THE PROCESS MODEL OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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ABSTRACT: *This paper is a contribution to the theory, principles and practice of conflict resolution. It takes on the task of publishing a model - a process model of conflict resolution – developed following a research into the resolution of an inter-ethnic conflict. We discussed the process model in terms of conflict resolution dynamics and practices. The discussion outlined the factors, processes and conditions which make resolution possible using the lessons drawn from our research into how one of Ghana's most intractable conflicts, the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict in the Volta Region, was resolved. The paper argued that conflict resolution should be understood as a process involving many dynamics including actors, issues, times, resources (finance) and conditions in the context where the conflict occurs. The model stresses the importance of resolving conflict through community structures, highlighting the importance of careful mapping of the conflict in order to identify the dynamics (issues and the actors) involved. We argued that conflict resolution should be approached as a multi-layered dynamic process where the latencies are interconnected, procedural and parallel. We argued that funding is an essential ingredient in conflict resolution as is timing of resolution efforts, trust building, long term commitment and capacity building (confidence building) and sensitivity to local context issues. We put forward the idea that conflict resolution is a multi-dimensional process involving a broad spectrum of actors, activities, processes, and resources.*

KEYWORDS: Process Model, Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Nkonya-Alavanyo, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

Methodologies for conflict resolution are in development across that world. The field is still young and active with many theories and propositions (Connolly, 2015; Hoffman, 2014). The research that informed the development of the model presented in this paper was carried out at the Nkonya-Alavanyo area of Ghana. Ghana, is a West African country that has a false image as a beacon of peace in the sub-region. There has not been any major upheaval that attracted international attention. However, a permanent feature of Ghana's history is the several intractable inter conflicts across the country (Tsikata and Seini, 2004; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007; Awinador-Kanyirige, 2014). Northern Ghana is particularly volatile and Brukum (1995) reported that there were about two million people affected by one of the conflicts. Discussions following that conflict led to the establishment of a National Peace Council whose responsibilities, according to Act 818, include to facilitate and develop mechanisms for conflict prevention (Awinador-Kanyirige, 2014).

The research examined the conflict resolution process in the Nkonya-Alavanyo area. The nature of the Nkonya.Alavanyo conflict is explicated in several works off scholarship (Gariba, 2015; Duah, 2014; Kpormasi, 2013; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007). Those works discussed that the conflict was one of Ghana's most intractable inter-ethnic conflicts. Prior to the eruption of the conflict the two communities co-existed. They were bound by years of inter-marriages. The people of Nkonya learnt and still speak the Ewe language as spoken by

the people of Alavanyo. As logic would have it, the reverse applies in the case of the people of Alavanyo. People in Alavanyo who have blood relations – mothers, fathers, children, grandchildren, uncles, aunties, nephews and cousins in Nkonya towns (Gariba, 2015; Duah, 2014; Kpormasi, 2013; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007). The same applies to the people of Nkonya. Years of conflict has broken those relationships. Relatives lived without any news of the welfare of the affine in the opposing communities. The nature of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict was such that some came to give spiritual interpretations: observers along the fronts hinted that since 1923, the conflict resurfaced every ten years with bloody consequences (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007). Everyone came to expert the conflict once ten years had elapsed since a period of re-escalations. Conscious efforts were made by both sides to prepare for an escalation; and in this way the least rumour of war resulted in re-escalation. This superstitious belief has been one factor which fuelled the conflict for many years. Although the conflict was originally over a small piece of land alleged profiteers engage in unprovoked skirmishes so that in the midst of the ensuing confusion they have a field day to harvest timber, bamboo, cola nuts and cocoa, fell palm trees for palm wine and also engage in the wild and ruthless looting of food crops, poultry, sheep and goats (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007). In 2001, the conflict assumed proportions unparalleled by past escalations (Gariba, 2015; Kpormasi, 2013; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007).

A Press Statement Issued by the Chiefs and Queen mothers of Nkonya and Alavanyo after a Three-Day Conflict Transformation and Peace Building Workshop Organized by the Nkonya – Alavanyo Conflict Mediation Committee summarised the effects of the conflict, noting that:

> *nothing positive has ever accrued from the conflict, rather sporadic violence, killings and maimings, fear, uncertainty, insecurity, tension, suspicion, hatred and bitterness have been our lot. …Our two traditional areas now suffer from socio-economic disintegration and live as though an iron curtain was erected between us. This is the plight of our communities who otherwise are closely related … Today, there is hunger and poverty in our [Nkonya-Alavanyo] communities because we are farmers who have denied ourselves access to land. We are no more able to sponsor our children in schools … Trade between the communities is no more possible and roads linking us with other towns have become impassable due to insecurity.*

Penu and Osei-Kufuor (2016) discussed the dynamics to include disappearances, abductions, raiding and looting of farms, food bans and the setting of fire to the forests and hilly slopes. Other neighbouring groups were almost drawn into the conflict on suspicion that they were giving moral support to opposing camps. One such group was the Akrofu people who were suspected of giving support to the Alavanyo people. The one kilometre stretch of road linking both communities was abandoned, overgrown with weeds and became impassable. With time both sides were indoctrinating their youth to see people from the opposing side as enemies that cannot be tolerated. A resolution passed by the Youth of Nkonya and Alavanyo described the era of the conflict as the dark period of violence and war which was associated with pain, suffering, killings, destructions and traumas when the door on fear, mistrust, hatred and violence was opened (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007). The past sporadic episodes of violence resulted in disruptions to socio-economic activity, insecurity, uncertainty and displacements (Gariba, 2015. The trend has serious foreboding for education in the area and the future of the

youth. Violence, disruptions and displacements have severely affected farming activities and the people were faced with hunger and poverty (Duah, 2014; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007).

There has been several attempts at resolution in the past. A report, Peace Building Initiatives in the Ho Diocese: Final Report on Mediation Efforts in the Nkonya-Alavanyo Conflict (130-003-1027 ZG) noted that there have been "persistent litigations in the law courts". Tsikata and Seini (2004) documented that some Nkonya even believed that "there was no land dispute in the area as it had been settled by the court of appeal in 1975" (p. 39). Yet the Alavanyo have never accepted any of the court rulings. They alleged that a colonial Grunner Map which shows that the disputed land belonged to the Nkonya is not sufficient evidence. However, since the Alavanyo traditional boundary demarcations are not tenable in law, the Nkonya had always had court rulings in their favour. Government efforts have also been ad-hoc. The efforts were uncoordinated and different governments introduced their own doses of ad-hoc measures rather than build on the efforts of their predecessors. Nkrumah's government in the 1950s and 1960s enforced the court decisions. The Alavanyo's resisted this. Several committees were set up in the 1990s with little success. The Provisional National Defence Council appointed a committee (The Aquah Committee) in 1992 to "investigate the dispute and advise the government as to solutions" (Tsikata and Seini, 2004:39). This committee never met. There were two reasons: (1) Agyeman Baidoo fell ill. (2) The secretary was from Nkonya side and his neutrality was questioned by the Alavanyo group. In the intervening period hostilities resumed in 1993. In 1995, the District Chief Executives of the two Administrative Districts (Hohoe and Jasikan) where the two belligerent groups were located entered the resolution attempts. They jointly appointed a committee (the Mireku committee) "to inquire into and resolve the dispute" (Tsikata and Seini, 2004). The committee met, and did produce a report. According to the paramount chief of Alavanyo, the Mireku committee concluded that "the implementation of the court's decision will not help to promote peace between the two traditional areas" (Tsikata and Seini, 2004). In 1997, the Alavanyo Youth Association called for a high powered committee to look into the dispute and resolve it once and for all, instead of waiting for hostilities to begin (Letter by Kwame Dzathor, vice president, Alavanyo Youth Association, *Ghanaian Times*, 15/11/97; Tsikata and Seini, 2004). The two sides have gone to court several times to seek redress, especially to settle the land dispute at the heart of the conflict. A rejoinder from an Nkonya citizen cited four (4) court cases between 1957 and 1980 which were decided in favour of the Nkonya (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007).

The literature is also replete with efforts at resolution (Gariba, 2015; Duah, 2014; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007). Since 1996, prominent individuals Dr. Kwabena Agyei, an Nkonya citizen, and William Kpende, and Alavanyo citizen decided to talk peace to the conflicting communities. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church (the dominant Church in the area) ensured that their members from the opposing communities celebrated all anniversaries together. The efforts of both the individuals and the church were largely uncoordinated. It did not target many of the key actors in the conflict. It therefore, had very little effect, if any, on the factors that could trigger re-escalation. In 2003, hostilities resumed. The scale of the escalation was traumatic. Lives were lost on a daily basis and Government troops were somewhat permanently stationed in the area to enforce peace (Penu & Osei-Kufuor, 2016; Kpormasi, 2013). There were occasional arrests, swoops and seizure of guns. The presence of troops also had its own contribution to the conflict. This problem was expressed by the then Member of Parliament for the area Dr. Kwabena Adjei who was reported to have given the example of "peace-keepers who were stationed in the area but who with time, gained

economic interests, hence losing focus and becoming part of the problems rather" (Gariba, 2015; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007). Appeals were made to the Moderator of the E.P. Church to find ways of resolving the problem. The individuals tried to talk peace in their respective communities and to their own people. This continued until an appeal was made by both parties for a mediation committee to be formed to help resolve the conflict.

About the research

The research that informed the paper was occasioned by two major events. First, in 2006, the Official Report of Parliamentary Debates (Wednesday, February 1, 2006: 240-253) indicated that the Parliament of Ghana admitted a Statement dedicated to the resolution of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. The Statement was hailed in Parliament that the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict was resolved in a manner that provides a 'shining example' and expected "all other areas which have conflicts to do likewise" (249). Kwawukume (2007:3) added that, the "lessons from the Alavanyo-Nkonya process have also show that the government cannot be relied on to bring peace between feuding communities". So the research was launched to examine the model that was used to resolve the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict so that the lessons can be documented for future generations. Several steps were involved in the processes leading to the development of the model that is being published in this paper. Second, the process used for the resolution of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict remained a myth as there were several unanswered nagging questions: 1) What conditions made the resolution possible? What considerations determined the resolution possible practices and choices? What specific steps led to the resolution? As a result, the scope of the research focused on understanding of the nature of the conflict, previous attempts at resolution and, the factors and conditions that have produced the armistice. Thus the research that informed the paper was designed to produce knowledge from which other conflict areas and researchers can draw useful lessons. As such there was a twine purpose: 2) it examined the conflict resolution process; and constructed the model of conflict resolution used which can be beneficial for the theory and practice of conflict resolution in Ghana.

The theoretical framework for the research was informed by several theoretical and conceptual frameworks, which we found both useful and inadequate in explaining the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict resolution process. We benefitted from lessons presented in the Multi-track diplomacy framework developed by Louise Diamond and John W. McDonalds (1996). The schema of Multi-Track Diplomacy emphasize that state and non-state actors alike are seen as integral and complementary organs in conflict resolution; and calls for the bridging of all theories, approaches, frames and perspectives in conflict resolution. We also benefited from Harold Saunders' (1999) *Public Peace Process* which targets the use of sustained dialogue to transform racial and ethnic conflicts. The public peace process theory is based on the assumption that sustainable implementation of conflict resolution work depends on public consent and involvement. We also benefited from William Ury's (1999) concept of *the Third Side* in which citizens or civil society can constructively contribute to conflict resolution acting as provider, bridge-builder, equalizer, mediator, healer, witness and peacekeeper as they move through and within the field of the conflict resolution. In reflecting further on this work to present a model, we draw from some of our own scholarly works of to define our thinking and theorisation (Adzahlie-Mensah, Golo and Gyamfuaa-Abrefa, 2016; Adzahlie_mensah, 2010; Benson 2007). Although these works have to do with conflict prevention they provided important lessons about actor mapping and engagement during

situations of conflict. they informed us about process issues in conflict and conflict dynamics that are important to conflict resolution.

The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict resolution process

The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict resolution process was examined using the extant model gleaned from the literature and theoretical frameworks (see Diamond and McDonalds, 1999; Saunders, 1999). Critical considerations included actor analysis and how the different actors managed their difficult relationships towards creating real dialogue. The main concern was to identify how blame was transformed into responsibility and enemies into partners. Critical to that was how the resolution process was managed including how practical dynamics related to the conflict were dealt with. The analysis revealed several things including

a) The conflict resolution process was steered by a Mediation Committee (MC). The MC was formed in response to a petition from both parties calling on the government "to intervene in resolving the age-old conflict that has disrupted life and living in our communities" (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007). The parties were asked to propose names of individuals who they wish to intervene. The names were to be mutually acceptable. The Seven Member Committee comprised three clergymen, two traditional rulers, a representative of the Volta Region Coordinating Council (VRCC) and a High Court judge. The VRCC representative also acted as Secretary to the Committee. The basic selection criterion was neutrality and acceptability to both parties though there was a consideration of the status of the individuals involved. For example, Mama Adokua Asigble was the Queen Mother of Tefle and has no interest in issues in the Nkonya-Alavanyo area because they are miles away from her jurisdiction. At the same time, her name could easily come up because she worked as a Commissioner of the National Commission for Civic Education. Her status as an Executive Officer of the National Commission on Civic Education made her acceptable as a capable personality who could be trusted. The Chairman of the Committee was the Moderator (National Head) of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, which has members in both Nkonya and Alavanyo. The other two clergymen were Diocesan Bishops of the Catholic Church in the Volta Region. The Krachi Wura is a paramount Chief of the Krachi Traditional Area. Yet the MC could not start work immediately after inauguration because of three reasons: 1) government's focus was on national elections – presidential and parliamentary; 2) lack of financial resources; 3) the MC members lacked the technical experience in conflict resolution of such a complex scale as in the Nkonya-Alavanyo situation. The situation continued for more than six months (July 2004 to February 2005). Work started in February, 2005 when the committee received some support from the Catholic Relief Services through the Ho Catholic Diocesan Peace Building Team.

b) Various strategies were adopted by the committee in the resolution process. The first step was a needs assessment and conflict mapping exercise. This strategy helped to identify the issues, interests at stake and the factors which affected previous resolution efforts. Following on that the MC drew up strategies to approach the conflict resolution process. The MC was expanded to include eminent representatives of both communities and experts in peace building. As a second step, the MC established structures through which it ensured that it was in constant touch with the belligerent communities. The structures included Mediation Team (working as a consultative forum that discussed strategies for resolving the conflict than a mediation team), Five-

member Consultative Committees in both communities, Influential individual Community Peacesetters and the Ho Catholic Diocesan Peace Building Team (CDPBT). The structures became implementing bodies, which implemented 'Peace Plans' and decisions of the MC in the Nkonya-Alavanyo area.

The Consultative Committees were selected by the communities themselves. They were later brought together to form a Joint Consultative Committee (JCC). The members of the JCC later protested that the word *Joint* should be removed because it tends to portray that they were two different groups. Consequently, the two Consultative Committees became one under the name Consultative Committee (CC). The CC members were used as "foot soldiers". This is because the members of CC were resident citizens in their respective communities and therefore interacted with the people on daily basis. Since the Membership included respected leaders of the communities, their views were respected by their people. They were responsible for educating their people on the need to embrace peace and use dialogue in resolving the conflict. It worked among the people on daily basis to resolve all threats and manage rumours.

The Community Peacesetters included all clergymen resident in the Nkonya – Alavanyo area. All Pastors of Churches in the area were identified to be part of this group. Their task was to educate their congregations on the need to embrace peace and avoid hostilities. With their positions as respected men of God, they made significant impact on the lives of the people particularly in transforming attitudes.

The CDPBT played the role of a "strategic Planning Committee". The team provided technical direction to the MC. It also developed the various programmes and activities that were followed by the MC for the resolution of the conflict. The team also developed proposals and source initial funding for the work of the MC. It provided facilities and materials used by the MC. The team had two Reverend Fathers of the Church who have been previously trained in Peace Building and Conflict Resolution. The two became useful resource persons to the resolution process. In fact, in the words of Bishop Lodonu, the CDPBT was "the strategic planning committee" because it provided various forms of technical direction which were used for the resolution of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. They provided technical direction to the work of the MC to ensure that things were not left to chance. The CDPBT experts helped to co-ordinate the activities of the MC and as well provided some training to its members. It was CDPBT that brought the MC in touch with WANEP in recognition of the need for the other members to receive some basic training in conflict resolution. In short, the Peace Building Team was the main architect of the conflict resolution work which was done by the MC in the Nkonya-Alavanyo area.

c) The third step to the resolution of the conflict involved capacity building. It centred on efforts to update the knowledge and skills of the members in the various structures. The training was designed to provide professional approach to the mediation process with the understanding that conflict resolution is delicate and multi-dimensional. The training for the structures was to make the members of the structures skilled negotiators. They were exposed to basic skills which facilitates conflict resolution. The West African Network for Peace (WANEP) provided training, to the various structures and the MC itself. The trainings were mainly in the form of workshops and

seminars. The training sessions equipped the Committee members and the members of the various structures with the art of conflict resolution.

d) The next step involved workshops and seminars for various interest groups involved in the conflict. The trainings were organized for and attended as follows:

1. Training of Chiefs, Council of Elders, Queen mothers and Opinion Leaders

2. Training of Women Leaders from Nkonya and Alavanyo Traditional Areas

3. Training of Youth Leaders and War Leaders of Nkonya and Alavanyo

4. Briefing and sensitization forum for Nkonya and Alavanyo citizens resident in Accra, Toronto and New York City. They were believed to be the people who provided funding and logistics for their factions.

These workshops were not smooth meetings. Initially, the participants came with anger, pain and frustrations. The various groups shared their experiences during the conflict. Individuals were given the opportunity to tell their own experiences. Those sessions were characterized by emotions of vengeance, anger, hatred and unpalatable words. In anticipation of the vexation, anger and strong emotions that characterizes first face-to-face meetings steps were designed to address the fears entertained by the various groups. Participants to the training workshops/seminars were taken through exercises in Group Dynamics. The objective was to develop an attitude of 'seeking first to understand'. The parties were taught that it was necessary to listen as people share their intentions, emotions and pains. They were taught that listening to the other side was the only way to get over antagonism, create real dialogue and develop positive relationships. In terms of contents, the workshops focused on themes such as *Understanding Conflict, Conflict Styles and Stages*, *Mediation and Restorative Justice*; *Conflicts and Implications of Conflict etc.* Restorative Justice presented participants with a responsibility - that true justice can only be achieved if victims, offenders and the entire community accept responsibility and decide to put things right.

At the end of each workshop training participants passed resolutions affirming support for the resolution of the conflict. Follow-up trainings were purposed to deepen reconciliation. It enabled the MC to gauge the concessions made by the Chiefs, Elders and other key players in the conflict so as to refine and sharpen the commitments necessary for lasting peace. At the initial stages, the training sessions were characterized by hostile relations and derogatory comments. However, tempers calmed with time. Later, friendly relations developed with deeper understanding. Performance review workshops were organised. The participants at the workshop were Chiefs and Council of Elders, the Queen mothers and Elders, the Youth Representatives, Women Leaders who are citizens but resident outside the conflict area and who have a stake in the conflict. The members of the structures also participated in the workshops. The West African Network for Peace Building (WANEP) facilitated the workshops.

At a workshop on the 29th of June, 2005 "out of their own volition and conviction" the parties made a declaration to cease all hostilities and restore peace and good neighbourliness. Since then hostilities ceased. Later the youth vowed never to

engage in any warfare or violence. They bemoaned the "dark period of violence and war" and pledged to "become emissaries of peace and . . . work tirelessly for peaceful co-existence". The youth declared: *We shall no more entertain the war protagonist from within and outside our communities . . . We cherished peace we love peace and we shall work for peace.* During the Performance Review Workshop a Chief declared that "war was over forever". He advised those who invested in guns and ammunition to re-directed their resources into peace and development. Significantly, the MC did not take such gains to mean, the resolution of the conflict.

e) Trust and confidence building visits and activities were organised to the communities. They were not haphazardly done. For each visit, the MC was sure that the CC and the Chiefs have worked to prepare the people for the visit. The Chiefs were visited on regular basis. During the process emerging issues were discussed and updates received. People from both communities signed a Peace Pact. The one kilometre road linking the communities was re-opened. A cross section of Chiefs and people from both communities embarked on a Peace Match to celebrate the end of hostilities and to signify the beginning of friendly relations and interactions. Monthly review meetings were organized to assess the progress of the resolution process and the extent to which the Chiefs and people of both communities were committed to the concessions they were making at each stage of the resolution process. Participants included the chiefs and opinion leaders of both communities, and the members of the structures. The MC worked with Management Strategies for Africa, a Non-Governmental Organisation which has programmes for capacity building in post conflict communities. After gaining clearance from the United Nations Development Programme to work in the Nkonya-Alavanyo area, the MC ensured that the activities of the group were mainstreamed into its broad strategies.

The point is that conflict resolution in the Nkonya-Alavanyo area was not an easy adventure. The MC could not have achieved it as single entity. The collaboration with other groups and the participatory approach to the process contributed significantly to the final resolution. The process of selecting the committee was also a crucial factor. The initiatives of community leaders who called for the establishment of the MC and the multi-stake approach was also essential. Therefore, community ownership of the process was crucial to the resolution process.

The Process Model of conflict resolution

The examination of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict resolution process revealed a model that can be presented as a lesson for other conflict resolution efforts in Ghana and elsewhere. The model focuses on process - the steps to be followed in resolving a conflict. The process is represented schematically below:
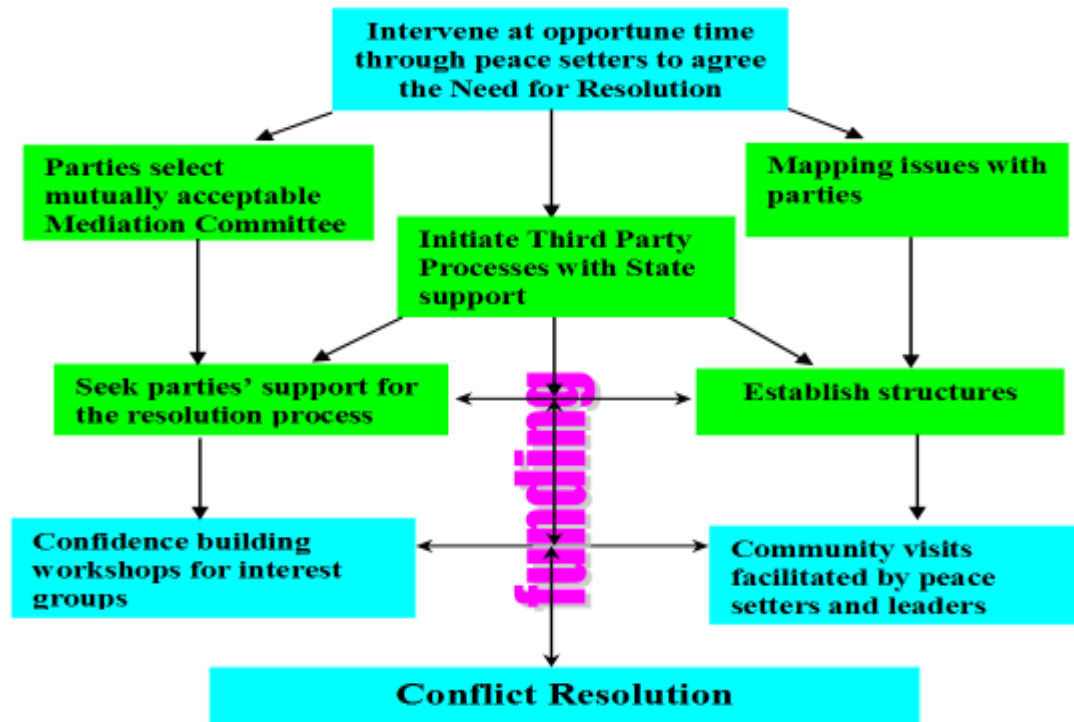
Source: Author's Conception

The model presents conflict resolution as a multi-dimensional process, involving a broad spectrum of actors, activities and resources. It shows that several things are important in conflict resolution.

Timing of resolution efforts: The model proposes that resolution efforts must start at an opportune time. Opportune time refers to what Zartman called 'ripe moment'. Opportune time refers to when peacesetters within the belligerent communities are identified. When they are seen to be making efforts within their groups. Resolution efforts must accelerate with the support of peacesetters. The substance of the proposals for a solution as the key to a successful resolution of conflict, a growing focus of attention shows that a second and equally necessary key lies in the timing of efforts for resolution (Zartman, 2008).Parties resolve their conflict only when they are ready to do so–when alternative, usually unilateral, means of achieving a satisfactory result are blocked and the parties feel that they are in an uncomfortable and costly predicament. At that ripe moment, they seek or are amenable to proposals that offer a way out. The concept is based on the notion that when the parties find themselves locked in a conflict from which they cannot escalate to victory and this deadlock is painful to both of them (although not necessarily in equal degree or for the same reasons), they seek an alternative policy or Way Out (Zartman, 2008). However, timing also speaks to the fact that conflict resolution is a complex process. It takes time. Getting enemies to one table takes time. Trust building between or among enemies takes time. Bringing people together, building trust, and developing shared ownership takes time, but it is always time well spent.

Local ownership of the process: A resolution process must be locally owned and led. The process of overcoming mistrust and deep divisions can be a difficult one. The model proposes that local actors should be empowered to establish independent institutions, which can continue to address root causes of conflict and promote peace over the long term. Weber (2011) explains that local ownership begins by ensuring that priorities are determined locally. Community peacesetters are people within the belligerent groups who are opposed to violence although they share the concerns of their people. Community peacesetters are indispensable as they have grounded knowledge of the main causes of the conflict and have deep knowledge of central concerns of their people. They have very good knowledge of the leadership and political culture driving the conflict, the sponsors the conflict and conflict profiteers. Community peacesetters include influential people who believe that without peace their communities might suffer destruction, their businesses will suffer or lives might be lost unnecessarily. While they think their people are justified in fighting, they believe that conflict is not the best way to deal with differences. Community peacesetters have access to the corridors of power within their communities and are usually respected people because of the principles they share. What that means is that conflict resolution is not possible without the support of the belligerents who must first agree to resolve their central differences through peaceful processes. The belligerents must take control over the process by selecting a mediation team that is mutually acceptable as a neutral group. It is crucial that time, space, and processes exist to promote dialogue that can lead to a consensus-based resolution. For a conflict resolution process to be credible and durable, the voices of people from across society must be heard and incorporated in the process so that the resolution unites rather than divides. Local actors are more likely to take ownership of the solutions if they participate in defining the problem. Similarly, if people feel a sense of ownership of the resolution process they are more likely to protect it and exercise their duties towards achieving positive peace. A conflict resolution process cannot be imposed from outside. All parties must be included in the process. The argument of the model is that all relevant groups in society must be involved in the dialogue and the priority-setting process. The corollary is that actors from each social group are instilled with a sense of responsibility for the resolution process. Exclusion or marginalization of certain actors breeds resentment and sows the seeds for renewed violence. A resolution process can be one of the defining moments in intractable conflicts. The resolution is more likely to collapse if some key actors are excluded from the process.

Building Trust: The third issue is building trust, and it is the most difficult outcome to achieve. Although intangible, trust is crucial to conflict resolution in many ways. First, trust gives legitimacy to the resolution process and helps individuals and groups remain engaged on the long path toward lasting peace. It helps parties look at each other as collaborators who are in a difficult conversation with a common goal. It helps to remove enemy images and the parties are willing to invite ideas from the other person. Second, the parties are certain that the conversation is worth having. Third, the parties are comfortable to share their points of view, intentions and feelings. They are able to talk about the future, what can happen differently and frame their relationship together. They are able to suggest what the other party can do and what they can do to help. Thus once trust is built, resolution is possible. The parties seek to understand each other's point of view. They listen more and talk less. They seek collective solutions than make demands. So, how is trust built? Trust must be generated as a product of a consistent, daily commitment to and application of a common vision. It must be built through collective engagement on issues, large and small. It cannot be imposed, imported, or bought. It must emerge slowly and sometimes reluctantly (Weber, 2011).

Long term commitment and financial investments: The fourth issue in the model is a view of conflict resolution as a long-term commitment with financial implications for all planned activities. Conflict resolution is not a simple matter. It requires commitment to engage over a long period of time to help people get over their central incompatibilities and the plethora of additional issues that have defined their relationships. There are many stages for individuals and groups. It will require time, space and process for individuals and communities to get to levels of rationality where they can sit at the same table to discuss their future with people they have regarded as 'enemies'. Lots of thinking has to be done and many activities must be undertaken. Conflict resolution, therefore, is a product of long term investment in terms of man hours, money and social engineering. There are no shortcuts. The model views conflict resolution as a participatory and deliberative process, which must be designed to allow for time to heal, to reframe enemy images and to build trust. It is therefore vital that those designing, implementing, and supporting a resolution process do not become so focused on arriving quickly at the destination that they overlook the importance of the journey. Parties in conflicts often demonize the other, developing 'enemy images' or even 'dehumanizing' the other side (Burgess, 2003; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007). All forms of communication between or among parties break down. The break in communication leads to mutual suspicions, distrust and hostility (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2007). It is impossible to work on such long term repairs without funds. So, conflict resolution cannot be carried out without funding. Money is an essential issue. Travels, meeting expenses and accommodation costs are critical. Training programmes require investment of funds to hire the services of professionals in the field.

Confidence building workshops: Other structures should be established in the communities because belligerents have elite groups that influence their actions and inactions in respect of the conflict. This model preferred the term confidence building workshops. Confidence building because intervening to resolve a conflict is not a task for the weak hearted. It requires being tough, patient and resilient. It requires being pragmatic and confident to approach hardened leaders whose thoughts and philosophy have been defined by conflict situations. Self-confidence is required to navigate the complex dynamics, and often time depressing and provocative scenarios, in a conflict situation. People involved as community peacesetters and negotiators from the parties need confidence building workshops to make them skilled negotiators among their people. This ensures community ownership of the mediation process. The mediation team then uses this group as foot soldiers whose task is to be in constant touch with their people to disseminate information about peace. This communication is important to dispel rumours of preparations for war in the opposing camp. The mediation team is concerned with developing new strategies, systematically designed either as support strategies to be implemented simultaneously or as follow up activities to resolve the conflict. However, at the same time there is need to collaborate and to integrate the efforts of all groups and individual peace agents into a common plan. This ensures proper co-ordination. The model shows that funding is an essential ingredient in conflict resolution. It could be sourced from various sources.

Sensitivity to local context issues: The issues in each conflict are as different as are attitudes and interests of actors. Therefore, no universal template, no single approach is applicable to all contexts. A resolution process should include conflict mapping to identify the dynamics of the conflict in order to understand positions being held by the parties. The model provides a planning tool that gives an overview of the variety of processes (including tasks and structures/institutions) that may be required. The central thesis is that conflict resolution should be viewed in terms of the process rather than simply the result. This model is an

ongoing process, not unalterable. It needs to be examined more critically and developed further as we generate new expertise and learn new lessons from the field. Thus the model is a living proposal that will be relevant across the years.

RECOMMENDATION

The interpretations of the process model indicate that conflicts are not resolved by a simple calculation. Conflict resolution would not occur either because the mediation team remained neutral in the process or that the mediation committee members were carefully selected. Also, conflict resolution is not merely a painstaking process involving different segments of society – conflict resolution experts, the clergy, members of Parliament, chiefs, youth, women, community elders, citizens in the diaspora, government agencies, NGOs etc as delineated within the public peace process of Saunders (1999) or the Mutli-track diplomacy approach of the Diamond and McDonald (1999).

The knowledge in the process model is that timing of resolution efforts is crucial. It involves a careful mapping of the conflict in order to identify the dynamics involved. This would help identify community peacesetters, the wide range of actors and issues involved in the conflict (Adzahlie-Mensah et al., 2016; Higgins, et al. 2015). Timing has two aspects. First, in situations of intractable conflicts, identifying the ripe moment, what we called the 'opportune time' to intervene is important as discussed in conflict prevent work (Adzahlie-Mensah et al., 2016; Security Council, 2015; Zartman, 1989). Any conflict resolution process must happen at the right time in order to be successful. Second, timing involves the acknowledgement that the process would be long and arduous. This kind of timing approach is important to commitment, preparation and effective engagement.

The second part of our theorisation in the model is that the conflict resolution process should be participatory to facilitate community ownership and leadership. Initial actors would work with community leaders to select a mediation team that is mutually acceptable to the belligerents. The purpose of this is not to get belligerents to respect the mediation committee. Committee itself was belligerents' own creation. It is to allow them own the process. This is to ensure the belligerent communities trust and work with the committee. The mediation committee should adopt a facilitation approach to the entire process. The parties are only to be guided to suggest solutions through mutual agreement. The task of the mediation committee is to identify, train and work through structures in the communities so that communication can be facilitated. The Committee would identify and facilitate access to resources such as experts that should support and guide both communities to work their relationship together. It would provide logistic support in planning meetings, identify funding sources and facilitating access to the corridors of State power. It would be a coordinating centre where all other initiatives geared towards conflict resolution in the area are managed. This would avoid the situation where there would be patchworks of activities by different groups of organisations, groups and individuals. All funding from state and non-state actors aimed at supporting the resolution process would be channelled through the Committee. The Committee may be in charge of fundraising in support of the resolution efforts.

Community ownership is important and should work together with education and capacity building. A central proposition of the model is that the collective willingness of the parties to embrace peace was the strongest pillar which carried the resolution. In fact, the conflict could

not have been resolved without the collective willingness of the people to embrace the resolution. All stakeholders need to be identified and engaged in the process as strategic allies. Structures must be created and the belligerents should be made to take ownership of the process. The generality of the people in their leadership need to engage in and with the process. The youth, women and citizens in the diaspora should be engaged in the process.

Capacity building should include education on effects of conflict in the community and the perceptions of their communities. To facilitate community ownership and engagement in the process, capacity building for belligerents to develop resilience is crucial. Capacity building should include trust building and confidence building that is essential to transform enemy images into positive friendship imagery of the 'other' party involved in the conflict. Here information dissemination is crucial in averting the spread and threat of rumours and the attendant conflict escalating effects. Information dissemination that is essential in paving the way for good faith bargaining based on genuine dialogue, understanding, trust and reconciliation. Training and sensitisation workshops are essential to guide the belligerents to find ways of resolving the conflict. Sensitisation should focus educating communities about how conflict creates a cyclic process which facilitates impoverishment, hatred, slaughtering of people and bleak future (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2010; Adzahlie-Mensah & Amenuvor, 2008). It should address how conflict erects a partition between or among groups and damages friendly relationships; how it gives belligerent communities a demeaning - label as killers and how this creates a stigma around people from the belligerent communities in the eyes of other people; and how such communities suffer an undeclared social isolation.

A central thesis of the model is that that government cannot be relied on to resolve a conflict. In the same way, government funding alone cannot be depended upon to support conflict resolution process. Financial sources to support the conflict resolution process need to be diversified. Funding should be sourced from a wide range of track two actors – religious groups, non-governmental organisations and citizen groups as well as individuals. Given the dynamics involved in intractable conflict situations one set of issues that is closely related to conflict resolution work is post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. The resolution is one process and reconstruction is needed to consolidate peace. Conflict researchers and practitioners need to focus on how post-conflict reconstruction work. Reconstruction work should focus on transforming relationships and supporting peacebuilding initiatives that are necessary to ensure that peace is maintained. In this models conflict resolution is the beginning of peace building initiatives. Our proposition which we and other researchers need to research further is that where conflict resolution is not supported effectively in the ways delineated in this model, there is the likelihood of return to conflict.

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, we have made the argument that conflict resolution is a process that is multi-faceted and arduous. We pushed the idea that the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict resolution process provides important lessons. We argued that conflict resolution should be approached as a multi-layered dynamic process where the latencies are interconnected, procedural and parallel. We argued that funding is an essential ingredient in conflict resolution as is timing of resolution efforts, trust building, long term commitment and capacity building (confidence building) and sensitivity to local context issues. We highlight that, the resolution of conflict is not a simple calculation or rationalization. It involves a careful mapping of the conflict in

order to identify the dynamics involved. We stress the importance of resolving conflict through community structures. Different actors – government, opinion leaders, non-governmental organisations, youth groups, community peacesetters, and women groups - considered as stakeholders need to be identified and engaged in the process as strategic allies. Citizens in the diaspora who contribute to conflict escalation must be engaged in the resolution process. All stakeholders need to be identified and engaged in the process as strategic allies. Community peacesetters need to be identified to make belligerents take ownership of the process with a commitment to resolve their central differences in a peaceful way. Structures must be created and the belligerents should be made to take ownership of the process. But the structures must be clearly identified and trained to work. The youth and citizens in the diaspora constitute a critical factor in any conflict resolution effort. Belligerents should select a mutually accepted mediation team and have the declared intension to support the team to succeed. Constant funding and communication are essential elements for any effective conflict resolution process. The mediation committee should adopt a facilitation approach to the process. The process should be participatory and involve all segments of society. The resolution team would not exclusively depend on government for funding. The team would not depend on the courts to resolve ethnic conflicts. The process model is recommended for conflict resolution, particularly in situations of intractable ethnic conflicts.

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