the roads and in one incidence a CCJP vehicle swiped off the road due to mud in the road whilst travelling for a youth voices forum in Gono and this caused a delay of the CCJP team to the venue. Also a travelling CCJP team had to take a long route to Renco mine from Masvingo due to a flooded bridge in the shorter route and this caused extra expenses in financing the journey. Also due to the bad state of roads to Chikombedzi a CCJP vehicle had its windscreen broken whilst travelling for a youth voices forum in Chikombedzi and CCJP had to source funds from its budget to replace the wind screen.

Antagonism between the state and civil society proved also to be a challenge in the operations of CCJP. Civil society organizations are accused by the state of supporting the opposition party, MDC and also effecting regime change. A youth voices forum in Matsai ,Bikita was barred from happening by the police on unclear grounds after all the necessary arrangements had been made. Participants from different villages had gathered for the event and had to disperse after the police cancelled the event. In Chiredzi during a peace building training for peace committees three uniformed police officers invaded the venue and it caused panic in the participants .Also a peace committee member in Nyika was approached at her house by state security agents after a peace building training for peace committees had been held in that area. She later pulled out of the peace committee as she feared to be victimized.

Also there has been completion over volunteers with other organizations which operate in CCJP target communities. A challenge has been realized by CCJP in that some organizations such as BHASO gives monthly allowances to its volunteers and CCJP does not pay volunteers because of its policy, so volunteers in communities opt to participate where they are given money. Also some participants at CCJP organized workshops have demanded sitting allowances and CCJP’s policy and budget for peace building do not cater for that.

There has been a low representation of men at CCJP organized events and it is important that men play a leading role in peace building as they constitute the majority of the perpetrators of the 2008 political violence. Out of four peace events organized by CCJP, 31.62% were men and women constituted the rest of the participants and out of five youth voices forums organized by CCJP men constituted 38.71% of the participants. Most men spent most of their time at beer drinks and would not have time to attend peace building activities. Also most of the men have migrated to towns and others have gone to neighbouring countries such as South Africa and Botswana in search of better economic opportunities to look after their families and this has resulted in low representation of men at peace building activities.

Also a technical partner of CCJP temporarily pulled out of their agreement due to several reasons. The partner was responsible for peace building trainings and outreach strategies for youth leaders workshops through providing facilitators and the content that was used for the workshops as they have technical expertise in the field of peace building. After the partner pulled out of their agreement with CCJP, CCJP had to use its staff as facilitators and provide material for peace building and outreach strategies’ for youth leaders workshops.

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

# Conclusion

The 2008 political violence in Masvingo caused a breakdown of the social fabric in the community. People could no longer relate to each other well due political divisions, supporters of MDC and ZANU PF no longer had good relations amongst themselves. During the political violence people were victimized on the basis of their political parties, the main victims of the political violence were MDC supporters and the main perpetrators of the violence were ZANUPF supporters. During the violence people were murdered, beaten, houses destroyed and property was lost and this caused hostility between victims and perpetrators of violence. However CCJP Masvingo intervened through their peace building initiatives to restore peaceful relations in the community and political tolerance. The hotspots of the violence included Zaka, Bikita, Nerupiri and Chiredzi. In Zaka MDC offices were attacked and burnt and three MDC activists managed to escape the incident and also a Roman Catholic Priest’s house was burnt at st Anthony mission by suspected ZANU PF supporters. In Bikita MDC candidates for the march harmonised elections and MDC polling agents were the main victims of the violence. In Chiredzi victims of the violence were suspected and supporters of MDC.

After the 2008 political violence CCJP Masvingo Diocese introduced peace building initiatives to help restore peace and promote tolerance in communities by overcoming political divisions mainly in political violence hotspots of 2008.An informing the community process was carried out by CCJP in target communities to mobilise key stakeholders in peace building in the community. Peace committees were created in communities which were composed of people from different political and religious backgrounds. Functions of the peace included organising peace building activities with CCJP and mobilising the support for peace building in communities. The peace building activities introduced by CCJP included peace building trainings for peace committees, peace events, youth voices forums, outreach strategies for youth leaders and community visioning workshops. Peace events were carried out in Berejena, Nyika, Nerupiri, Mashava and Makambe. Peace building trainings for peace committees were held in Masvingo, Nyika and Chiredzi. Youth voices forums were held in Chikombedzi, Bondolfi, Gono, Makambe and Nerupiri. Outreach strategies for youth leaders were held in Jerera and Rutenga and a community visioning workshop was held in Nerupiri. Participants at peace building activities were drawn from different religious backgrounds and they also happened to be from different political backgrounds.

Notable successes were scored by the peace building initiatives and challenges were also faced by CCJP in carrying out the peace building activities. The successes were measured by the desired objectives versus the outcomes of the peace building initiatives. The peace building initiatives aimed at increasing trust across political divides, better connect youths to their community after the 2008 political violence, overcome political divisions in communities as well as promote political tolerance and successes are drawn from the events which followed after the introduction of peace building by CCJP in Masvingo. There was a noted increase in political tolerance as people from different political backgrounds would gather at peace building activities in their communities. Also, people from different political parties came together to propose undertaking collaborative projects in their communities with the consultation of CCJP. There was also a noted decrease in cases of political violence and this can be evidenced by the peaceful holding of the referendum as well as the 2013 harmonized elections in Masvingo. Some of the successes scored by the peace building project include gender equality which is an international obligation in peace building as well as the consent of key stakeholders in community peace building such as chiefs and church leaders to take part in the peace building initiatives.

CCJP also faced various challenges in carrying out peace building in Masvingo. CCJP was perceived to be an ally of the opposition party and this created resentment with ZANU PF supporters, some peace building volunteers received threats from state security agents which caused them to pull out of the peace building project in their communities, the poor state of roads in rural areas made it difficult to travel for peace building activities and lack of adequate funds caused the organisation to operate on a shoe string budget.

Despite the challenges faced, CCJP managed to be successful in its peace building initiatives in Masvingo. Political tolerance increased and cases of political violence are on the decline.

# Recommendations

There is need for CCJP to use the social media such as Facebook to coordinate activities by peace building volunteers. CCJP can create a closed group on Facebook for volunteers and the volunteers would then use the group to communicate with CCJP on any peace building issue in their communities and also volunteers across Masvingo Province can interact through the group and share experiences and ideas in peace building and the use of the internet tends to be faster and cheaper than conventional means of using phones and letters.

CCJP must source more funding for peace building in order to reach out to more communities that are in need of peace building. The funds available to CCJP are only for its target communities which leaves other communities being left out of the peace building project. Villagers in the northern parts of Masvingo such as Zimuto and southern parts such as Nyikavanhu expressed ignorance over peace building initiatives by CCJP and there is need to reach out to these areas.

There is need for CCJP to engage political leaders in its peace building initiatives because they were fingered in the 2008 political violence and villagers believe that politicians have the capacity to even separate brothers due to their use of hate speech at rallies, for example during the run up to the 2008 elections it was the political leaders who master minded the operation ‘wakavhotera papi’ campaign which led to a heavy crackdown on opposition party supporters. Hence political leaders have to be invited at peace building activities such that they appreciate the need for political tolerance and peace in communities.

CCJP should work with the government in carrying out peace building to increase the efficiency of the project. CCJP should have worked with government bodies in peace building such as JOMIC which was also carrying peace building initiatives in Masvingo. Also there is growing antagonism between the state and civil societies and the tendency of working with the government in carrying out projects would reduce mistrust and create good relations between the organisation and the government which in turn promotes effectiveness of projects.

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# Appendix A- QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Prosper Manavele, a student at Midlands State University and I am studying for an honours degree in Development Studies.

I am conducting research on the role of church based organisations in peace building case study of CCJP Masvingo Diocese and I would like to collect data through the use of this questionnaire.

I kindly ask you to respond to the questions in this questionnaire and your responses would be used for academic purposes only and would be treated with confidentiality.

If you need any further details about the researcher you can contact the Chairperson of the Development Studies, Dr Matunhu.

**Personal information**

Age..................................18-30 .....31-40 .......41-50 .............50+

Sex..................................Female ........Male

Marital status................Single ......Married ......Widow .......Divorced

**Objective 1: to establish the nature of political violence in Masvingo**

1. Are there any cases of political violence that occurred during the 2008 elections in this area? …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

2. Who was victimized?

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3. Who were the main perpetrators of violence?

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4. What was the effect of violence to your relations in the community?

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**Objective two: to establish the role that CCJP played in peace building initiatives in Masvingo.**

5. What do you understand by Peace building?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

6. Are you aware of CCJP?

Yes

NO

7. What peace building activities have been undertaken by CCJP in your community?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

**Objective 3: to establish the extent to which peace building initiatives have been successfully implemented by CCJP.**

8. What change has been made by CCJP peace building activities in your community?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………...

9. What are the challenges to peace building in your community?

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10. What are your recommendations for effective peace building in your community?

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# Appendix B- Interview Guide

1. What occurred during the 2008 political violence?

2. What has CCJP done towards peace building?

3. Have you participated in any peace building activities organized by CCJP?

4. What has been your role in peace building initiatives by CCJP?