

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY



FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

**ECUMENICAL CHURCH LEADERS FORUM (ECLF) PEACE BUILDING WORK
AND THE SUSTANABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (sdgs) IN ZIMABWE: SPECIAL
FOCUS ON ZAKA, MASVINGO PROVINCE**

BY

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**A DISSERTATION PROJECT SUBMITTED TO MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE B.A HONOURS IN
THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES DEGREE.**

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

ZVISHAVANE, ZIMBABWE

YEAR 2017

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APPROVAL FORM

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Bachelor of Arts Degree in Theology and Religious Studies

YEAR 2017

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DECLARATION

I, Lindiwe Princess Maseko (R141847Y) earnestly declare that the study presented here is my own work except where cited sources are acknowledged for clarification. This work has neither been submitted nor will it be to any institution for the award of any degree.

Signature.....

...../...../.....

Lindiwe Princess Maseko

Date

DEDICATION

This work is written in memory of my beautiful and loving mother, the late Bevly Evelyn, my caring grandparents, my brothers Shingai, Namatai, Yeukai, No Doubt and my future family. I also dedicate this work to the ECLF in Bulawayo.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the Lord who gave me the gift of life, the ability and the strength to accomplish my mission as a young theologian during my four year course at Midlands State University. My deepest gratitude and appreciation goes to my supervisor, Dr. Sophia Chirongoma who took her entire time and patience to guide and journey together with me during my research. With due respect, I also extend my special thanks to the Chairperson of the department, Dr Canisius Mwandayi for his good leadership skills which moulded me during my course as a student. It is my great sentiment to place on record my best regards and deepest sense of gratitude to all my lectures in the department of Theology and Religious Studies, for their academia, social and moral support which was extremely valuable during my studies.

Also, my profound gratitude goes to my family particularly my grandparents Mr and Mrs Maseko who are my source of inspiration and motivation. What I have achieved, I have because they managed to release the extra-ordinary potential within me and taught me that everything is possible with the guidance of the Lord. My deepest gratitude is also directed to the Good Shepherd team in the Lutheran church for their financial, social and religious support for me to finish my studies. They have made my life whole and made me feel complete among others. I also want to give special thanks to my close friends Blessing, Pamela, Benjamin and others for standing by my side through all the good and the bad moments I had, and for their encouragement for me to be emotionally strong.

Lastly, I give many thanks to the ECLF team, especially the Director Dr. Ambrose Moyo and the Programs Training Manager, Reverend Sikhalo Cele for training me to become a peace facilitator. I also give my sincere appreciation to the members and staff who provided information for me to trace the origins of the ECLF up to date. I also want to thank the ECLF facilitators on the grassroots specifically in Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo where I collected a lot of data in as much peace building is concerned. To the ECLF leadership, staff, and facilitators, I say *Twalumbalokoloko, Ngiyabonga*, Thank you!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL FORM	i
RELEASE FORM.....	ii
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF ACRONYMS	x
ABSTRACT.....	xii
CHAPTER ONE	1
1.1 INTRODUCING THE STUDY	1
1.2 Background to the Study	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem	3
1.4 Aim.....	5
1.5 Objectives.....	5
15.1 Hypothesis.....	5
1.6 METHODOLOGY	6
1.6.1 The Social Scientific Approach	6
1.6.2 The Phenomenological Approach	6
1.6.3 The Comparative Approach/method	7
1.6.4 Data Collection Method	8
1.6.1.1 Questionnaire Survey	8
1.6.1.2 Interviews	8
1.6.1.3 Written material/documentation.....	9
1.7 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY.....	9
1.8 SCOPE OF THE STUDY	13
1.9 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	14

1.9.1 Introduction	14
1.9.2 General Development in Zaka.....	15
1.9.3 ECLF’s Peace Building Work.....	15
1. 10. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	16
1.10.1 Peace.....	16
1.10.2 Development	17
1.10.3 Peace and Development	18
1.11. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	19
1.12. CONCLUSION	21
CHAPTER TWO	22
AN ANALYSIS OF THE ECLF AND THE WORK THEY DO	22
2.0 INTRODCTION.....	22
2.1 ECLF and the work they do in general	22
2.1.2 The Situation Before the ECLF’s Intervention	25
2.2 DEFINING THE ECLF PROGRAMS	26
2.2.1 Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution and Transformation (CPMRT)	26
2.2.2 Conflict.....	26
2.2.3 Perceptions	29
2.2.4 Conflict Analysis.....	29
2.2.5 Power dynamics	30
2.2.6 Dialogue	30
2.2.7 Mediation	31
2.2.8 Negotiation	31
2.2.9 Facilitation.....	32
2.2.10 Healing session.....	32
2.2.11 Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).....	34

2.2.12 Local Peace Committees (LPC).....	35
2.2.13 Community Cohesion Projects (CCPs).....	37
2.3 THE WORK OF THE ECLF IN ZAKA.....	38
2.4 Conclusion.....	41
CHAPTER THREE	42
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS GUIDING THE VISION OF THE ECLF’S PEACE BUILDING INITIATIVES	42
3.0 Introduction	42
3.1 Introducing the Sustainable Development Goals	42
3.1.1 SDG 1-No poverty	43
3.1.2 SDG 2- Zero Hunger	43
3.1.3 SDG 3- Good Health and Well-Being.....	44
3.1.4 SDG 4- Quality Education	44
3.1.5 SDG 5- Gender Equality	44
3.1.6 SDG 6-Clean Water and Sanitation	45
3.1.7 SDG 7- Affordable and cClean Energy.....	45
3.1.8 SDG 8- Decent Work and Economic Growth.....	45
3.1.9 SDG 9- Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	45
3.1.10 SDG 10- Reduced Inequalities within and among Countries	45
3.1.11 SDG 11-Sustaianable Cities and Communities.....	46
3.1.12 SDG 12- Responsible Consumption and Production	46
3.1.13 SDG 13- Climate Action	46
3.1.14 SDG 14- Life Below Water.....	46
3.1.15 SDG 15- Life on Land.....	46
3.1.16 SDG 16- Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.....	47
3.1.17 SDG 17- Partnership for the goals	47

3.2 Identifying the SDGs that relate to the ECLF’s peacebuilding work in Zaka	47
3.3 The ECLF’s contribution on the selected SDGs	48
3.3 CONCLUSION	52
CHAPTER FOUR.....	53
AN ASSESSMENT OF SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT, USING THE ECLF’S PEACE BUILDING WORK IN ZAKA AS A CASE STUDY	53
4.0 Introduction	53
4:1 The Concept of Peace and Development: How Peace enhances Development and how Development strengthens Peace.....	53
4.2 The Relationship between the SDGs and ECLF Peace Building work in Zaka	55
4.3 The Nexus between Peace and Development	60
4.4 CONCLUSION	61
CHAPTER FIVE	62
SUMMARY, LESSONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION	62
5.0 Introduction	62
5.1 Gaps identified in Developmental Work without Peace	62
5.2 Summary of the Key Findings	64
5.2.2 Lessons Learnt.....	65
5.2.3 Recommendation and Concluding Remarks	66
References.....	67
APPENDIX A: Questionnaire Guide.....	72

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AFSC	American Friends Service Committee
CC	Christian Care
CCPs	Community Cohesion Projects
CPMRT	Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution and Transformation
DFP	District Focal Person
DV	Domestic Violence
ECLF	Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum
EFZ	Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe
FECCLAHA	Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa Region
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPPAC	Global Partnership for Prevention of Armed Conflict
LPCs	Local Peace Connectors
LPCs	Local Peace Committees
LUCSA	Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
OHNRI	Organ for Healing National Reconciliation and Integration
PFP	Provincial Focal Person

SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UDACIZA	Union of the Development of Apostolic Churches in Zimbabwe and Africa
UNDP	United Nations Development Project
WCC	World Council of Churches
ZCC	Zimbabwe Council of Churches
ZCBC	Zimbabwe Catholic Bishop's Conference

ABSTRACT

Zimbabweans have been struggling to attain sustainable development for quite some time. This was caused by the past unresolved conflicts which blocked their unity making it practically possible to work together. However, this study is grounded on the ECLF's peace building work and the SDGs in Zimbabwe, using Zaka as a case study. The research uses a theory from John Paul Lederach who defines peace as a comprehensive term that encompasses the full array of stages and approaches needed to transform conflicts towards sustainable peaceful relationships and outcomes. Using this perspective, the argument of this research is that development is not sustainable in the absence of peace, which comes from within and which is practical and realistic. The researcher collected data using interviews and questionnaires. The collected data are presented in an analytic way. The researcher also compares the ECLF's peace building work and the selected Sustainable development goals, achieved in Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo ward in Zaka. This study reveals that there were deep rooted conflicts which existed as a barrier to sustainable development. This research is significant as it shows that peace and development are inseparable, and the church should engage in local peace building initiatives, hence promoting sustainable development in Zimbabwe. Lastly, the study demonstrates that when people are united and peaceful, they work towards sustainable development, despite their religious, social, and political differences.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCING THE STUDY

Zimbabwe is one of the countries which is more into development. Since 1980, Zimbabwe has been the bread basket of Africa and it is still striving to maintain the gaps that occurred due to many circumstances. However, development in Zimbabwe has been compromised due to unresolved conflicts. Instead of improving people's lives in Zimbabwe, development has become unsustainable, hence the need to build peace for development to be realized. Development without peace in Zimbabwe, is therefore not sustainable. This study seeks to explore the relationship between ECLF's peace building work and the sustainable development goals in Zimbabwe, with special focus on Zaka in Masvingo province.

1.2 Background to the study

After attaining political independence in 1980, there have been limitations to sustainable development due to unresolved conflicts in Zimbabwe. Over the years, Zimbabweans have lived with pains of their past experiences. These conflicts ranged from political, religious, economic and family, but mostly they emerged from inter and intra political conflicts. Since 1980, the nation has been falling into a politically unpleasant situation. This has been caused by different political wills, power hungry leaders, politics of the elite, social injustice to mention a few. Also, victims and perpetrators have lived with trauma of the past grief, and this has affected their peaceful co-existence, hence causing disunity. Violence was prevalent and was also in the physical form which lately affected many people spiritually and even psychologically. Hence, the hurts that are physical are far much better than the unseen wounds which have affected the inner being of most Zimbabwean communities. It is this scenario that makes it apparent that the absence of physical violence does not mean the presence of peace in Zimbabwe as a nation. In actual fact, the past encounters have polarized the nation and have resulted in under development in different communities in Zimbabwe.

The Zimbabwean vision since 1980 to improve the quality of life, has been blurred and this has caused extreme poverty. A significant challenge in the Zimbabwean society has been identified in the 10 provinces of Zimbabwe, including districts like Zaka, Nkayi, Honde Valley, Chitungwiza, Mberengwa and others. The impact of poverty which was caused by the unstable

economy following the past conflicts has also caused millions of youths flocking to countries like South Africa for greener pastures. This kind of situation has also led to early child marriages causing many conflicts between families, marriage partners and mostly between the daughter/son in laws and father/mother in laws, hence a barrier to sustainable peace and development in Zimbabwe. Youths have been excluded from issues to do with development and this has caused the unsustainability of some developmental and income generating projects throughout the country. This also caused high levels of unemployment and limited access to livelihoods to community cohesion projects, hence falling prey to political manipulation during the campaign period.

Furthermore, there has been serious marginalization of women, and gender based violence is common. Whilst women have been excluded from peace building and any developmental work, they are the ones who suffer most in the Zimbabwean community. The political, social and religious violence which the Zimbabweans have been experiencing in the past 30 years, have negatively affected women. There have been several reports of rape, torture and intimidation as stated by Vengeyi (2011). The worst part of it is that some of these women were abused by some political practitioners before independence. Vengeyi (2011), argues that during the war, rape was used as a political weapon to intimidate and suppress women. Magaisa (2010: 367), also presents the evidence from one woman saying, “when a male victim is attacked, the weapon of choice is a stick, but when a woman victim is attacked, the choice of weapon is the male reproductive organ”. This resulted in many cases of sexually violated women in the past years. This also exacerbated social conflicts, hence leading to unsustainable development.

Moreover, there has been corruption, lack of accountability and unequal distribution of the economic resources which came as a result of poor governance. The issue of the land reform has also raised questions to many, hence impacting negatively on unity among the Zimbabweans. The distribution of land became an issue since Zimbabwe gained its independence. In this regard, Schumacher (1974), comments that the land issue will inevitably give more people access to land as a means of production. This has also led to lack of community ownership and forward planning in terms of sustained development, hence causing poverty. It is in this scenario that the poor have become downtrodden in the communities. The poor and the rich could not work together for peace and development, hence there has been a tendency of “survival of the fittest”.

Also, there have been poor international relationships which failed to out-track foreign investments. This further caused hyperinflation, hence unfavorable policies for foreign investment. What worsened the situation is that there was an economic meltdown in the country particularly in the year 2008. Following all these encounters, the Zimbabwean government realized the situation which was damaging the image of the nation. In response, there was an establishment of OHNRI (Organ for Healing National Reconciliation and Integration). The idea was to have a mission of coming up with a peaceful environment. The birth of OHNRI also created an enabling environment for ECLF (Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum) to engage in peace building work in Zimbabwe.

Following the extreme political violence in 2008 which caused the loss of life, and slowing pace of development, there have been strategies to make Zimbabweans unite and work together for sustainable peace and development. It is against this background that the ECLF decided to sensitize communities on peace building workshops in the year 2009. It has not been easy to facilitate and spread the gospel of peace to traumatized and depressed families and communities. It has been a mammoth task to reach the ten provinces in doing peace building work. However, different stakeholders and church leaders from different churches constitute the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum and aim to transform the Zimbabwean communities for sustainable peace and development from 2009 up to date. A lot still needs to be done to nurture and empower the Zimbabwean community to remain instrumental in sounding warnings and addressing conflict situations as well as coming up with strategies for sustainable development. It is against this background that this study will explore how the ECLF's peace building work has contributed towards sustainable development economically, politically and socially.

1.3 Statement of the problem

There is no sustainable development in the country due to unresolved conflicts, negative perceptions both politically, religiously, socially and culturally. This has led Zimbabwe to fail to develop in all spheres of life. Communities in Zimbabwe have countless stories to tell such as experiences with self-help projects that were introduced soon after independence, but failed to be sustained for numerous reasons including the lack of community ownership and forward planning in terms of exit and sustainability strategy. Chances and opportunities have been availed to Zimbabweans so as to develop, however most of these have failed. Various factors

have resulted in unsustainable development in Zimbabwe and these include grudges of the past, hatred, perceptions and the so called “ISIMS” (tribalism, racism and others). Considering this, chances are very high that Zimbabwe cannot roll out sustainable development, unless the past grievances and conflicts are addressed and resolved.

Millennial Development Goals (MDGs) in Zimbabwe which were targeted to end in 2015 failed. Development could not be sustainable since there was extreme poverty throughout the country. Conflict of the stomach has been identified as a major problem affecting Zimbabweans at all levels. Both religious and non-religious communities have been affected by this dilemma. In this scenario, the poor have been affected such that they remained at the same level, whilst the rich are getting richer and richer, hence the gap between the poor and the rich has been widened.

Furthermore, a lot of money has been poured from different partners and from the Government itself so as to start income generation and developmental projects in different communities in Zimbabwe. However, what disappoints are the results which came out after all this effort. In fact, all this time and the funds were in vain because there is no unity, justice and peace in Zimbabwe. There was once development, however it did not last due to poor management of differences or conflict. Instead of assisting and transforming the Zimbabwean community, development however has been done 95 percent on paper work and only approximately 5 percent practically, hence the poor quality of living among the Zimbabweans.

More so, Zimbabweans are still thriving for development in the absence of peace. Whilst there are many chances to get more funds for any kind of development, it is not possible for it to be sustainable without peace. Instead, peace should precede development, so that both are sustainable. Another crisis is that Zimbabweans are looking at development with different spectacles. It is therefore a mockery to say that there is development in Zimbabwe in terms of building schools, hospitals and farming whereas people are fighting among themselves because of their differences in political, social and religious way of thinking. Zimbabweans are still fighting because of differences, mostly in the political arena. In Zimbabwe, political parties are identified by their different regalia mostly with distinguishing colors. In this scenario, it is more of an offense or crime to wear a blue T. shirt instead of a yellow one which someone is putting on. This way, there is no way one can include Zimbabwe among developed countries if their psyche is not developed as well. Several questions can therefore be asked concerning this: is it a

sin to be different?. Just as the fingers on the same hand of the same person have different sizes, so Zimbabweans are. The dilemma in the country is that the majority rushes to look more into physical development as mentioned above, however overlooking the core that is the development of the mind as well. It is against this situation, that this study seeks to show the relationship of the ECLF's peace building work and the targeted SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals, which are 1,2,3,4,5,8, and 16) and how it has contributed to Sustainable development in Zimbabwe, with a specific focus on Zaka, Masvingo province.

1.4 Aim

The main aim of this dissertation is to advocate for churches to engage in local peace building that will result in sustainable peace building in order to attain sustainable development in Zimbabwe.

1.5 Objectives

1. To unpack the ECLF forum and to examine human relational problems how do people relate in their communities?
2. To identify the SDGs that relate to the ECLF's and to showcase the ECLF's contribution in pursuit of sustainable development
3. To show the relationship between the ECLF peace building work in communities and the Sustainable Development Goals in Zimbabwe (SDGs), with a specific focus on Zaka of Masvingo province.
4. To identify gaps in development work without peace and to show that sustainable development goals can be achieved if there is sustainable peace.

15.1 Hypothesis

In doing peace building work in Zaka, the ECLF is journeying together with Sustainable development goals in Zimbabwe to improve the nation. Sustainable development goals are more likely to be achieved if there is sustainable peace.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

By definition, methodology is a way to systematically solve a research problem. It may be defined as a science of studying how research is done scientifically. The researcher will also consider the logic behind the methods that will be used in the context of this study explaining the reasons why these methods are implemented.

Methodology is defined by Flass (2008), as the systematic theoretical analysis of the method applied to a field of study and it comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of method and principles associated with a branch of knowledge. Corbin (2008), also defines methodology as a way of thinking about and struggling with social reality. She asserts that it is also a set of procedures and techniques for gathering and analyzing data. In carrying out this study, I will try to use methods that do justice to the research. I will also use methods which are relevant and best suited to embark on the journey of exploring concepts of this study. Lastly, the methodology will help me to think objectively towards the study.

1.6.1 The social scientific approach

The social scientific approach is defined as a phase of the exegetical task that is used to analyze the societal and cultural dimensions of the text. According to Hayes (1979), the main aim is to determine the meaning explicit in the text, meanings made possible, and shaped by the social and cultural systems inhabited by both the author's and internal audiences.

This approach is used on the background of the ECLF's peace building work and its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals in Zimbabwe without being biased. It is used to spell out the social relations of people and the position of the ECLF in the ten provinces of Zimbabwe, particularly Zaka. However, this approach has downsides in that the Zimbabwean situation of serious poverty and hunger does not lie on the social context only but is also caught in between the religious and political arena which this approach overlooks.

1.6.2 The phenomenological approach

This method seeks to provide an objective, fair, neutral approach to any given context. The phenomenological approach is defined by Husserl (1859-1938) as the study of reality and knowledge. It is also derived from a Greek term *phanos* which means that which "manifests itself". The experience of the Zaka community before and after peace building intervention

should manifest or present itself rather than to be explained. This means that the research is going to be strengthened by the possibility of knowledge about Zaka community as a real historical context.

In using this approach, I will apply “epoche” meaning to suspend, hold back, and bracket off what I already know about “peace and development”. I will also refrain from evaluation and judgments so that the manifestation of the experiences of Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo of Zaka district overflows or is presented in a fresh manner. This will help me to appreciate to the inner meaning of peace among the people in Zaka community.

Furthermore, in using this research method, the researcher must have empathy or getting inside the shoes of the people in Zaka community to know better from experience. Smart (1992), adds that the researcher should enter inside the shoes of the believer for more information. During this study, the researcher must put herself inside the shoes of those in Zaka district to understand why the Zimbabwean community needs peace before development. This method also deals with emotions, hence the researcher has to think emotionally and empathetically towards the traumatized communities that need peace for sustainable development. This approach will help the researcher to showcase ECLF’s peace building work which speaks to the heart of the Zimbabwean community in pursuit of the SDGs in Zimbabwe.

However, this approach has its own loop holes. According to Cox (1992), bracketing previously held beliefs and knowledge is very difficult for human beings. Another weakness is that it is difficult to maintain a free stance, especially to reality where it concerns human beings.

1.6.3 The comparative approach/method

This method is about grouping some things under a common class or pattern but also noticing how examples vary in relation to each other. It looks into the similarities and slight differences that are found between ECLF’s peace building work in Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo in Zaka, Masvingo province and the Sustainable Development Goals in Zimbabwe. The researcher is going to compare and contrast the nexus of ECLF’s peace building work in three areas in Zaka district and the sustainable development goals in Zimbabwe, hence this will be the basis of thought and science of this study. It is fundamental to note that the strength of this method is on comparing. It emphasizes on this view because one cannot generalize things or concepts without

comparing them. For instance, it is not wise to generalize the concept of development, but one has to look into development which has been spearheaded by peace building work. By using this method, the researcher will be able to explore how Zaka community has managed to achieve sustainable development through peace building work. The researcher will also contrast the Sustainable Development Goals in Zimbabwe and ECLF's peace building work to show that the two can be attainable if they co-exist.

However, this method falls short in that by nature it is subjective and has a very blinkered view of scope to any given situation.

1.6.4 Data collection method

This has to do with tactics and various ways being employed to obtain specific and relevant information. In this study, the writer will be able to access data that needs to be collected for the study. Information can be gathered from numerous sources including written documents, records, questionnaires and interviews.

1.6.1.1 Questionnaire survey

In carrying out this study, the researcher used questionnaires to gather relevant information. A list of questions was distributed to ECLF facilitators (offices), and to the districts where peace building work has been taking place particularly in Zaka district, Masvingo province. The researcher distributed both open and closed ended questions. Open ended questions helped the researcher to get more information from the people in Zaka community and other members from the ECLF. Drafting closed ended questions also assisted the researcher to get short, brief, precise and relevant information from the ground especially from Zaka district. Both questionnaires helped the writer to obtain first-hand information and to know the social and economic background of the respondents. However, these questionnaires also have loop holes in that dependence may easily creep in, thus resulting in false information as well. These questionnaires will be attached as Appendix A at the back.

1.6.1.2 Interviews

Interviews are a systematic way of talking and listening to people and another way of collecting data from individuals through conversations from various forms of information. (<http://www.who.int>). Kvale (1996:14), defines an interview as an interchange of views

between two or more people on a topic or mutual interest, seeing the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production and emphasizes the social situatedness of research data. Therefore, interviewing is a way of collecting data as well as to gain knowledge from individuals. Nine oral interviews from representatives of nine villages were conducted during the course of this research. This helped the researcher to identify as well as to interpret some gestures and facial expressions portrayed by the interviewees. In carrying out this research, the researcher interviewed facilitators and members from the ECLF church forum and the District and Provincial Focal Persons (PFP) of Zaka district of Masvingo province. These interviews are contained in chapter three.

1.6.1.3 Document Analysis

Written materials or documentation is defined by Guzman and Verstappen (2003), as an act of recording results of an investigation, inquiry or research. A lot of written material was used during the compilation of this study. Reports of the ECLF's peace building work, different books and the internet are some of the written materials that were used. These materials will also contribute to Midlands State University for future use, as presented in this study.

1.7 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The main reason why the writer decided to carry out this research is that there is very limited sustainable development in Zimbabwe due to lack of peace. The researcher wants to investigate the development work that has been done in Zimbabwe in the absence of peace in an endeavor to illustrate that the absence of peace leads to unsustainable development. The researcher wants to make investigations and show that Zimbabwe has been much into development in the absence of peace, hence leading the nation into a major crisis of poverty.

Also, the writer wants to prove that Zimbabwe is one of the countries which receives funds from different partners in order to start projects, empower the local communities as well as the whole nation and it also works in collaboration with some of the biggest organizations such as the United Nations Developmental Project (UNDP), Christian Care (CC), the World Health Organization (WHO) and many others. Even with all this effort, most of the projects have been in vain because there is no sustainable development, there is no transparency and accountability in any project given per any area, hence Zimbabwe's economic development has not improved

much since 1980. The nation has adopted multi-currency, there is tribalism, there are no free elections, there is prevalence of corruption in projects, and hatred among Zimbabweans.

Another reason why I am carrying out this research is that I am a young academic and a social activist who has also experienced violence in the year 2008, which resulted in disunity, grudges and hatred among the Zimbabweans. This violence also led some youths to flee to other countries like South Africa, some dropping out of school and getting married at an early stage. Some young people whom I grew up with are now mentally challenged, some died and some still use violence as a weapon to express their bitterness to rebel against the community, especially during the elections. I have seen people of my age group participating in violence during the election period mainly because they do not have anything to do, having no jobs or occupations. As a youth, I have also seen young people of my age being silenced during discussions on peace building in any developmental work given per area. Furthermore, the youth have been excluded in things to do with peace building and development, posing a major threat which exacerbated conflicts in different communities, leading to unsustainable peace and development. For that reason, this research is being conducted so that it may serve as a voice of the voiceless for peace, justice and to advocate sustainable development in Zimbabwe. It is my hope that one day the youths will actively participate in peace building programs for sustainable development.

Furthermore, I decided to carry out this research because of my personal life experience. At a tender age, I witnessed a lot of deaths and divisions among members of the family. Also as an orphan, the ill-treatment from some members of the family made me to think that everybody needs peace. If the ones who treated me badly had peace in their minds, they could not have treated me in the way they did. I have also decided to carry out this research and write about peace not as the absence of war, but about peace which comes from within an individual, hence peace begins with one person and passes on to another. From my experience, I have come to understand that it is a mandate for everyone to have peace, so that people do not hurt each other. I had a bad experience and I have learnt that 'once a victim, tomorrow a perpetrator'. There is no way grievances and hurts can be solved through fighting, but through the peace which comes from the inner heart of an individual.

For further elaborations, I decided to carry out this research because I am one of the peace building facilitators in the ECLF Forum. I have been travelling in the ten provinces of Zimbabwe

facilitating at workshops on peace building and developmental work from the year 2016 up to February 2017 during my Work Related Learning experience as a student of the Midlands State University. During, the one and half years that I worked as a peace facilitator, I have encountered many communities who testified that development work has not been sustainable in the absence of peace. Many people could not work together even if they had a chance given through various developmental projects like borehole drilling, irrigation schemes and even building of schools and clinics.

However, through the intervention of the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum peace building work, there have been changes in these ten provinces in terms of development work. The reason being that peace has spearheaded development. As such, I have decided to also prove that sustainable development is attainable if there is sustainable peace in Zimbabwe, notably in Zaka, Masvingo province. After the intervention of the ECLF, I have witnessed families reconciled and united, broken marriages mended, communities co-existing peacefully and working together on community projects such as the repairing of roads and bridges and engaging in livelihoods activities despite their political and religious differences. Also, after this establishment of peace, as a facilitator I have also witnessed individuals healing from traumatic experiences, some of which were dating back from the time of their tender age. Also conflicting parties have been able to work together and sharing rooms, sitting on the same table and sharing even food from one plate.

Moreover, the inclusion of peace building in developmental work has created an environment where victims and perpetrators of violence begin talking face to face and sharing their stories without fear, so as to forgive and reconcile with one another. Considering the facts above, it is worthwhile carrying out this research as a youth in Zimbabwe, a facilitator in peace building work, hence showing the nexus between the ECLF's peace building work and the Sustainable Development Goals in Zimbabwe.

More so, as an aspiring theologian, it is worthwhile carrying out research on issues to do with peace and development in Zimbabwe. The fundamental point that should be taken into consideration is that peace is a biblical concept which was mandated to the church by the Lord and the Savior Jesus Christ in Mathew 5:9 "blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called children of God". Another aspect of Peace is also mentioned in Hebrews 12:14 where it reads

“pursue peace with everyone and holiness without which no one will see the Lord”. The last reflection is found in Ephesians 4:3 and Romans 12:18 where God is seen as a God of peace and hope and theologians have been called to be peaceful and optimistic ambassadors. Basing on these facts, it is mandatory for theologians and the church to discuss more on peace as it is said in biblical texts, hence becoming ambassadors of Christ both in praxis and in theory. This is supported by the ZCC, ZCBC and EFZ (2006) document which accounts that the church is a divine institution in the world, which include both women and men, called to serve God as the hope of the world. This also means that, without peace the church can be divided and lose its mission. Church leaders and theologians are at work to continue supporting peace and reconciliation which will lead to the achievement of sustainable development goals in the country, for Zimbabweans.

Moreover, in carrying out this study, the researcher bases on the historical justification of the church as stated in the ZCC, ZCBC and EFZ (2006) document. The church is now 2000 years serving since Christ’s death. The church has been known for a long time assisting and deeply involved in the issues dealing with social and economic needs of Zimbabwe and the world over. The church has handled the challenges amongst others of refugees, war victims, poverty and many others (ZCC, ZCBC, EFZ: 2006). Traditionally, it has been known that the church let those who are in need lean on its warming and comforting shoulders in times of struggle due to any particular problem. In this regard, the church has been involved in nation building, coming up with peaceful strategies to building up and developing the country. The church was also involved in the liberation struggle to liberate those who were in bondage during colonialism (ZCC, ZCBC, EFZ:2006). So why cannot the church also liberate the communities in Zimbabwe from violence caused by their differences?

It is against this overview, that the researcher proposes to carry out a research in this area to showcase the peace building work done by the ECLF in pursuit of the seven Sustainable Development Goals in Zimbabwe. In this study, the researcher will also explore how the ECLF’s peace building work has worked with communities like Zaka in Masvingo province to make development sustainable through peace and nation building work. In this study, the researcher will also show case how the church has positively contributed to sustainable peace and development, with special reference to Zaka district in Masvingo province, Zimbabwe. It is also

worthwhile to discuss the work done by the ECLF in collaboration with the ten sustainable development goals (SDGS), targeted to end in 2030.

1.8 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The main focus of this study is on sustainable peace and development in Zimbabwe, particularly in Zaka district, Masvingo province. This way, this study will explore how development has become sustainable in Zimbabwe, in Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo area in Zaka district, Masvingo province, following the ECLF's intervention of peace building work through its Conflict Prevention Management Resolution and Transformation (CPMRT) workshops.

Zaka is a district in the Masvingo Province of Zimbabwe. It is in region 5 and is located 86 km southeast from Masvingo in the Ndanga communal land, with a population of 181 106 and a total of 34 wards.(ECLF Reports: 2016). The village was established in 1923 and lies in a very low-lying area hence the Shona derived name *kwo-ka-zaka* which means *to where it is going down*. Zaka district is a typical Karanga smallholder farming area, which is a semi-arid, mountainous area with erratic rainfall averaging 600–800 mm/yr. The soils are generally poor and subsistence farming is the central economic activity and the main crops grown are maize, groundnuts, cotton, sorghum finger millet, sunflower and pumpkins. The population density is more than 65 persons/km², which is quite high for a mountainous area where subsistence farming is the main economic activity. It is the most densely populated rural district in the province and probably in the whole country. Most families rely on support from breadwinners working in big towns and cities. Until recently, teachers and nurses used to be the major source of formal income to the small economy of Zaka. However, many able bodied people including the uneducated have fled the district for South Africa. Jerera growth point accommodates the district administrative offices and is the hub of the district's activity with locally owned shops selling groceries and is 95km from Masvingo town. Other activities include income generating projects like poultry, welding and soap making. Different stakeholders like CARE International doing humanitarian work in the district, are also based at the growth point. Though it seems as if there are now many schools, many children still travel long distances of up to 10 kilometers to the nearest school

This study mainly focuses on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Zimbabwe which built on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, not all of the SDGs will be discussed in this research. The researcher specifically focuses on some of the

SDGs which best describe the nexus between sustainable peace and development. Therefore, for best results, the study excludes ten SDGs and focuses on the seven Sustainable Development Goals as follows: eradication of poverty, zero tolerance to hunger (which is described as the conflict of the stomach), good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, decent work and economic growth as well as peace, justice and strong institutions which is the heart of this research. By so doing, this research also explores the link between the ECLF's peace building work and these seven SDGs, with a special focus again on SDG number sixteen.

The targeted group of this research in general is inclusive to men and women in Zaka. This study targets all age groups and all social, religious and cultural groups in Zimbabwe, with a special focus on Zaka who also will transform the whole nation. The reason being that, everyone needs peace whether Shona, Ndebele, Venda, Ndau, Tonga or Kore-Kore since they have all been affected by the consequences of lack of sustainable peace. This study targets the communities that is the perpetrators and victims of violence, church leadership including the pastors, ministers, lay church leaders, community and government leadership and traditional leadership, particularly in Zaka. The researcher is also guided by one of the greatest and inspiring leaders of Zimbabwe John Nkomo, who said "peace begins with me, peace begins with you, and peace begins with all of us". Hence, the researcher will be targeting all age groups whether poor or rich. The main focus is to advocate for peace in all aspects of life in Zimbabwe.

1.9 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.9.1 Introduction

Not much has been written concerning the subject matter, but however the researcher is also aware that this is not the first time this subject is being discussed. This chapter, also seeks to explore the works of other scholars and writers in as much as the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum peace building work and development is concerned. However, this part is not blinkered to peace and development in Zaka only, but will greatly appreciate the works of other writers in as much as peace and development in general are concerned. The researcher will also analyze the gaps from different scholarly views concerning the subject matter, and hence giving a critique and evaluation. .

1.9.2 General development in Zaka

The works of Clarios Chidoko and Silibaziso Zhou (2012) in their article: *Impact of Agricultural Development on Youth Employment in Zimbabwe: A case study of Masvingo Province*, is helpful in this study. This article explores the development initiatives focusing on the youths in Zaka through agriculture. Silibaziso Zhou and Clarios Chidoko argue that irrigation activities have become popular in developmental activities in Zimbabwe. However, though irrigation schemes are seen as part of development in Masvingo province, Chidoko *et al* (2012), say that there have been slow investments in agriculture for economic development particularly youth employment. This study closely analyzes why development in Masvingo province led to low investment for youths. Chidoko and Zhou (2012), highlight that development and youth employment bent down a decade ago because of the economic crisis.

Besides the fact that Masvingo province is situated in the low veld where rainfall is low at times, the researcher seeks to identify the main cause of low investments in development in Zaka, Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo areas. This article by Chidoko and Zhou (2012) is useful although it does not explain the reasons for the failure of development, which is covered in this study. Chidoko and Zhou (2012) do not identify that besides the geographic area in Zaka, there are past historical conflicts which are still burning in people's hearts which need to be solved first before introduction to any kind of development. Chidoko and Zhou (2012), fail to see that it is problematic to rush to function whence people are still thinking about the land reform.

1.9.3 ECLF's peace building work

Busi Ncube *et al* (2016), a peace building practitioner in her works published a book entitled: *Community level peace building Efforts in Zimbabwe: The Experience of ECLF with the support of UNDP* which also contributes a lot to the subject at hand. This book presents a report of ECLF's peace building work, hence it assisted the researcher as the study unfolded. The book focuses on the genesis and the journey of the ECLF to date and its support to community level peace building. It also deals with ECLF's peace building within the correctional services and healing deeply wounded communities. Busi Ncube *et al* (2016), highlights that the church played a significant role in bringing about healing and reconciliation. She also points out how this church forum has advocated healing, peace and reconciliation through capacitating members with conflict transformation skills in order for the communities to carry out all the important

work. This writer also adds that the contribution of the church through this forum has greatly transformed the traumatized and depressed communities in Zimbabwe, hence this has led to sustainable development in Zaka. The researcher greatly appreciates this writer as she will be guided to explore more works that will result in sustainable development in Zimbabwe.

Annette Ittig and Goodwill Kadzikano (2014), in an article entitled: *Support to Peace Building and Increased Access to Sustainable Livelihoods; Midterm Education of the United Nations Development Project (UNDP)* are in support of the ECLF work done so far. From the source above, there has been great transformation of all age groups at all levels through 3,5 and 10-day Conflict Prevention Management Resolution and Transformation (CPMRT) workshops throughout the country. These writers put more emphasis on the confessions about the physical fights that were made by war veterans after the ECLF's intervention. This source supports that the Local Peace Committees (LPCs), have been formed to maintain peace and implementing projects in different communities. These sources are useful because of their recognition of the role of the ECLF in peace building.

More so, Cynthia Sampson (2007), in an article entitled: *Religion and Peace building* also contributes much to the study in as much as the church and peace building are concerned. In her article, she acknowledges that religious communities made significant contributions to conflict transformation in the past century and are even mobilizing even more effectively. According to this scholar, religious practitioners are working at all levels in peace making, in conciliation, mediation, trauma healing, and reconciliation. This source is useful to this study as it strongly supports that the church is doing great works in pursuit of the Sustainable development goals in Zimbabwe.

1. 10. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.10.1 Peace

A plethora of works have been written about peace, hence these sources will also help the researcher in conducting this research. Peace is a biblical concept which is stated in the gospel of *Matthew 5:9* "blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God".

Peter Verbeek (2008), in his journal of *Peace Ethology* defines peace as the behavior through which individuals, families, groups, or nations experience low levels of violence and engage in

mutually harmonious interactions. This article supports the current subject, as it explains the importance of oneness and serenity in conflict management.

Also, the *Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa Region (FECCLAHA)* (2015) contributes to this study in its *Youth Peace Clubs Workbook*. This organization defines peace as an activity aimed at improving the quality of life. Peace building prevents, reduces, transforms, and helps people to recover from all forms of violence. This is a clear indication that peace should not degrade people's life but upgrade, hence develop in other words. Peace should and can change the lives of the people, especially in Zimbabwe. Peace building in this sense is a prescription for healing trauma to all forms of violence. In other words, the word peace on this piece of paper does not lead to transformation, but peace is transformation and peace is development.

Hakan Wieberg, (1987) divides peace into two: negative and positive peace. He asserts that negative peace is the absence of organized personal violence that is apparently the same as non-war and positive peace require the absence of structural violence. The researcher will benefit from this writer as she supports what the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum (ECLF) encourages in different societies. This shows that peace should at its best fight against any form of violence.

1.10.2 Development

Shenton and Cowen (1998), in their article *Sustainable Livelihoods Approach: A Critique theory and practice* define development as a journey of advancement in societies, with push factors which include advances in governance. These two scholars add that development is a typical set of projects to help the poor, hence this supports the fact that the ECLF is working together with the community like Zaka in pursuit of the Sustainable Development goals in Zimbabwe, to eradicate poverty. According to these writers, development provides a broad background of the change in the societies, hence this also supports development in Zaka, Masvingo province of Zimbabwe.

Kamidza (1996) in his article "What donors want to budget", *Volume 1, No 9* states that the story of the people based development in Zimbabwe, can be equated to a development crisis, after a series of attempts and failure to eradicate poverty. This article pinpoints that there is no sign of development in Zimbabwe, which has led to extreme poverty today. This article is of great value

as it highlights partly the background of the Zimbabweans' situation in terms of development. The researcher is going to use this article and also cover the crucial gap which seems to be the trouble causer of underdevelopment in Zimbabwe.

For more elaborations on development in Zimbabwe, the researcher also recognizes the works of Hazel Chinake (1997), in his *Journal of development in Africa: Strategies for Poverty Alleviation*. In this journal, the writer tackles the background of the Zimbabweans which need development through a community's will, based on equality and social justice to alleviate poverty and integrating all the people in the Zimbabwean community. As the study progresses this article will be useful to explore how the communities' will in Zaka (Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo), has contributed to sustainable development.

More so, Ursula Oswald (1992), in an article entitled: *Sustainable Development with Peace Building and Human Security: Peace, Security and development 13b*, highlights three dimensions of sustainable development: environmental, economic and social dimension. The first dimension is related to human development. The second dimension deals with structural transformation and growth of economy as a core factor of development. The last dimension also talks about development in social terms, linked to sustainability, equity and vulnerability. Hence, the researcher is also going to look into the increasing data on poverty and the widening gap between the poor and the rich. The researcher will also hint on psychological development as a core factor, that is seen in Zaka district.

1.10.3 Peace and Development

Gary Milante and Phil Oxhorn (2009), in the article "*No Development Without Peace*" gives an overview of unique challenges of communities that have past unresolved conflicts. One of the challenges Gary Milante and Phil Oxhorn (2009) mentions is the damaged infrastructure, which impacts negatively on development. The argument goes sideways with the subject matter as it explores that peace has to precede development. According to this scholar, trying to initiate development among frustrated and disappointed people, is a non-starter.

In this regard, Emmanuel Hanson's (1980), view in the *Introduction from Africa: Perspectives on Peace and Development*, strongly supports the argument above. Hanson uses Boutros Boutros –Ghali's statement that "there can be no peace without any kind of development, just as

development is not possible in the absence of peace”. The researcher greatly appreciates this source as it lays bare the fact that sustainable development can be achieved if only peace exists before development, hence the need to research about the nexus between the two.

To add more, Keith Krause & Oliver Jutersonke (2005), in *Peace, Security and Development-Conflicts Environments*, say that peace building has become a core business of the developing community and the international humanitarian crisis. The writer argues that in rebuilding the society, resolving and managing societal conflicts, there is need to create peace building to cover a gap which was caused by past grievances and issues related, hence peace building needs a critical approach.

Moreover, according to Erin McCandless & Tony Karbo (2011), in the article titled: *Peace Conflict and Development in Africa: A Reader*, the drive for peace should not marginalize the vital priority and human development or vice versa. This goes in line with this study and supports that development in Zimbabwe cannot exist without peace and vice versa. In carrying out this research, however the researcher will clearly show that peace does not lead to development, but peace is development and peace develops the communities itself.

1.11. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical framework is defined by Grant and Osanloo (2014:13), as “the blue print for the entire dissertation inquiry”. These two argue that the theoretical framework serves as a guide on which to build and support a study and also provides the structure of how philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically approach will be used for the study as a whole.

Eisenhart (1991: 205), also defines theoretical framework as a “structure that guides research by relying on formal theory.... constructed by using an established, coherent explanation of a certain phenomenon and relationships. This simply means that theoretical framework consists of selected theory or theories that will secure one’s thinking with regards to how one understands to plan to research on a topic. By so doing, Mertens (1998: 3), acknowledges that theoretical framework “has implications of every decision made in the research process...”.

There are many theories used in the academic institution. These include developmental theory, system theory, change theory, relational, sense of community, gender theory and so forth.

However, in this dissertation transformational theory to peace building is used hence linking with developmental theory.

This study was formed by John Paul Lederach's theory of peace building in which he defines peace as a comprehensive term that surrounds the full array of stages and approaches needed to transform conflict toward sustainable peaceful relationship and outcomes. John Paul Lederach's approach to peace building is based on practice rather than grounded theories and also supports the concepts and mechanisms for conflict transformation that are grounded in the local cultures and society involved in conflict (Obiekwe: 2009). This is the reason the ECLF peace building work aims at transforming communities like Zaka through practical peace initiatives like Community Cohesion Projects. Most importantly, there are some terms in this theory and these are conflict transformation, conflict resolution and reconciliation.

On conflict transformation, Lederach (2003), defines it as to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice, indirect interact and social structures, and also to respond to real life problems in human relationships (Obiekwe: 2009: 6). In this theory, Lederach argues that conflict transformation should reduce conflict that manifests itself in violence. He further illustrates his point as he states that culture can be practice and can become a source of conflict. Since culture marks an individual's identity, the process of the ECLF's peace building work do not change the culture of the Zaka community, but it suits what already exists there. Conflict in other words should be transformed towards more sustainable peaceful connections in the community.

To add more, Mitchell (2012), echoes Lederach (2003) and Obiekwe (2009), when he posits that most writers agree on the fact that transformation goes beyond dealing with the cessation of violence and the achievement of a compromise settlement. Varyryen (1991) in Mitchell (2012), argues that conflict transformation can take place through the actor, issue, rule and structural transformation.

Furthermore, the building of relationship is emphasized by Lederach (2003) as they are built through reconciliation which balances the four values namely, truth, mercy, justice and peace. Lederach (2003), also explains these concepts as he says that truth represents the longing for

acknowledgement of wrong and the validation of painful loss experiences. He acknowledges mercy as a concept which articulates the need for acceptance, letting go and new beginning while justice as a concept seeks the vindication of individual and group rights and at the same time advocating social restructuring.

Moreover, Lederach (2003) gives an analysis of a biblical text of Psalm 85:10 to explain reconciliation: “mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed” (The holy bible: 612- 613). In this regard, reconciliation is regarded as a journey towards a place where truth, mercy, justice and peace meet. The Zaka community reconciled their past hurts and grudges and they have managed to build their relationship standards through Community Cohesion Projects. In this sense, the way the Zaka people interact is how “human beings” encounter God and themselves, hence that is reconciliation.

According to Lederach (2003), reconciliation is a journey with the substance of the gospel and he believes that when enemies reconcile, they see God in each other’s face. He also believes that the mission and the ministry of the church is to walk in the path of reconciliation, hence the ECLF is spearheading this in Zaka, Masvingo province. According to Lederach’s view, the purpose of God is to heal and reconcile with people, hence humanity has been given the same ministry (Paaffenholz: 2013).

On conflict resolution, Lederach (2003) notes that conflict resolution focuses on series of conflict and examines the substance and the content of the problems at hand and seeks immediate solutions to those problems (Paffenholz: 2013).

1.12. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Lederach’s holistic approach to peace building allows multi-level participation, empowerment of the grassroots, a focus on the long standing traumas and hurts, and deep rooted sense of the past injustices. This goes in line with the ECLF’s peace building work which focuses on healing, addressing the past hurts which hinder any kind of development. Hence the researcher will be guided by the above sources in conducting this research.

CHAPTER TWO

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ECLF AND THE WORK THEY DO

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to unpack what the ECLF is all about. It reviews ECLF's background, its work as a forum and identifying human relations in communities specifically in Masvingo province where the ECLF has been operating. This chapter also aims at presenting the programs of ECLF used in different communities. The work of ECLF in Zaka will be presented as well.

2.1 ECLF and the work they do in general

The Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum is a Faith Based Institution focused on Peace Building in Zimbabwe found in 2008 and registered as a trust in August 2010 (Ncube *et al*: 2016). It is a body constituted of leaders from various churches at all levels, both clergy and lay, male and female, hence inclusive. Ncube *et al* (2016), document that the ECLF was formed following the difficult situation of 2008 and the socio-economic and political situation which had become progressive worsened for years. *"We knew that the nation was hurting and desperately needed to heal, we also knew that as a church we had the moral obligation to heal the people..."* (Ncube *et al*, 2014: 7). In this regard, Dhlembeu (2014), also supports Ncube in the formation of the ECLF. This writer acknowledges that the ECLF was formed against a background of people with pain, hurt and anger at personal, community and national levels. According to these writers, it is the terrible situation faced by the Zimbabweans, which pushed a group of concerned church leaders from different denominations to come together and examine the role of the church in response to such challenges, hence the formation of the ECLF. In this scenario, the ECLF reflects on the prophetic role of the church and on issues of peace and nation building, hence this forum works together with the community for peace and development in the ten provinces of Zimbabwe.

On its prophetic role, the ECLF inspired by the ZCC, the ZCBC and the EFZ documentary work (2006). This document emphasizes that the church is the divine institution in the world called to serve God. In this case, the background of the ECLF is based upon preaching the liberating gospel to alleviate human suffering in this world, hence the mandate to safe-guard peace in Zimbabwe (ZCC, ZCBC, EFZ:2006). Considering this, the ECLF looks at how people live and have been living and relating in different communities in the ten provinces of Zimbabwe. It is

Comment [S-E1]: Am assuming that in Chapter 1 you had already explained the acronym for ECLF I do not think there is any need for this now.

Comment [S-E2]: Talk about why it was formed when it was formed so that you can contextualize it to Zaka and its many problems.

also a vibrant forum with different church leaders who have a vision of ‘a peaceful, just and democratic nation which values the dignity and sanctity of life for all’. In this sense, the God which the forum serves, is a God of peace, justice and reconciliation and has chosen the ECLF to be the ambassadors for peace. The ECLF’s vision is also supported biblically, especially on peace and justice. On peace, the bible states that “blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9). Justice is also spelled out “...but let justice run down like waters...” (Amos 5:24) and lastly “...act justly and love mercy...” (Micah 6:8).

As a church forum, it works to contribute towards the creation of a peaceful, just and democratic nation by capacitating the church, the community and its leaders with peace building skills. In this view, the church’s concern is justice, good governance, peace among others hence God’s concern to his people. By so doing, this study uses a holistic approach where Jesus talks about abundant life and the fulfilment of the spirit, mind, emotions and culture.

The ECLF comprises many churches affiliated to ecumenical bodies including the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops’ Conference (ZCBC), Union of the Development of Apostolic Churches in Zimbabwe and Africa (UDACIZA) and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) (Dhlembeu 2014). It is made up of quite a number of staff members working at the office and other members outside the office. The hierarchy consists of the Chair, ECLF Board of Trustees, Executive Director and personal assistant, Finance manager and assistant, Program’s Training manager, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, the Community Cohesion Project Officer and the Receptionist. The ECLF is in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA), Bread for the World, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany (VELKD) (Dhlembeu:2014).

With the painful experiences that most Zimbabweans have endured for a long time, this institution has and is still working hard to solve the past grievances through peaceful means. The ECLF flashes back to the past communal challenges and addresses them through the knowledge of church leaders together with the community leadership. Apparently, there have been challenges which ranged from the economic meltdown and corruption. The Zimbabwean economy has been suffering unfortunately from a number of problems which included corruption, underperforming parastatals kept draining national resources, withdrawal of

international lines of credit, difficulty of balancing market forces with a social welfare to economics (ZCC *et al*:2006). ZCC (2006) is also supported by Dube and Makwere (2012), who argue that the challenges that Zimbabwe has faced since attaining political independence, has actually left a bad mark on the face of the country.

Kadzikano and Ittig (2014), bring out the idea of the ECLF in conducting community capacity building targeting everyone including women, the youth and those living with disabilities as well. According to these writers, the ECLF has been able to touch more than 35 000 lives nationally through its training sessions. These two also support that the ECLF is inclusive and has worked with the government ministries, political parties, the youth and women. By so doing, the outcome of the ECLF's engagement with political parties has greatly contributed to the parties adopting peace to be part and parcel of their life.

Furthermore, the ECLF conducts healing of the past hurts, memories and trauma (Kadzikano and Ittig:2014). Accordingly, there have been many healing sessions conducted and this has led to total human transformation. Healing sessions were conducted notably in Zaka, Mtshabezi, Matokokishini, Vumba Mine and Gomwe communities' among others (ECLF Reports:2014. Peace building program has brought about some notable changes to people's lives and violence has been reduced (Kadzikano *et al*:2014).

The ECLF started to capacitate the church as from 2009 to 2010. After training sessions the communities had a positive eye towards the program of the ECLF's peace building. This work resulted in community ownership of the peace building initiatives, demonstrated by communities establishing their own Local Peace Communities, and leading to community cohesion. The cohesion is practically evidenced by communities identifying their priority needs and engaging in developing initiatives as a collective measure. The ECLF started as a church forum and later extended to church and community and this gave birth to a unique product called Local Peace Committees. Journeying together with the church and the community, the ECLF activities gave birth to dialogue so that communities were able to discuss issues affecting them at community level. This forum prides itself with several examples of peace and development such as the three schools in Beit bridge, Masarakufa-Mudzi and Zibwowa, constructed by communities after ECLF intervention (www.eclfz.org/aboutus). The ECLF emphasizes on every citizen's participation in peace building as 'one does not make peace with his friends, but with his or her

enemies'. This way, the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum is 100% non- partisan and is not an evangelistic movement.

2.1.2 The Situation before the ECLF's Intervention

Before the intervention of the ECLF in the communities, there have been a lot of challenges which have caused conflicts and disharmony among community members. There have been conflicts exacerbated by episodes and series of challenges, due to political tensions and violence during the election period (Dhlembeu) (2014). These interests included the manipulation in the political arena, the mismanagement of resources and unequal distribution of resources. Due to the 90% of the population surviving below the poverty datum line, there has been negative peace in the country, no overt physical violence but people were hurting, their money was gone and the situation was inflammable Dhlembeu (2014). Religion and socio-economic differences are also some of the factors which led to division in the districts. Hunger and violence were bedeviling the country.

Earlier on, it was a crime for one to have his or her own choice especially in politics. There was no peace within and as a result, people were hurting each other due to bitterness, status and indifferences. Everything was politicized such as a football match and even the church activities. Churches have been renamed and relocated for political reasons. On top of this, some of the church choruses have been reframed to become political songs. These include:

“Tokwira Makomo tomudana Mwari wedu! (changed to

Tokwira makomo tomudana Tsvangirai

“Vashandiri/VeZvapupu muri nhumwe dzakatumwa kuzoparidza vhangeri (changed to “Baba/Mai Mugabe muri nhumwe yakatumwa...”)

Besides the political and religious havoc caused, there was also domestic violence where most men were practicing wife bashing and women were also doing the same thing to their husbands. This led to underdevelopment in areas like health and wellbeing, morality and gender equity and equality. This was all exacerbated by the economic situation in the country.

2.2 DEFINING THE ECLF PROGRAMS

2.2.1 Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution and Transformation (CPMRT)

Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution and Transformation is a mechanism used to prevent the conflict and violence, to manage it, and to transform the communities through reconciliation. CPMRT is a program used to show that positive conflict resolution can lead to development.

CPMRT is a unique model that focuses on the inner person transforming human beings at a personal level, as well as leading to institutional level Dhembeu (2014). The approach includes the understanding of conflict in nature, types, the genesis, deep conflict identification of the root causes through conflict analysis, hence using the tools to manage such conflicts. CPMRT looks at communication that is active listening, understanding of perceptions and how they influence relationships, effective messaging (www.eclfz.org/what). It also looks at power dynamics, dialogue, facilitation, mediation and negotiation skills. CPMRT also includes healing which is intertwined with trauma counselling.

The CPMRT program strategies are based on ownership of initiatives by communities, participation of women the youths and traditional, church, civic and political leaders. The CPMRT program runs for all and is inclusive as well to diverse players going beyond ecumenism to interfaith, partnering and networking with other stakeholders.

2.2.2 Conflict

A working definition of the term conflict is the energy generated when two or more individuals or groups compete for seemingly incompatible goals in their drive to meet their needs and interests (ECLF: 2012). FECCLAHA (2015), argue that the word comes from Latin “*conflictus*”, where two parties are competing or opposing one another through action.

Chambliss (1973) also approaches conflict from a sociological point of view and notes that social inequality has caused conflict in different societies. In this manner, conflict sometimes is based on the class of the people and it comes from the suppression of the lower class by the upper class.

Heinrich (2006), defines conflict as a disruption of normal desirable social interaction, a dysfunctional state' of social relation. He views conflict as a part of human existence and it is inevitable. Conflict, in this sense, is found in all spheres of life. Heinrich (2006), adds that it is a social relationship that is determined by a perceived and articulated contradiction about perception and judgments. Heinrich (2006), brings in the three types of conflict which are: conflict as a perception, that is how things are seen. The second is about how things should be and this is a conflict about values. The third one is about who is entitled to have what and this is a conflict of interests. Conflict is not violence but it is a response from different people who ought to have different views. Conflict can be negative or positive, hence it can be constructive or destructive. In peace building, negative conflict is like a cancer, it eats and destroy relationships.

Fig 1: The diagram below shows the components of the term conflict

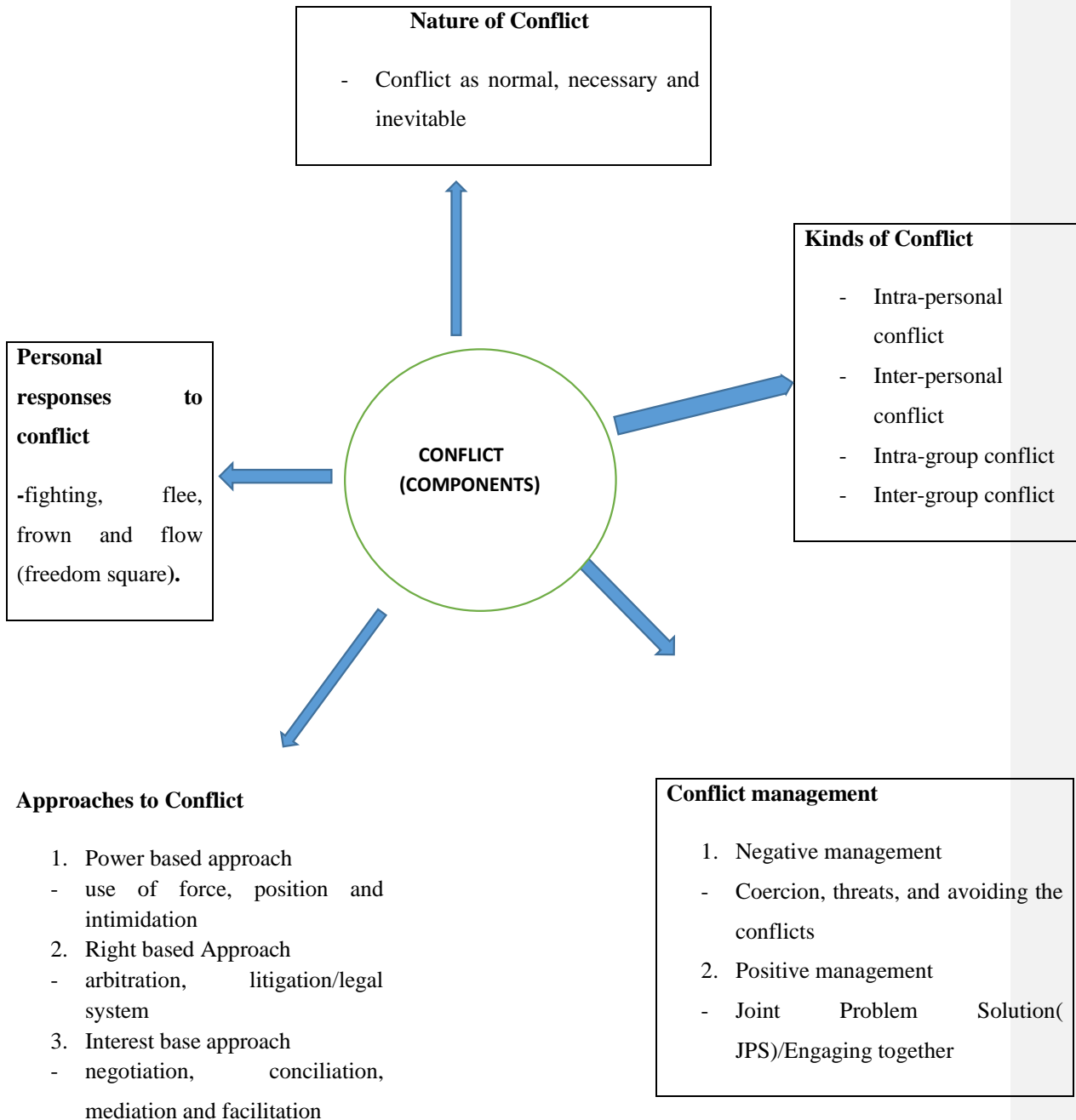


Diagram Source: *ECLF 2012*

Conflict is dual in nature. It can bind people together by sharing different views on different situations, and at the same time can tear relationships apart. In peace building, conflict can be likened to a two-way traffic, hence a double edged sword.

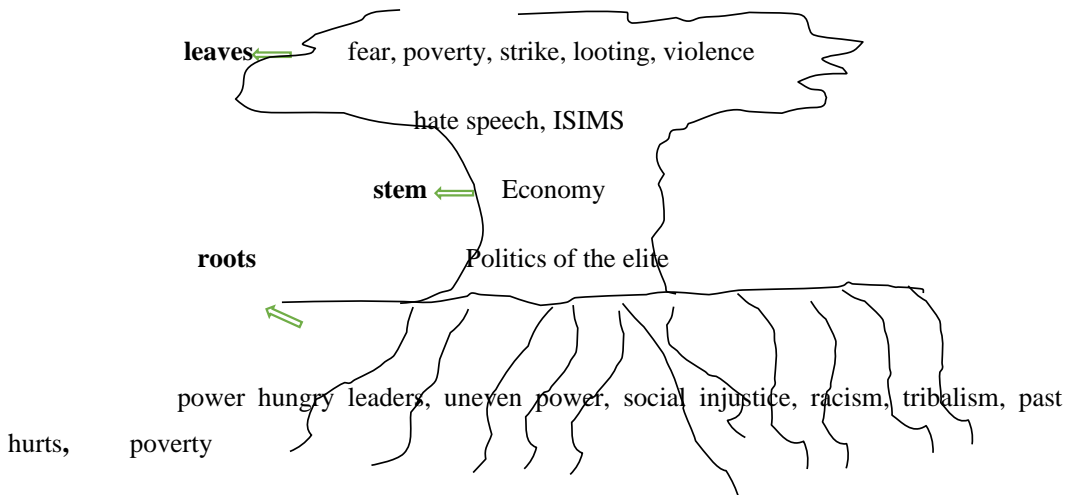
2.2.3 Perceptions

According to the ECLF DNA, perceptions refer to an interpretation, a perceived reality, an observation that might not consist of the absolute truth. Perceptions also mean the way one sees something or someone. In peace building, perceptions refer to wrong biases and prejudices held about the people. Perceptions greatly affect relationships. In fact, perceptions do not cause conflict, but they exacerbate it.

2.2.4 Conflict Analysis

Conflict analysis is getting deeper in researching about the background and the history of conflict. It is generally known that numbers do not count themselves so conflict does not analyze itself. In peace building, there is a feeling that the background and the history of the conflict, should be understood and must be interpreted. Several tools are used in trying to explore what kind of this analysis is. According to FECCLAHA (2015), the conflict tree is one of the best tools which focuses on the root causes of the core problems that are visibly seen. Below is a conflict tree which shows the leaves as the manifesting issues and the roots as the causes of the violent and unpleasant manifestations:

Fig 2: Below is ECLF's conflict tree which best describes conflict analysis:



2.2.5 Power dynamics

By definition, power is the ability to influence an outcome. Power is characterized by three types namely power over (which is more likely authoritarian leadership), power under (slave leadership) and power with (democracy) (ECLF:2014).

2.2.6 Dialogue

Dialogue comes from two words that are *dia* which means through, and *logue* which means words. This means conflicts are solved “through the words”. The ECLF’s CPMRT provides dialogue services so that conflicts are resolved non –violently. In dialogue, the ECLF’s peace building have vehicles of approach. The ECLF describes dialogue as a conversation between two or more people. It is an exchange of ideas. Anderson *et al* (2014), define dialogue as a simple back and frontiness of message in interaction, it points out to a particular process and quality of communication in which the participants meet, which allows for changing and being changed. In peace building, dialogue involves the conversation of two or more people discussing about issues that affect them. It is about exploring the conflict at hand and helping one another to develop an improved understanding of the concerns, fear and the needs of the other side.

Dialogue resolves long standing conflicts and builds deeper understanding of contentious issues especially negative conflict. Dialogue is done to understand human behaviors in different communities. The main purpose of dialogue is for communities to share their views and how they have experienced life especially their difficulties. Dialogue emphasizes on understanding, hence it is not about decision making, but it is about learning and it is not about telling, but about hearing more. Dialogue does not defend, but it compromises. Also, dialogue should be empowered to join in a common pursuit of justice, peace and constructive action for the good of all people (WCC: 2003). Therefore, it nurtures relations and builds a bond of relationships between two conflicting parties. In the ten provinces of Zimbabwe, dialogue was sensitized using the ideal versus the real for communities to lay down their real situation versus what they dreamt about (ideal), hence development through dialogue. Biblically, dialogue is encouraged for theologians of today in Isaiah 18:1 “come now, let us reason together, says the Lord...”.

Fig 3: Below is ECLF's DNA diagram which describes dialogue in short:



Diagram Source: *ECLF 2016*

2.2.7 Mediation

Mediation refers to a third party intervention into a dispute directed at assisting disputants to find a solution which is mutually acceptable (ECLF:2014). Mediation also has key elements which include: parties to agree to mediation, to choose their mediator, own settlement, and to agree on an impartial mediator. It should be a general understanding that mediation is not a quick fix solution, but it is a process which takes ages, hence the ECLF's CPMRT shows that the program itself is a process not a one-day thing. Mediation is a very important mechanism in the journey of peace building and development.

2.2.8 Negotiation

According to the ECLF's DNA, negotiation is a problem solving solution or process in which two or more people voluntarily discuss their differences in an attempt to reach a joint decision on their common concerns. There are several conditions which can be observed in negotiation. In peace building, conflicting parties should be willing to negotiate and also have a will to settle a negotiation. They should also have willingness to compromise, since there might be unexpected reactions during the process. The conflicting parties should be ready to negotiate and their

agreement must be reasonable and acceptable. In every process, negotiation in the end takes a lead to settle problems.

2.2.9 Facilitation

Facilitation is a problem solving process where a facilitator leads conflicting parties or groups towards a consensus in a collective and acceptable manner. In simple terms, facilitation is making two conflicting groups to discuss without calling a meeting and this has also solved many problems in the communities even the parties without knowing that they are in a peace building process.

2.2.10 Healing session

It is not easy to understand what healing is. In defining healing, one question that comes into an individual's mind is, *how does a healed person or society look like?* However, according to ECLF, a healed person or community is that which works together for development despite different political, religious and cultural persuasions. Healed people do not revenge, but they seek peace. From the communal past experiences, the ECLF felt that there were some stumbling blocks to sustainable development, hence there was need for healing. Healing is defined as to “make whole”, where gaps have been identified, (@personaltao.com/teachings/healing). Mwandayi (2011), defines healing as the process of taking away from a sick person a stumbling block or disturbance to his or her spiritual or physical life inhibiting him or her from human self-fulfillment. A sick person in this context does not necessarily refer to the one with a physical disease. Rather, a traumatized person is also sick, a depressed person and even a stressed individual can be categorized as being sick. CPMRT has dealt with such people and in the process of removing a stumbling block in the communities, healing sessions were taking place.

The CPMRT opens up such wounds which cannot be seen. A famous American Novelist Hamilton (2002) says, there are wounds that never show on the body that are deeper and more hurtful than anything that bleeds. These wounds are inside the heart, hence rarely seen. Healing in CPMRT, helps to solve and to do away with the deep unseen wounds, which destroy a human being time and again. CPMRT has been used to manage conflicts in different communities by opening and unpacking what the container has for air ventilation. In other words, CPMRT in ECLF has been done in several districts to open up the minds of the people who are hurt by their past.

In healing, there is an open space where participants in a workshop are free to write down or say what hinders and bothers as well as what hurt them most. After sharing of the past hurts, there is another stage of burning of small piece of papers as a sign to show that an individual participant has finally let go of the previous hurts (ECLF:2014). ECLF's CPMRT, emphasizes on healing as it is generally known that the only way to heal a boil is to open it, and if not the pus will spread and spoil a bigger portion or the whole body. Past experiences should be opened and said out so that people know where to start in terms of developing such characters in the community. In this scenario, the ECLF speaks to the heart of the mourning communities through healing. Healing addresses ways to take away the baggage that individuals have and families. This in turn results and has resulted in reconciliation, community cohesion and integration. Healing is the core of the ECLF activities among CPMRT activities. It is mostly done by sharing stories of deeper sorrows and how the ECLF activities have changed such people. Below are two stories extracted from ECLF reports:

Story 1

“CPMRT workshops literally saved my life. I was a drunkard for 20 years and had tried a superficial investigation of religious and many things to stop it. Nothing of them worked. The CPMRT skills provided by the ECLF for over three months, thinking rationally and productively and a spiritual commitment did the trick. I quit drinking five months ago. I feel the combination of your program and the commitment enabled me to stop on my own, a source of wonder to alcoholics I talk to. I appreciate the work of the ECLF and its peace making program. The three-day workshop also enabled me to overcome ten years' chain smoking, a thirty-year fear of water caused by a childhood diving accident. Now I can swim and it is a joy and a wonder to myself. I appreciate the ECLF for its life giving workshop. I have joined a Local Peace Committee to teach others to stop violence and to create peace from the individual level up to the national level”.

Story 2

“I would like to express to ECLF my feelings of gratitude for the opportunity to know of a better way to live through your peace building program called CPMRT. There is no doubt in my mind of the validity of your program. I was a Primary school head teacher and I guess subconsciously

as I attended your program, I was mentally testing everything the ECLF facilitators said during the workshop. This program is designed in a simple and easy to understand language that even a tender aged person can understand it. As someone with a crippling disease muscular dystrophy, it is most important only my mind be as free as possible from negative thoughts. So I used CPMRT skills as a work manual for everyday use. I wish for many to be healed through this program and to find comfort, knowledge, understanding as I found through knowing this peace program”.



Fig 4: a healing session (*Ukwelatshwa kwemimoya eyephukileyo*) of the church leaders in Bulawayo, Khumalo hotel, Image source: picture taken during field work

2.2.11 Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is a program covering all CPMRT activities to deepen the foundations for peace, dialogue and social cohesion in Zimbabwe. This program moves an extra mile from CPMRT as a way of deepening peace and development in Zimbabwe. An analogy of ADR is given from ECLF Reports (2016), which likens CPMRT as *secondary* and ADR as *tertiary* level in ECLF peace building. Another analogy is of a ball and an orange put into water

as a test to see how deep a dam is; the ball being the CPMRT sessions and the formation of LPCs and the orange being the “deepening” using the ADR mechanisms to teach peace to the fullest. ADR in simple terms means to make peace a lifestyle and not a syllabus.

ADR aims at expanding local level mediation, dialogue and dispute resolution capacities. ADR is expected to contribute and to enhance the resilience of communities against disruptive disputes or conflicts. Access to communities and their leaders will be through local authorities and traditional leadership as well as the civil society. The overall objective of this program is to reduce potential threats to national and community peace and social cohesion while improving capacities from timely and structural response to disputes before they escalate to violence, ONHRI (2014).

In addition, ADR seeks to develop a pool of Local Peace Connectors (LPC), amongst community leaders across sectors and through the LPC who will be nurtured through enrolling them in a tailored learning trajectory encompassing diverse skills for example, collaborative leadership, problem solving, facilitation and mediation. In this case, this document also aims at developing Local Peace Facilitators (LPC), who will be critical in facilitating community level engagement and dialogue, leveraging on the existing LPC structure.

Another aspect of ADR is the establishment of Conflict Early Warning and Early response (CEWER) mechanism to complement community dispute resolution efforts, a mechanism for early detection and response to disputes and conflicts which will be established with the leadership of the NPRC and other national stakeholders including the civil society, the church amongst others (ONHRI) (2014).

2.2.12 Local Peace Committees (LPC)

Odendaal (2010), defines this umbrella term as an inclusive committee operating at a sub national level (a district, a municipality village or town). He also brings out an interesting perspective as he gives a short description, “LPC means ending violence of the past, preventing any occurrence or reoccurrence of violence...” (Odendaal 2010, page 7). This implies that LPCs are very important in the communities.

Dube and Makwere (2012), bring in the idea of LPCs as facilitators who encourage joint inclusive peace making and peace building processes. They also highlight that LPC is a generic

Comment [S-E3]: When writing a research paper, you do not state what the abbreviation stands for you simply write out in full then put the abbreviation in brackets

name for committees and other structures formed at a local level and implemented as part of national peace processes.

However, Ncube *et al* (2016), adds that Local Peace Committees are structures which are established by communities after the three day CPMRT training workshops. These structures are made up with the participants' demand that the CPMRT program must be owned by communities. After the three day CPMRT workshop, the participants then choose a smaller group from among them to lead and safe-guard peace in their communities. LPCs are peace drivers and community healers. They become the strong structures for durability and sustainability of peace in the community and hence paving a way for the ECLF to exit and letting the LPCs own the program for the rest of the time. This means that even though the ECLF was working in the communities, when it left, the LPCs continued operating peace programs and hence leading to sustainable development significantly seen in the districts mentioned earlier on.

The LPCs of all villages have their own chairpersons, secretaries and treasurers as well as community members. LPCs also help one another in identifying challenges found in their communities. LPCs function at different levels. They mediate in between conflicting parties in the community conducting sustained dialogues for peaceful co-existence contextually. Because of their positive mind, LPCs produce positive results such as encouraging community cohesion issues which include developmental and income generating projects (Ncube *et al*:2016). To epitomize this scenario, districts like Zaka have three wards mentoring a clinic, school and a bridge all made up through the LPCs ideas.

To add, these LPCs also act in identifying early warning signs and create early warning responses, hence they prepare several ways like mediation, dialogue and negotiation to resolve emerging conflicts before they become violent. LPCs have become 'rallying points for community progression and cohesion on developmental issues (ECLF 2017). In Masvingo province and other districts, the LPCs took those who were in the Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) to be part and parcel of the committee.

Comment [U4]:

Moreover, Local Peace Committees strategy programs made it possible for people to work together towards healing and reconciliation. It is through these strategic ways that people of

different social, economic, religious and political backgrounds were able to put their heads altogether for a “common cause of sustainable development” (www.eclfz.org/LPCs).

Lastly, LPCs act as platforms for citizen participation and protection of human rights. They have become open to the community regardless of gender, age, religion or political persuasion to be free when discussing developmental issues and other priorities that make the community keep going for a sustainable future. The LPCs are the voice of the voiceless, especially to women and youths as well as other vulnerable groups in the society, hence they are the mouth piece passionate for a wholesome sustainable development.



Fig 5: LPC members of ward 20,8, and 5 in Zaka community, Image source: ECLF 2016

2.2.13 Community Cohesion Projects (CCPs)

Community Cohesion Projects (CCPs) were made up of amazing results after the ECLF’s intervention. After the ECLF activities, there was a gap identified as poverty remained an issue that had the potential to disturb any peaceful interventions. CCPs are built to strengthen and sustain a peaceful relationship among community members, thereby addressing the “conflict of the stomach” (www.eclfz.org), hence advocating for peaceful self-reliance. CCPs also capacitate LPCs so that they are able to bring issues of common interest in finding solutions to issues that

affect them as a community, and at the same time coming up with strategies that foster peaceful coexistence within the society (ECLF annual report:2014).

The main objectives of the CCPs, is to bring together separate groups into a single unified whole and deepen the foundations for peace and social cohesion. CCPs are also there to conduct suiting skills or tailor made equipping sessions for LPC members on integrating community projects for peacebuilding. The CCPs are done to provide unity as a strategy for building intra and inter-cohesion within the society.

Further, the CCPs also came up when the communities utilized the knowledge that ECLF had poured during CPMRT workshops. From the little they had, communities started to work hard, hence occupying themselves rather than fighting. From the work they do, the income generating projects have also improved many people's lives within the ten provinces of Zimbabwe. The impact of the CCPs is seen in Zaka district as the community members are testifying that the ECLF has done such great works. It is a general feeling that if other communities unite together, Zimbabwe will be a better country at large and conflicts can be handled non-violently.

2.3 THE WORK OF THE ECLF IN ZAKA

The ECLF started its peacebuilding work in Zaka in 2015. The ECLF has managed to carry out CPMRT workshops in 30 wards and has also conducted capacity building workshops for Local Peace Committees in 20 wards. There have been major changes in the district since this forum started. It is a testimony of many and the ECLF members that the forum has worked so hard in Zaka. Community members gave testimonies in support of the ECLF peace initiatives highlighting how it had healed their emotional wounds transforming their behavior and hence navigating a way for sustainable development. It is also believed that the ECLF has intervened in three wards in Zaka and community members are at work, not only for development but for peaceful co-existence as well. Communities have been working together for forgiveness and reconciliation, hence people are mending broken relationships caused by previous grudges. Unity has been forged through community cohesion projects which are seen and proven by a school in Zibwowa, a bridge in Rwemhepo and a clinic in Chiromo. All these achievements are referred to as “blisters of peace “ by community members (www.eclfz.org) .

There have been frequent visits in Zaka of different LPCs provided by the ECLF. Several visits and investigations have been done and the most impressive include the wards mentioned above. Rwemhepo bridge in ward 5 is 50m long, 6m high and 4m wide (ECLF research 5-6 June, 2017). This bridge is 22 kilometers away from the tarred road leading to Jerera growth point in Zaka. This idea came to light after the ECLF had conducted a CPMRT workshop and the LPC capacity building in November 2016, hence it had an impact and this resulted in community cohesion. For the bridge to be constructed, the community members from different political parties and different religions took turns to carry sand, stones and water through manpower and from the little they got they also contributed some money towards the building of Rwemhepo bridge. This bridge had been planned by the community way back and people had been suffering for a long time trying to cross. Some school children would walk 15kilo-metres away to different schools because there was no way they could cross that bridge. All these inconveniences were being caused by the prevailing disunity of purpose and perceptions as well.



Fig 6: A nearly complete Rwemhepo Bridge in ward 5, Image source: ECLF (picture taken 12 May 2017)

Besides the construction of the bridge, the community members have also managed to put their heads together and construct a two block secondary school in Zibwowa, ward 20, 20km from Jerera growth point. This secondary school has become a success because of the unity and through income generating projects. Long back, school children would walk about 7km away and this was regarded as their nearest school. Since there was division for the past couple of years, mobilizing community members was not that easy and on the other side the council was

disagreeing basing on the fact that the land was too small. Through the ECLF peace building skills and the hard work done, today the community is full of joy because of the secondary school in ward 20, and the school has already enrolled students from the local community. It is now easy for the children and the community at large to educate their children. Through such a step forward, Zibwowa Development Association were impressed by this and are still working hard towards getting the access to electricity for both the primary and the secondary schools.



Fig 7: Zibwowa secondary school in ward 20. Image source: ECLF 2016

Significantly, there is also the construction of a clinic in Chiromo ward 8 in Zaka, which is 40 km away from Jerera growth point. Together with the community, the LPCs came up with an idea to build a clinic after the ECLF's work in Zaka. The vision which has been blocked for so long, has actually come into light through hard labor, working together and the contribution from different stakeholders. The current situation shows that the clinic project is at the slab level.



Fig 8: Above is Chiromo clinic under construction in ward 8, Image source: ECLF 2016

2.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has highlighted the background and the history of the ECLF, from the time it began as a forum up to date. Human relations have been explored as investigated in the ten provinces of Zimbabwe. ECLF's work and programs have been defined and explained in detail in order to give a better understanding of ECLF's peace building initiatives in different communities. Lastly, the work of the ECLF in Zaka has been explained to showcase how Zaka has been changed from its previous state before ECLF's peace building work intervention. The next chapter will identify the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS), that relate to ECLF in the pursuit for sustainable development.

CHAPTER THREE

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS GUIDING THE VISION OF THE ECLF'S PEACE BUILDING INITIATIVES

3.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher outlined the background of the ECLF exploring human relations in different communities, and discussing the work of the ECLF's peace building work in Zaka. This chapter is centered on the Sustainable Development Goals. It seeks to define and to identify the SDGs that relate to the ECLF's peace building work in Zaka in the pursuit for sustainable development.

3.1 Introducing the Sustainable Development Goals

Almost 15 years earlier, the MDGs were envisioned with an aim to change the world and people's lives. The MDGs were promoted as a vital framework working on the progression of development in different aspects of life (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>). However, the MDGs were uneven and they failed to reach the target in 2015.

Nevertheless, the SDGs are a new framework building on the MDGs which are targeted to change the communities, the nation and the whole world by 2030. The new framework goes a mile beyond the MDGs, hence it also targets to reach particularly the most vulnerable parts of the world (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>). Alongside the development priorities such as poverty, education, and food security and nutrition, the new framework of the SDGs, also sets a wide range of economic objectives and also comprises more peaceful and inclusive societies. The SDGs are a win-win co-operation which bring in a huge gain to all countries.

The United Nations Development Program has been one of the leading organizations working to achieve the MDGs in 170 countries and territories, including Zimbabwe. The United Nations Sustainable Development Summit for adoption of the agenda 2030 and the SDGs was held from 25-27 September in 2015. However, the UNDP is aiming to build on the many successes of the past 15 years and go further. The Sustainable Development Goals also aims at ending poverty and hunger by 2030.

The SDGs also aims to make the world better now and forever than it was in 2000, and is building a consensus about a sustainable future (sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships). The sustainable referred to is the one where everybody has enough food, employment, sustainable peace and where there is health and education for all, to mention a few. The quotation that is given by Nehlsen and Richard (2017: 2), in the GPPAC background highlights that the SDGs are there to improve the quality of life for all. The quotation reads “a central promise of agenda 2030 is to leave no one behind...”. This highlights that the SDGs by 2030 are aiming to improve and develop the whole world. In the case of Zimbabwe, the SDGs can be only achievable in the presence of sustainable peace. Therefore, below are the seventeen SDGs extracted from the GPPAC background by Nehlsen and Richard (2017).

3.1.1 SDG 1-No poverty

Ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, is an ambitious goal targeted for 2030. In 2000, the world was committed to cut the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 and it was partially met. However, looking into the world’s situation today, people still suffer from poverty and around 800 million people in the world live on less than \$1.25 per day (www.undp.org/content/dam/undp). In Zimbabwe, people are starving everywhere, in jail and in their homes. There are street kids in dirty rags all over. The heart wrenching question to reflect on is as follows: Is God seen in such kind of a situation? The answer is NO because people are still suffering from poverty in Zimbabwe as highlighted earlier. By so doing, this goal gives a strong signal to theologians that it is high time to build up on what the world is learning and implement strategies that can eradicate poverty.

3.1.2 SDG 2- Zero Hunger

It is believed that in the past 20 years, hunger has dropped almost halfway (www.undp.org/content/dam/undp). Many countries used to suffer from hunger, famine and nutritional challenges. By so doing, this goal is in support of sustainable agriculture for the small farmers. However, one fundamental question that may be asked is that *how is sustainable agriculture attainable?* This can be fulfilled if there is sustainable peace, hence this goal aims at making every country to have access to sufficient and nutritious food all year round.

3.1.3 SDG 3- Good health and Well-being

This goal is set to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Generally, health is a very important aspect to human beings. To live is to be healthy and without a healthy lifestyle, life can be sour. People cannot develop if they are not healthy. All sorts of jobs need a healthy mind, which will help in developing the communities and the nation as a whole. Since 1990, big strides have been made especially on preventing child deaths that are down by more than half today. However, there are some numbers which are tragically high for example 6 million children die before their 5th birthday, and AIDS is also the leading cause of death for adolescents in Africa (www.undp.org/content/dam/undp). This way this goal needs much attention and work for it to be attainable by 2030.

3.1.4 SDG 4- Quality Education

This goal ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. So many factors lead many children to drop out of school. Poverty and armed conflicts are some of the factors that have led to this challenge. This shows that the situation of the children is getting worse time and again. This is also supported by Machel (2001), who explains the plight of the children involved in wars. Many children suffer during war as a result of armed conflicts. He also points out that in war, children are subjected to the most severe forms of maltreatment, and war is definitely the worst type of aggression against children, hence they drop out of school. Another illustration comes from Sendabo (2004), who gives an example of Mozambique and says children are forced to kill their parents during the war and they are afraid to come back home. At the end of the day, they become street kids and they will be no more school opportunities for them. This is also terrible as it is known that in many developing countries, children from the poor families are more likely to drop out of school than those from the rich family. This goal aims at equal affordable access education for all.

3.1.5 SDG 5- Gender Equality

This goal aims at achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls. For all development activities that have been done so far, women and girls are still behind. There are still many areas where women are oppressed such as in the workplace and in homes when they serve as domestic workers. What frustrates most is that women are not even paid for all these

duties. However, this goal believes that there is still a ground for hope. This SDG is thriving to end the discrimination against women and girls everywhere.

3.1.6 SDG 6-Clean water and sanitation

This SDG emphasizes on the availability and the sustainability management of water and sanitation for all. By 2030, everybody should have access to clean water. This is because water scarcity affects more than 40 percent of people around the world and that number can even go higher, hence a need for quick action for this goal to be attainable.

3.1.7 SDG 7- Affordable and clean energy

To ensure access to affordable, reliable and modern energy for all. The number of people who need access to electricity has increased to 1,7 billion between 1999 and 2010 (www.undp.org/content/dam/undp). This means that there is more need of energy for all.

3.1.8 SDG 8- Decent work and economic growth

Aiming at sustaining per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and at least 7 percent gross domestic product per annum in the least developed countries. It also aims at achieving higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation. It also aims at promoting development through decent job creation.

3.1.9 SDG 9- Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

This goal targets to build resilient infrastructure promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. It also targets to develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure including regional and trans border (<https://sustainable/un/org>). This goal will develop the economy and well-being, hence equal access for all.

3.1.10 SDG 10- Reduced Inequalities within and Among Countries

This goal is adopted to encourage, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all despite of “age, gender, race, sex, ethnicity, origin, religion, disability and economic status (<https://sustainable/un/org>). In other words, the opportunities for all important contribution to life should not be divided by the so called “ISMS”. It is a target that by 2030, that there will be no discriminatory laws and inequalities of the outcome. This goal also aims at ensuring enhanced representation and become a voice of the voiceless for the developing countries like Zimbabwe.

3.1.11 SDG 11-Sustainable cities and communities

By 2030, there should be access for affordable housing and basic services for all. This goal aims at improving road safety and sustainable transport systems for all. This goal envisions that by 2030, it should strengthen inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries. By 2030, this goal shall reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and scrutinizing, decrease the direct economic losses related to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, and also protecting vulnerable groups.

3.1.12 SDG 12- Responsible Consumption and Production

It ensures sustainable consumption and production patterns. It aims at implementing the ten-year framework of programs on sustainable consumption and production patterns including developing and developed countries taking action. It aims at the sustainability of the natural resources ([https://sustainable/un/org](https://sustainable.un/org)).

3.1.13 SDG 13- Climate Action

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact. It aims at strengthening the resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters in all countries. This goal aims at improving education and raising awareness to human capacity and on climate change, mitigation, adaptation, reduction and early warning. It focuses on the management of climate change planning focusing on women, the youth and local marginalized communities.

3.1.14 SDG 14- Life below water

This goal aims to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. It aims at managing and protecting the marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including strengthening their resilience and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans. It also aims at reducing and addressing the impact of ocean acidification through enhanced scientific co-operation at all levels.

3.1.15 SDG 15- Life on land

Goal 15 aims to protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation, and

halt biodiversity loss. This goal is targeted to ensure the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial and in land fresh water ecosystems and their services in particular forests, wetlands and dry lands.

3.1.16 SDG 16- Peace, Justice and Strong institutions

This goal forms the heart of this research and other goals need this one for them to be attainable by 2030 and in future. It promotes peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Briefly, this goal aims to significantly reduce all forms of violence and related deaths everywhere. It aims at ending abuse, exploitation, human trafficking and all forms of violence including torture of children (<https://sustainable/un/org>). It aims at inclusive justice for all. Goal 16 seeks to develop the effective, accountable and transparency of the institutions at all levels. This also means that this goal aims at responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision making for all. This goal shall promote the participation of developing countries to be broadened and strengthened in the institution of global governance. It shall promote birth registration as an example of the identity for all. Further, this goal aims at enhancing of relevant national institutions for capacity building at all levels in order to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime. It will promote and enforce non- discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

3.1.17 SDG 17- Partnership for the goals

This goal strengthens the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. There is also enhancement of domestic resource mobilization through international support to develop countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax over revenue collection. By 2030, there must be a system which mobilizes additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources. The main aim is to assist developing countries in attaining long term debt restructuring and appropriate addressing of the external debt distress (<https://sustaianble/un/org>).

3.2 Identifying the SDGs that relate to the ECLF's peacebuilding work in Zaka

All the SDGs need sustainable peace for them to be achieved, hence there can be no sustainable development without sustainable peace (Milante and Oxnorn: 2009). This also means that it is necessary for the ECLF's peace building work to partner with these so that development in

Zimbabwe is attainable and durable. As highlighted earlier, not all of the SDGs are going to be discussed in detail with regards to the ECLF's peace building work. The researcher selected the seven SDGs that relate well with the ECLF's peacebuilding work in Zaka as shown below:

SDG 1 Eradicate poverty in all its form everywhere

SDG 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture

SDG 3 Ensure healthy lives and well-being for all at all ages

SDG 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all

SDG 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

SDG 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full of productive employment, and decent work for all

SDG 16 Promote Peace, Justice and Strong institutions

3.3 The ECLF's Contribution on the Selected SDGs

A sample of nine interviews from the ECLF peace facilitators and staff members (interviewees) was done to collect data. These were the representatives of other different groups in Zaka community, to give adequate and accurate information. This research was carried so as to assess the contribution of the ECLF's peace building work to the selected SDGs. This data helped the researcher to find out the response of the different peace practitioners and beneficiaries pertaining to the ECLF's contribution to sustainable peace and development in Zaka, Masvingo province. The researcher selected data from three local facilitators in Zaka, two beneficiaries and LPCs members. Among these study participants was the Provincial Focal Person (PFP), the District Focal Person (DFP) whose names are not mentioned for privacy sake. The researcher also interviewed the ECLF staff and other facilitators at the office. These included the Programs Training Manager, the Community Cohesion Projects officer, the Monitoring and Evaluation officer and other two facilitators. The researcher was also sensitive to gender balance and the youth in collecting the relevant information. The researcher was looking at the seven SDGs which are 1,2,3,4,5,8, and 16 whilst interviewing the study participants mentioned above to get

relevant information about the ECLF's peace building work in Zaka and what it has done in as much as these SDGs are concerned with so far.

The researcher found out that the ECLF has actually reduced poverty by educating communities during the CPMRT workshops to use locally available resources to do Community Cohesion Projects (CCP), and also to do away with the *donor syndrome*.

Also, the ECLF contributed to health and wellbeing in Zaka, Masvingo province. According to the PFP, DFP and other beneficiaries, the ECLF worked hard to improve this aspect of life by teaching people to own projects in their respective wards. To epitomize this, Zaka ward 8 and 23 people from these communities are building clinics, notably Chiromo clinic which has been shown in pictures in the previous chapter. Some communities like Chiromo dotted across Zaka are growing vegetables, beans, and hence promoting nutrition value from the food eaten by the people of Zaka, Masvingo province. From their income generating projects, the people of Zaka district are now getting some funds or money to pay their fees at the hospital, hence this has actually eased their struggle to visit the clinic or any nearest hospital. From the respondents, the ECLF has also highlighted the issues of health by organizing a trauma workshop and stress oriented diseases are bound to be reduced.

Furthermore, for quality education, the researcher found out that the ECLF taught the communities to work together as united and this is seen in Zaka ward 20 Zibowa where locals built a secondary school where two blocks are already operational. It is believed that before the intervention of ECLF in Zaka district, school drop outs level was high due to failure of parents to pay school fees and in some areas some students were travelling long distances going to school. However, as for now, the researcher found out that the LPCs have managed to mobilize to build schools.

More so, the researcher found out that the ECLF also promoted gender equality and girl's empowerment by urging the communities to treat their children equally. To add more, during the interview, the respondents also praised ECLF in that it always and mostly co-facilitate in pairs, that is a man and a woman giving an example of gender equality. From the interviews carried

out, Zaka of Masvingo province is generally known for a strict Shona culture of the *Vakaranga*. As such it is known for patriarchal systems where women are not allowed to raise their voice against men, to decide and to participate in socio-economic and political issues in the society. This is well supported by Shoko (2007), who avers that Karanga men are always considered as right and superior than their wives and the women do not even have a say in the society. He also posits that a man in this culture, is compared to a bull which is in charge of other cattle. However, as mentioned earlier, this forum is very inclusive, the respondents also added that the people in Zaka community were transformed and they now view some Shona cultural and religious beliefs which suppress women and the girl child with a critical spectacle. Results from the grassroots showcase that the people of Zaka community, especially from Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo were encouraged by the ECLF to fully participate in peace building work despite their gender differences. As a starting point, the mobilization process was a highlight in reaction to peace building workshops conducted by the ECLF in Zaka in the wards mentioned, respectively. These communities are now considering gender equality and also girls and women are able to stand in front of men facilitating workshops in villages. Since an opportunity is a resource in peace building, the respondents showcase that there is now a great achievement in as much as justice in distributing resources is concerned, hence empowering women, men and girls for sustainable development in Zaka, Masvingo Province.

Moreover, from the interviews carried out, results show that the ECLF influenced the economic growth and sustainable development by capacitating the LPCs with knowledge to run projects using locally available material. Some sell chicken popularly known as road runners at Amai Munemos' noted at Jerera for a good amount.

From the results shown, sustainable peace and development has been achieved in Zaka, Masvingo province. The respondents testified that the ECLF's programs especially CPMRT gave the people of Zaka considerable peace and there was massive development as seen in ward 5 of Rwemhepo which managed to build a 50m long and 6m high bridge at Musuka river, Zibwowa which built a school as well as Chiromo with a clinic which is under construction, just to name a few. ECLF facilitated the formation of the LPCs in each and every ward that will continuously promote peace and encourage communities to keep on working together in doing peaceful

developmental projects. This shows that the people in Zaka were able to unite again in the pursuit for sustainable development for the present time and the future.

For further elaboration, the researcher found out that the ECLF also had an impact in Zaka specifically in three areas namely Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo amongst others. During the interviews, the facilitators from the grassroots contributed much on this point emphasizing that peace has been made a lifestyle in Zaka, Masvingo province. In fact, there have been scars of war in this community, but through the ECLF's intervention, the bridge, the school and the clinic made them to see the scars of peace as evident by the construction of the bridge in ward 5. In this scenario, one woman (a beneficiary), showed off her hands which were bruised due to carrying stones for the construction of the bridge. The implication that is given by this picture is that when people are united they do wonders, they forget about the past and move on to build their future. Considering this, the people in Zaka reconciled and they came to understand that their violent ways could not be at least resolved by another violence, but they had to harmoniously work together towards sustainable peace which will lead to sustainable development, through Community Cohesion.

However, there were some major challenges which were faced by the ECLF as the staff and the people on the ground reported during the interview period. Since everything is politicized in this world of today, the ECLF was threatened in the first place as some of the community members were assuming that it was a political movement targeting to oppose the existing ruling party. Another challenge was that the people of Zaka wanted to be spoon fed and they had no sense of ownership. Nevertheless, after being workshopped, the community were set free from these biases and they began to know the truth and the good part of this forum. From the conversion time up to the present day, the people of Zaka community now have new ways of thinking in terms of development in their area.

Lastly, the respondents praised what the ECLF has done so far in Zaka in terms of peacebuilding, considering that people now work harmoniously despite their previous conflicts. They urged that the ECLF should continue working hard in the communities and also continue using the

approach of orthopraxis rather than paper work. Another area where the ECLF should maintain in future is to work together with the leadership which already exist in the communities.

3.3 CONCLUSION

To conclude, this chapter has presented the SDGs in general for a better understanding in as much as sustainable development is concerned. This chapter also addressed the seven selected SDGs that relate well to the ECLF's peace building in Zaka through carrying out interviews from the ECLF staff and the people from the grassroots in Zaka. The interview questions will be attached at the end of this study. The next chapter will look at the nexus between the ECLF's peace building work in communities and the SDGs in Zimbabwe, using Zaka district as a case study.

CHAPTER FOUR

AN ASSESSMENT OF SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT, USING THE ECLF'S PEACE BUILDING WORK IN ZAKA AS A CASE STUDY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the connection between the ECLF's peace building work in Zaka, Zibwowa (ward twenty), Rwemhepo (ward five), Chiromo (ward eight), and the Sustainable Development Goals which have been highlighted in the previous chapter. This chapter shows clearly the true identity of sustainable peace and development. This chapter also presents answers from the ground to the question on how the work of this forum has benefited the individuals and the community of Zaka district, specifically in three wards mentioned above. This chapter will first discuss how peace enhances development and vice versa, using John Paul Lederach's theory and finally show how peace and development has partly contributed to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

4:1 The Concept of Peace and Development: How Peace enhances Development and how Development Strengthens Peace

The concept of peace and development should be defined in the same manner. One cannot define peace in the absence of development, and development in the absence of peace. Hence in this study, these two concepts are inseparable. Peace building is not easy to measure. However, it can be seen, tangible and be felt through sustainable development. If peace is a measure used to make people not to live in violence, then it should precede development. Once the community is in that state then it means that there is development. Peace and development are different side of the same coin. To understand the coin, one needs to turn it up the other side. This implies that for the SDGs to be attainable in Zimbabwe, there should be an understanding of peace before one talks of development.

In this context, development can be referred to as an organized intervention in collective affairs according to a standard of improvement. In general understanding, development is the act of growing or causing something to become advanced. Sustainable development should be

continuous improving the quality of both social, economic, political and religious life for all. Sustainable peace is where people are able to determine their destiny, where human rights are respected, where freedom of expression, democracy, transparency, and access to equal justice is there.

From Lederach's theory (2003), peace which he refers to as conflict transformation, should manifest itself and be understood in a practical manner more than it is defined on paper. Galtung (1975), in LedWith (2005), alludes that peace is something more positive and dynamic than simply creating stability to prevent violent conflict, hence peace is change, peace is transformation and peace is development. Peace should be in orthopraxis for empirical evidence of sustainable peace and development. This way, McCandless and Karbo (2011), suggest that peace should not only help people resolve their conflicts, but should also improve the life style of the certain individuals. Hence where there is peace, there is a right level of income or development, where there is peace, there is sustained progress and improving economic situation, where there is peace there is a set of strong formal institutions including prosperity rights, democracy and trust, Reychler and Langer (2006)

This theory of Lederach (2003), emphasizes more on the practicality of peace building, hence this has made development a successful story in Zimbabwe, particularly in Zaka district. People at individual, community and national level should learn to live in harmony and in peace so that they can manage any situation peacefully. A peaceful community reconcile in a non-violent manner and develops not for one individual but for the benefit of the citizens. As compared to a violent community where there is no sense of ownership, people tend to use other means to solve their conflict and development in that area is named after the partner or the donor instead of that particular community. In this case, Oliver and Jutersonke (2005), point out the problem of most peace building practitioners who follow a donor system where knowledge does not come from the local levels, but is brought by the donors, let alone promoting pseudo-scientific models of society and social change. However, the theory of transformation emphasizes that peace building should come first and make the community to adopt a way forward of developing their area, hence that is how peace strengthens development. Sustainable peace and development comes from within, it is driven from oneself passing to another, hence it is sustainable peace which

brings the idea of development, and it is sustainable development which keeps peace within an individual and among people.

Nehlsen and Richard (2017) argue that there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development. The 2030 agenda of SDGs includes peace as a cross cutting issue alongside other critical areas including peace goal, SDG 16. Since peace dimension is among the SDGs it is important to note that peace and development should go hand in hand if the goal is aiming at sustainability of both. This clearly shows that the part of this dissertation will strongly contribute on the relationship of ECLF peace building work in Zaka and the SDGs.

According to PPJIS (Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Society) (2017), there are 36 targets from other SDGs that directly has a measure on peace inclusion or access to justice with only a third of these found in SDG number 16. The whole point is that peace is the heart of the SDGs, hence they are attainable in the presence of it.

Nehlsen and Richard (2017), also talk about the connectivity and the implementation of peace building and the SDGs. These writers suggest that the implementation needs a well done deal of resources and united action and hence this will be discussed as the link between ECLF work in Zaka and the SDGs unfolds. The important goal is to make the SDGs not to disturb the already existing peacebuilding activities. What is very important is that the SDGs should characterize the work undertaken by peacebuilding organizations. In other words, the SDGs should continue being useful to already existing peace initiatives, (Nehlsen and Richard: 2017). From these writers, the SDGs should link well with peace so that it is easy to identify if the civil society is actively involved in the implementation of these goals.

4.2 The relationship between the SDGs and ECLF peace building work in Zaka

SDG number 1 and 2 addresses the same issue of eradicating hunger and poverty. There is no way a country or a community can be developed when people are in poverty or suffering from the conflict of the stomach. In actual fact, people who suffer from such kind of challenges are the ones who are most aggressive all the times. There is an Asian-Indian proverb which says “empty vessels make much noise” (<http://www.pinterest.com/pin>). This already shows that in most cases empty stomachs also make a lot of noise, hence communities in poverty usually produce more

violence than peace. On this point of view, Younan (2012: 55), quotes Martin King Luther Junior saying “as long as there is poverty in the world, I can never be rich...”. A violent environment also causes poverty among people. This is seen in one of the Zimbabwean dramas of Sabhuku Vharazipi when he is involved in social conflicts. One of the community members commented upon the habit of fighting saying “*munzvimbo medu, inongova zhara nazhara*”, meaning to say it is poverty after poverty. Hence poverty is a barrier to any kind of development

Furthermore, so much has been written about poverty. Several donations have been made in order to eradicate poverty in Zimbabwe, but the difference was the same. There was only a change after the ECLF’s intervention in Zimbabwe, especially in Zaka. What differentiates the ECLF is that it sensitizes people on peace first before the community chooses for development. This is also supported by one of the women in West Bank who once said “...international actors do give aid and development through projects, but it is not effective because the problem is not a specific crisis, but a long standing occupation”. In other words, development minus peace, it is equals to poverty and hunger.

However, SDG 1 and 2 as shown in the communities shows that ECLF has managed to achieve sustainable development, hence the link between SDGs in Zimbabwe and ECLF peace building work in Zaka. From the reports that are given, the people from Zaka never used to work together due to political differences, but now they have put their differences aside and they can pull their resources together for income generating activities which can address poverty and hunger. Conflicts can now be managed during project implementation. There is now fair distribution of agricultural inputs and even social welfare handouts are now being distributed to the deserving individuals who used to be excluded on party lines. The construction of roads, bridges and footbridges has enabled the improvement of road networks so that service providers can now reach them and even developmental partners.

As such, through its CPMRT it is a joyous moment that communities are transformed through the spirit of “*Ubuntu/hunhu*” which have been restored and people have seen the need of relating and working together, that is community cohesion thereby alleviating poverty. This cohesion then gave birth to Community Cohesion Projects (CCPs), that ranges from gardening, chicken rearing and goat keeping. One person doing everything may be affected health wise. Peace building has brought less labor to both the fit and the weak in health. Hence, the researcher

adopts a Tanzanian proverb which says “many hands make work lighter”. In addition, hurt feelings, negatively affect the immune system and consequently stress and other disorders become the order of the day. Hence, the ECLF peace programs contributed to healthy issues in Zaka at the same time achieving one the 2030.

The togetherness that was brought by the ECLF program made people to share ideas and to work together, which then means less effort is employed because of numbers but the great is achieved. In fact, people on the ground translated peace to their minds as individuals, and peace in an individual mind translate to a healthy thinking from a healthy body. Hence this is even supported biblically in Proverbs 17 verse 22 “a cheerful heart does like medicine: but a broken spirit dries the bones”. Another reflection is seen in the book of Proverbs 15:30 where it reads “the light of the eyes rejoices the heart and a good report make the bones fat”. This implies that the ECLF represents the church in sustaining peace and also uses a theology of development to better the communities.

Likewise, after the ECLF’s intervention, the Zaka community in ward 20 came together to construct a secondary school in Zibwowa, hence addressing SDG number four of equitable quality education and learning opportunities for all. Long back, school children were travelling for about 15 km away from their homes and hence this degraded their quality of education since they reach at school already tired of walking. However, in this case the LPCs in this community have managed to put peace building into praxis for sustainable development, hence the link between the ECLF’s peace building work in Zaka and the SDGs in Zimbabwe. The imagery shown here proves that peace can promote a project which strengthens education towards creating an environment which makes every school child comfortable.

Moreover, SDG number 5 and 10 links with ECLF’s peace building work. Nehlsen and Richard (2017), reports that the network responds to the persistent under representation of women in the local government and governance structures and their lack of responsiveness of women’s security needs. Although there are some men who are challenged by women in different manners, SDG number 5 emphasizes more on the improvement of girls on many areas. Ringguard and Ohosson (2015), argue that, women are most at threat because of many responsibilities such as feeding the family, and in their pursuit, they end up facing different threats such as rape or being asked for sexual favors. However, SDG 10 and 5 reduced

inequalities and gender issues are being addressed as most of the LPCs in Zaka are female dominated and are actively involved in developmental activities. The ECLF DNA has improved family relationships thereby reducing GBV (Gender Based Violence) and DV (Domestic Violence). There is now fair distribution of resources especially food handouts during the drought period and agriculture inputs also.

Furthermore, SDG number 8 of decent work and economic growth is also linked to the ECLF peace building work in Zaka, hence this has partly contributed to an improvement in the economic situation in Zimbabwe. Economic development at heart typically means more jobs, business opportunities, fair access to safe and decent livelihoods. The link between development and peace is easy to understand. War or physical violence cannot lead to economic growth. Taking for instance, the violence experienced in 2008 caused by indifferences slowed down the economic growth in Zimbabwe, which also led to inflation and the continuous use of foreign currency. Considering this, there should be an understanding that mutual trust and functional relationships between people, groups and people's both grew and were nourished historically by trade, in a virtuous cycle (International Alert 2015). It is believed that in 1906, the economist Leon Walras was nominated for the Noble peace price by those who recognized the implication for peace of his work on economic equilibrium. Therefore, economic development is good for peace and economic peace is good for some economic growth, hence this can be in short referred to as peace dividends. In this context, Zaka communities have taken full responsibility in terms of development which will make them rise up economically in the spirit of togetherness and relationships have improved which will see the communities supporting each other. They are working together very hard which means their revenue bases are adding to the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the country.

In addition, the involvement of communities into CCP is direct contribution even to the Zim-Asset which was adopted by the government of Zimbabwe, a program that seeks to provide for macro- economic assumptions of the country, hence the relationship between SDG number eight and the work of the ECLF in Zaka, Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo. Basing on the information on the ground, this clearly shows that if the Zaka community was not sensitized on peace building by the ECLF, perhaps most of the families could have fled away leaving their community, but however in such kind of economic scenario, the Zaka community is surviving.

Since the ECLF spearheaded peace in Masvingo province, it is certain that Zimbabwe can greatly improve in the economic arena.

To add more, SDG 16 of peace, justice and strong institutions tell that communities in Zaka have embraced ECLF's peacebuilding work. This has been witnessed by peace dividends of community cohesion efforts coming up. To exemplify this, bridges have been constructed in Rwemhepo ward 5, and many other foot bridges in the district, clinics are under construction and these are the projects that were continued after CPMRT. Through the CPMRT and the capacity building of the LPCs in Zaka, villagers have learnt to shun hate and violence. Ultimately, the communities now see the need to work together transforming negative energies for development. Peace building has been witnessed in different ways in Zaka. It is a general understanding that Zaka district is known for crime, witchcraft and many other evil things. There has been an impact of peace building in this district as testified by the people on the ground. There has been a reduction of crime, and there is now an improvement in relationships, which was done through the management of conflicts by the community members despite differences in political affiliation. The promotion of peace and justice in Zaka is demonstrated by a cohesive society which can solve conflicts non-violently, hence development. Consequently, such a state can improve the nation and bring in durability of development for all.

Basing on the information from the Zaka community and the ECLF staff members, the ECLF has greatly changed individuals hence promoting sustainable peace from "within" and spreading to others. LPC members and counselors also testified that they have been changed in many aspects of life especially on their attitude and behavior. Individuals have managed to change their perspectives and have come to realize that at times perceptions exacerbate conflicts, as such it is very important to pursue truth in things and that a positive attitude always attracts peace and tranquility. This program is not about improving the economy and other things per se, but it is also designed to bring a total transformation in someone's life as testified in Zaka. The ECLF has also managed to tame the character of some of the individuals such that they become well-mannered as this is a hall mark for any emerging future leader. Actually, many of them have come to understand that a person is not defined by what is seen from him or her, hence in peace building, behind every human behavior there is a story.

Furthermore, some LPC members also confessed that they have been transformed and are now able to understand that conflict is everywhere and the solution is not a one size fit all, but a situational context. Since this program consists of church leaders, one pastor who is the former Provincial Focal Person (PFP), also praised the ECLF program as it had brought a new thinking in his life. He said that as a minister of the gospel, he has come to realize that the true work of his calling is right in the villages, communities, cities and not at the pulpit only. Basing on such facts, this part of this study clearly shows the position of the church in Zimbabwe which has been typically represented by the ECLF in Zaka.

However, not all of the conflicts were resolved. The reason is that people are born differently every day and conflict is inevitable. Unresolved conflicts still exist in Zaka, and such forums like the ECLF have a say in that. Conflicts are bound to happen as such there is need for continuous sensitization. Some people still believe in revenge more than building peace with their enemies. To exemplify this, the people in Zaka communities, have been tortured because of their political backgrounds. As such, it is not that easy for some of the victims to focus on the present and the future. What lies at the back of their mind is the past hurts, hence some people naturally cannot easily forgive. Nonetheless, peace building and development are not defined as a one-day thing, but it takes a long process for a community to live harmoniously and become well developed.

4.3 The Nexus between Peace and Development

The first question which comes in one's mind is that *“what is it that made people of Zaka community to develop in such a manner?”* One should bear in mind that the connection of peace building and development is mutual. Peace building is development, peace and development together agree and operate simultaneously. Peace without development is not durable and development without peace is unsustainable. This is seen in Zaka where the community has managed to tolerate the so called impossible in the society. Since the degree of normality varies, ECLF peace building has changed people's lives and they can live together with the worst people in the society. The link between peace and development is seen where the worst enemy becomes a best friend, where one's perpetrator becomes one's close relative, hence peace is development of the mind as well. Peace develops how people manage their conflicts in the society.

Lederach's theory (2003) states that the community should be proactive rather than reactive in reconciliation of the community. This theory concurs with what the ECLF has done in Zaka and

it has the positive and meaningful way to embrace humaneness and transform conflict into positive energy. Just like the ECLF did in Zaka, Lederach 's theory focuses on social change that transforms human interaction in social conflict from cycles of destructive relational evidence towards cycles of relational dignity and respectful engagement. This chapter fits well in this theory as it uses a holistic approach dealing with tangible things and not only paper work.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has laid out the results obtained from a sample of research carried out. This chapter has shown the analysis of the researcher on each of the questions and the scenario given by the people from the ground, particularly the community members of Zaka, LPC members, counselors, village head, the youth, ECLF facilitators and ECLF staff. The questionnaire guide is attached at the back. The elderly respondents only answered a few questions by summarizing what they knew about the ECLF and its contribution to sustainable development in Zaka. Nevertheless, this chapter has proven that peace and development are intertwined and the aspect of peace and development is mutually understood. Therefore, the ECLF's peace building work is of relevance in as much as the SDGs in Zimbabwe, Zaka are concerned. Both parties were engaged and consulted to contribute and share their ideas about the ECLF peace building work in Zaka. Finally, this chapter has clearly shown the link between the ECLF peace building work in Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo in Zaka and the seven SDGs which were selected among the 17 targeted in 2030. Hence, promoting sustainable peace and development among the Zimbabweans.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, LESSONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the summary and the conclusions of this paper, the challenges encountered, lessons learnt and recommendations that are suggested for future research. As stated in chapter one, the purpose of this study was to examine and explore the relationship between the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum, and the Sustainable Development Goals in Zimbabwe, specifically in Zaka of Masvingo Province. This chapter shows that this study has actually advocated the engagement of the church in local peace building, in order to promote sustainable development in Zimbabwe. This chapter will first explore the gaps that have been identified in development work without peace. Above all, objectives will be revised and to find out if they are achieved as well.

5.1 Gaps Identified in Developmental Work without Peace

There are some gaps which have been identified in development work done in the absence of peace building. These gaps are historically traced and have even affected the Zaka community before it worked with the ECLF. The subject at hand seeks to explore that development was once done, but it was not achieved due to the lack of peace. Hence peace, remains the heart of any development work. Initially, Zaka district, as an example, has many stories to tell before the introduction to peace building.

There was once the establishment of developmental projects such as borehole drilling, poultry projects and many others in Zaka. The World Vision is a typical partner which has poured lots and lots of money in support of these projects. However, the gap identified is the quarrel which led to a sour relationship between community members and the leadership and also among themselves. Development was not durable because there was hatred, grudges and people were not at peace. Imagine two brothers who have not been communicating for five good years, and it happens that they are given a project to run together, the possibility is that the project may not last because the two cannot work together. This is even supported by the reflection in the book of Amos 3:3 when it reads “can two work together unless they are agreed?” As such, unresolved conflicts which are hidden have disturbed the development work in the communities.

The whole point here is that, if people are not sensitized about peace and justice, life becomes unfair and unjust. Resources are not fairly distributed. In Zaka, community members testified that during the period of CARE, resources like food stuff was not equally shared, hence there was only the survival of the fittest. This means that those in high positions could not share with those in lower positions. However, what matters most is the relationship of a person with himself or herself. What kind of a person is that leader and does he have peace or not? Taking for instance, if a leader is hurting it is very easy for him or her to adopt a norm that everybody should be hurting just like him. In a scenario where there is no peace, leaders do not consider their followers in as much a life is politically, socially and economically concerned. If leaders lack peace within their inner-selves, there is social injustice.

More so, in a violent society, development cannot be durable especially if people are not united because of their status. It has been generally noted that since the level of life varies, the poor and the rich cannot work together because they do not have peace among themselves. What exists between them is hatred and perceptions. The poor are taken as outcasts, downtrodden, underdogs in such an environment and don't even exist in the eyes of the rich. In this case, communities in Zimbabwe are filled with different people from different backgrounds. Some are leaders and some are followers. By so doing, the poor have been underrated because of their status. In this case, the rich might not have been peaceful and they just thought of themselves, hence lacking love and unity. Considering this, the gap between the rich and the poor has widened and has dragged back development in Zimbabwe.

In addition, different political affiliation also led to unsustainable development. In the case of social gatherings and meetings in the society, the researcher found out that there have been clashes of interests and people tended to divert social issues to political ones and worse still fighting because of their differences. The kind of picture given only shows that the community at such a stage is not developed in terms of *Ubuntu* or *hunhu* meaning how to relate to one another. This way, it has been identified that the past political issues have actually planted graveyards instead of sustainable development. Since there was no peace, development practitioners have done contrary to what is expected. In actual fact, it has politically, religiously, economically and socially divided the Zimbabweans.

Development without peace has caused civil war in Zimbabwe, hence this is also reflected in the book of Matthew 3:3, where a brother has gone against a brother. As a case study, the Zaka community encountered such challenges. Before the peace program, there was hatred among family members and it was an eye for an eye. Instead of focusing on the project activity, people used to consider their colleagues according to what they like, where they belong and who they support. “*Unofarira mutambo upi? which team do you like most?*”. Such questions were asked diplomatically to find out where a person politically belongs. This caused tension among community members and development was not sustainable. Imagine the bridge in Rwemhepo ward today, was planned about five years ago. However, it remained premature because there was peace and unity and people were classifying themselves according to a certain political party. The thing is that the people in Zaka community did not understand the idea that peace and development go hand in hand, and it is very difficult to forge development where peace does not exist.

5.2 Summary of the key findings

The research was basing on the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum peace building work in Zimbabwe, Zaka district of Masvingo province, alongside the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically the selected ones. The relationship between ECLF and the SDGs has proven that sustainable development goals in Zimbabwe are only attainable in the presence of peace building.

The first chapter outlines the background and the problem that gave the writer the desire to carry out this study. It also explores research methodology and data collection, the aim and the targeted group in carrying out this research. The first chapter also justifies the reasons why the researcher found it worthwhile to carry out the study on the ECLF peace building work and the SDGs in Zimbabwe, in Zaka of Masvingo province. At the end it also reviews John Paul Lederach’s theory on peace building linking with development as a concept.

The second chapter analyses the ECLF, its history up to date, its social, religious and economic role in the ten provinces of Zimbabwe, including Masvingo province. This chapter also carries the highlights of the core activities of the ECLF which positively transformed the people in Zaka district. This chapter was compiled in order to understand generally about the ECLF and its role as a church forum in as much social issues are concerned in Zimbabwe.

The third chapter gives a brief discussion on the SDGs and also state the contribution of the ECLF to the seven selected SDGs which are: SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8 and 16. The research established that not all of the SDGs are in line the ECLF's peace building work in Zaka, but the seven mentioned above, which also gave birth to the findings attached at the end of this study. The study also established the framework of SDGs as a comparison of peace and development.

The fourth chapter carries this research to the heart of this dissertation as it shows the relationship between peace and development basing on the ECLF's peace building work in Zaka and the SDGs. The lack of peace has led to unsustainable development, thus this chapter focuses on the nexus of the concept of peace and development. This chapter also explores the phenomenological approach whereby the researcher got to ask the people from the grassroots in Zaka about the peace building work which resulted in sustainable development. Hence, this chapter clearly outlines Lederach's theory of peace building which focuses on the "seen" and not the "heard" (Lederach:2003). By so doing, paper work do not lead to sustainable development. The researcher is aware that the people of Zaka community were once involved in development activities which did not last because of the past unresolved conflicts. This chapter also fulfills the aim of this study of the position of the church on being active in peace building, social transformation and development.

5.2.2 Lessons learnt

As the study was progressing, the researcher drew some lessons which will be helpful in the future of the church and Zimbabwean community as represented by the ECLF, if they are addressed well. The researcher learnt that development is sustainable in a peaceful environment. This means that peace and development are inseparable and hence there can be no sustainable development without peace and no sustainable peace without development. Development does not mean infrastructure only, but it can manifest as unity, conflict resolution and reconciliation, hence a community can develop psychological. Also, this study has proven that poverty is also a barrier to development as it causes conflict of the stomach and becomes a major problem affecting communities in Zimbabwe.

5.2.3 Recommendation and Concluding remarks

The researcher recommends that the ECLF has to stand firm and to strengthen its relationship with the church and the community so that it remains apolitical. As such, it will be promoting more support on the prophetic role of the church in Zimbabwe for sustainable development. The researcher also commends the ECLF to continue to be inclusive so that everybody practices peace. In addition, since this forum is a church representative, the researcher urges that it has to operate not only on community and local level, but there is also need to sensitize policy makers, so that its programming becomes proactive rather than reactive.

Apart from this, the researcher greatly appreciates the peace building work done by the ECLF in Zaka, particularly Zibwowa, Rwemhepo and Chiromo wards. The ECLF made an impact and has strategically addressed the most difficult situation faced by many Zimbabweans. This forum has navigated a way in which the church can stand and continue building peace for sustainable development for all. Basing on the fact that Zaka district is famous about evil scenarios, the ECLF has managed to spearhead a peaceful environment where the majority is influenced to live peacefully and harmoniously. Though with some challenges noted in this study, the ECLF has promoted sustainable development and has left a mark that without the existence of peace the birth of development is complicated, hence part of the selected SDGs has been greatly achieved in Zaka, Masvingo province.

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APPENDIX A: Questionnaire Guide

I am Lindiwe Princess Maseko a student at Midlands State University. I am studying towards a degree in Theology and Religious Studies Honours Degree. I am carrying out a research on the relationship between the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum and the Sustainable Development Goals in Zimbabwe, with a special focus on Zaka of Masvingo province. Below are some questions that I have listed to get the information on this research particularly in Rwemhepo, Zibwowa and Chiromo wards. Your Contribution will be of great use to the success of this thesis and I assure you that this information is private and will be used for academic purposes only. Thank you in advance

PERSONAL DETAILS

SEX

Female

Male

AGE (TICK WHERE APPROPRIATE)

20-30

31-40

41-50

51-70

71+

POSTION (please indicate with a tick in the appropriate boxes)

Village Head

Counsellor

ECLF Facilitator

LPC Member

Youth

ECLF Staff

Member

Other(Specify)

Question 1. What comes in your mind when you hear about ECLF?

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.....

Question 2. What do you understand by the term(s);

a) Peace

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b) Development

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c) Sustainable peace and development?

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Question 3. How has the ECLF reduced poverty in your area?

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Question 4. How has the ECLF contributed to health and wellbeing in your area?

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Question 5. How has the ECLF promoted access to quality education in your area?

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Question 6. To what extent has the ECLF promoted gender equality and women empowerment?

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Question 7. How has the ECLF contributed to economic development, and how has it promoted sustainable peace and development in your area?

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Question 8. What were the common forms of conflicts in your area which you heard or witnessed before the intervention of the ECLF?

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Question 9. What were the strategies and mechanisms used by the ECLF to help community members to resolve and reduce conflicts in your area?

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Question 10. In your own opinion, what has been the impact of the ECLF program in your area?

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Question 11. What has changed in your life through the ECLF peace building support you received from the ECLF program?

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Question 12. In your own opinion, are there unresolved conflicts in your area after the ECLF intervention?

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Question 13. What challenges have the ECLF been facing in promoting sustainable peace and development in your area?

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Question 14. In short do you think the ECLF is of relevance?

.....

Question 15. What are your recommendations for the ECLF in pursuit for sustainable development?

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THANK YOU IN ADVANCE