

Gender Analysis

of
Zimbabwe's
Global
Political
Agreement



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edited by Teresa Mugadza

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Introduction

The Global Political Agreement (GPA), signed by the three political parties represented in Zimbabwe's Parliament following the 2008 harmonised elections, has been the subject of significant analysis.

In this gendered analysis, the GPA will be examined as a peace agreement.¹ While there have been various contentions on the nature of the GPA, there is no doubt that it is a peace agreement. The GPA has often been labelled a power-sharing agreement because it was signed by the three political parties. The proponents of this position state that the GPA was never really just about the outcome of the harmonised elections, but had been an ongoing negotiated process, with negotiations having started as early as 2004.

However, given that the GPA brought an end to the hostilities that followed the 2008 harmonised elections, in particular the Presidential election, it is not an overstatement to say that the GPA is a peace agreement. The ongoing inter-party negotiations provided a platform to expedite the process of managing the aftermath of the harmonised elections and provided a solution to a potentially explosive civil situation in the country. Recognising the GPA as a peace agreement also provides broader scope to consider gender implications therein, which would otherwise be limited to women's equal and equitable participation and sharing of powers among the political parties, without consideration of other societal issues. Thus, analysis of the GPA as a peace agreement provides room to evaluate the post-conflict situation in Zimbabwe from a gender perspective, with particular regard to the proposed institutions and mechanisms for making the transition from conflict to peace, and how these respond to the experiences of women both during and after the conflict.

Close examination of the GPA shows that its drafters were conscious of the fact that they were drafting a peace agreement. A comparison of the preamble to the GPA and the preambles of peace agreements² of coun-



tries that underwent conflict in the sub-region read similarly, with several alluding to ending conflict and intolerance, and providing for peace and rebuilding of society. Against this background, this paper seeks to provide a gender analysis of the GPA from the perspective of the participation of women in peace building and conflict resolution, and how peace agreements facilitate or hinder gender equality in post-conflict situations. This analysis will therefore address the following issues:

- Gender implications of the provisions of the GPA generally and, in particular, opportunities for the advancement of gender equality and women's participation.
- The relevance and importance of women's participation in national processes, particularly processes related to peace building and security.
- Recommendations on how to maximise opportunities for gender equality as provided for in the GPA.

Analysis of the provisions of the GPA

Overall, given the under-representation of women in the negotiating for and drafting of the GPA, the document must be commended for being relatively gender aware and gender sensitive.³ However, it is inconsistent and there are instances in which there is almost total oversight of the experiences of women in formulating desired post-conflict scenarios. Against this background, a clause-by-clause analysis of the GPA is necessary to project its total effect on gender equality in post-conflict Zimbabwe.

Preamble

The preamble, as the statement of intent by its signatories, lays a foundation for the GPA's aspirations to justice, fairness, participation by all,

equality and other democratic values. Importantly, the preamble recognises among its key values ‘... equality, non discrimination and respect of all persons without regard to race, class, gender... [as] the bedrock of our democracy and good governance’. The values recognised in the preamble indicate the intentions of the drafters of the GPA with regard to gender equality. The preamble also states a determination to create a society that promotes equality, fairness and justice. However, it does not make specific reference to ‘sex’ as a ground upon which one cannot be discriminated against. This is critical because gender and sex, though related, certainly do not produce the same impact where they are applied as a basis for discrimination. The exclusion of sex as grounds for discrimination suggests an oversight of the broad experiences of women and discrimination, in particular during conflict, and the impact women continue to experience even after conflict has ended.⁴ Despite this oversight, which could be explained by the fact that, in some instances, gender and sex have been used interchangeably, the preamble provides a broad framework on which the aforementioned values are inferred in all the other provisions of the GPA.

Article I: Definitions

This article defines the parties to the agreement and the two concepts of ‘parties’ and ‘government’ in the context of the GPA. It does not provide definitions for any other terms found in the agreement. The definitions section also infers that the GPA is a political power-sharing agreement; it appears to imply that it is only about political parties, to the exclusion of the people of Zimbabwe. The definitions are very limited. It would have been useful for the drafters to consider defining key terms used in the GPA, in particular a definition ensuring that the general reference to all/ persons is understood to include women. Many scholars have noted that gender-neutral language in the formulation of rights is blind to the realities of women and men, and therefore tends to cater for men more than women. This is because societies are inherently patriarchal and, therefore,



tend to infer any right or privilege on men, who are more visible in the public arena, than women. This is often why women have to fight for their entitlement to rights that seemingly accrue to all, but are generally understood to be for men (e.g. the right to participate in national processes, such as being voted into representative office). However, if the preamble is understood to lay a foundation for the values of equality, fairness and justice without regard for gender, and despite the lack of gender-specific definitions, it can be reasonably inferred that the intent of the drafters was that the provisions of the GPA would apply equally to men and women.

Article II: Declaration of Commitment

This article speaks to the political parties' commitment to the creation of a lasting solution. However, the focus of the solution appears to be political and economic, to the exclusion of social issues. As a peace agreement, it could be argued that the focus of the GPA would be on political and economic issues, to the exclusion of the social agenda. The issue is that the social agenda was obviously impacted by the political turmoil and the resultant economic challenges. In the period 2000-2008, Zimbabwe experienced a reversal of some of the social progression that had taken place, particularly in the area of gender equality and the promotion of women's rights. Thus, for the political parties to focus on commitment to the political and economic agenda, to the exclusion of the social agenda, may suggest a lack of appreciation of the impact of the conflict on women and, therefore, a lack of commitment to reforming the post-conflict situation to advance gender equality. The social agenda is critical in the Zimbabwean context, given that the crisis in the country, while both political and economic, manifested in the breakdown of social services delivery and the general societal fabric. Some of the gains that women had achieved were overrun, such as the right to equal treatment in all spheres of life.



Article III: Restoration of Economic Stability and Growth

Article III speaks to economic restoration and stability. The GPA utilises a traditional approach in its proposals for economic recovery. There is no recognition in the formulation of the article of the experiences of the ordinary citizen, let alone women, with the economy. It appears that the section was crafted to deal with macro-economic restoration, without appreciation of the real-life situations of ordinary citizens. Overall, the article infers that the business of the economy is the preserve of sectoral economic actors, as represented by the proposed composition of the National Economic Council. There is no recognition of the importance or, indeed, the value of the informal sector in economic restoration and stability, even though that sector accounts for more than half of the country's employment force. However, the article states that the parties to the GPA commit to working to end poverty, food security and unemployment, which could be interpreted to include recognition of the participation of the ordinary person in the economy and, by extension, the rights of women to participate in and benefit from the country's economy, albeit in a convoluted manner.

Article IV: Sanctions and Measures

This article relates to the fact that Zimbabwe is under sanctions. It outlines the nature and impact of sanctions and restrictive measures against the country. There is no reference to the specific impact of sanctions on men and women, but rather a broad reference to the negative impact of the sanctions on the economy and the State. It is interesting that there is no reference to the real impact of sanctions on daily life. The article seems almost detached from the real lives of Zimbabweans under sanctions and the experiences of women as a result.⁵



Article V: Land Question

This is a key article as it speaks to the land question, which is a critical resource for the nation and its people. It is encouraging to note that this article, while addressing the key questions of ownership of and access to land by the majority, is one of the few articles in the GPA that is cognisant of the importance of chronicling the issue's history. Recognition of the political history of land lays a good foundation for comprehensive and specific proposals regarding ownership of land. For example, Article 5.8 states: 'Recognising the need for women's access and control over land in their own right as equal citizens.' This specific reference to the rights of women is both commendable and a classic example of gender-sensitive provision in the document. Article 5.9 extends the recognition of the right to land for all and, by inference, to women. Articles 5.9(c), (e) and (f) are in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Article 14(2) (g), which provides for access to land by women.

It is also noteworthy that, because the application of the law in Zimbabwe has not always protected women, there is a real possibility that there will be challenges for women related to issues of access, ownership and control of land due to the interpretation of policies and laws, despite gender-sensitive language in the GPA.

Article VI: Constitution

This article provides for the constitutional reform process. As with Article 5, it states the background to the constitutional reform as envisioned by the parties to the GPA. In its preamble, it states a determination 'to ensure ... the enhancement of full citizenship and the equality of women'. This is proof of the recognition that the current constitutional framework does not ensure full citizenship or the equality of women. Thus, this recognition and determination to use the proposed constitutional reform to address

inequality is progressive and sensitive to the realities of Zimbabwean women.

Sadly, in the proposed structure of the institution to take forward constitutional reform, there does not appear to have been any recognition of the different roles of women and men. In the aftermath of the 2008 elections, Parliament had fewer women than before. To assume that the proposed select committee leading the constitutional reform process would be sensitive to the need to ensure equitable representation of women and men on the committee was not just an oversight, but a blunder on the part of the drafters and the parties to the GPA. This is why the current leadership of the committee is all male, and there does not appear to be room for women MPs in the structure to meaningfully engage with their political parties or, indeed, influence the political processes related to the ongoing crafting of a new constitution. The structure and processes proposed in this article do not provide for women-specific forums or engagements in the constitutional reform process. It is a proven fact that women tend to defer to male views and opinions in public meetings and spaces, so the outcomes of outreach and stakeholder conferences are more likely to result from the voices of men, at the expense of women's voices and issues.

Article VII: Promotion of Equality, National Healing, Cohesion and Unity

This article addresses equality and provides for '... equal treatment of all regardless of gender ...' (Article 7.1). However, it is a hotchpotch article that also addresses issues of national healing, national unity and cohesion, tolerance and respect, the Diaspora, etc. The parties to the GPA created a good starting point by clearly articulating the question of equality. It may have been useful to expand on the meaning of equality for women and men in the post-conflict context. However, this article became the place to address all those contentious issues that could not be addressed anywhere else in the agreement, thereby weakening the initial import of Article 7.1.



The article also addresses the question of national healing. Sadly it is only addressed in passing in Article 7.1(c). There have been many issues related to politically motivated violence in Zimbabwe's past that necessitate provision for a comprehensive national healing and cohesion mechanism, especially for women who bore the brunt of the conflict in 2008.

The article also provides for the creation of '... an environment of tolerance and respect among Zimbabweans ... with dignity and decency irrespective of age, gender ...'. Given that healing and cohesion are not clarified, there is a danger that it will be difficult to implement anything under this article, to the detriment of women who suffer violence, discrimination and intolerance disproportionately. From the perspective of improving women's lives, therefore, this article could have articulated the various concepts referred to therein.

Article VIII: Respect for National Institutions and Events

While on the face of it this may be an article that one skims over, there are only two sections to this article, both of which address equality and participation of all. Article 8.1(a) states that, regardless of gender, etc., Zimbabweans must respect and observe national institutions, symbols, national programmes and events. Article 8.1(b) creates opportunities for all to participate in national programmes and events. This is a positive move as, by inference, it provides for all persons, including women, to participate in national processes such as elections or appointments to public office.

Article IX: External Interference

This is one of the clearly political articles that states how political parties intend addressing the question of external interference in the internal

affairs of Zimbabwe. It in no way shows connection to the realities of the common person. There is no mention of the effects of this interference on Zimbabweans in general and, therefore, no mention of the ordinary woman or man of Zimbabwe or the effects of external interference on their lives.

Article X: Free Political Activity

This article addresses free political activity by recognising the right of political parties to canvass and mobilise within the law. Unfortunately, it does not address the effect or the circumstances in which free political activity would take place. It is a fact that, in exercising free political activity, political processes and politicians interface with women differently, whether legally or not. For the article not to address the question of violations against women in the exercise of free political will is an affront. Women and men engage differently with political processes; women tend to suffer the negative impact of and participation in political processes, even within a particular grouping of which they are members. Women also tend to be excluded from meaningful participation in broader political processes, both within and across political parties. Sadly, in crafting this article, the parties to the GPA did not take into account the need to protect the free political activity of all persons, regardless of gender.

Article XI: Rule of Law, Respect for the Constitution and Other Laws

This article provides for respect of the rule of law and the constitution by political parties and individuals, as if all individuals are equal before the law. The article could have been enhanced by the articulation of respect for the rule of law to include protection or promotion of gender equality. In some instances the law has been difficult to respect, wherein it promotes or provides for discrimination, but this critical issue was not even deemed



worthy of mention. This article is typically gender-blind, assuming that rights and access to the law are the same for women and men, despite ample proof that this is not the case.

Article XII: Freedom of Assembly and Association

Freedom of speech, of assembly and association are recognised as fundamental rights to be promoted and provided for. However, this article does not make provision for such specific rights for women and is clearly designed to deal with issues relating only to political meetings and rallies. It does not take into account that freedom of association is not just about the freedom to convene as an organiser, but also the freedom to choose not to participate. Women sometimes end up in meetings they had no intention of attending because of political party or community pressure. Thus, there should have been reference to the fact that, in the conduct and convening of meetings, care should also be taken to ensure that women are not force-marched to those meetings.

Article XIII: State Organs and Institutions

This article addresses the controversial role of State organs and institutions. It provides that they should be non-partisan and impartial. The article makes no reference to the need for State organs and institutions to be trained in gender-sensitive execution of their duties. State organs and institutions have a lot of authority and exercise executive power that is not always gender sensitive. Thus, it should have been critical to place specific and clear provision on how to deal with gender, in particular women.

There is proof that State organs and institutions violated women's rights during the conflict. This article could have provided for sanctions against State functionaries who do not protect women and promote gender equality. Further, given that a significant number of the uniformed forces



ended up violating women directly in the execution of their duties, this issue should have been addressed in the article.

Article XIV: Traditional Leaders

This article deals with the powers of traditional leaders and exhorts them to exercise their duties in a non-partisan manner. It also states that traditional leaders have responsibilities to their communities and should exercise their obligations with regard to gender. This is a positive step. Given the patriarchal nature of Zimbabwean society, traditional leaders tend to use customary law that oppresses or violates women's rights. It is noteworthy that traditional leaders are indeed in control of the majority of Zimbabweans, whether they do so in a partisan or non-partisan manner. Thus, to provide for their gender-sensitive exercise of power is a positive development.

Article XV: National Youth Training Programme

Article XV states the reasons for the National Youth Training Programme and the values it seeks to engender in youths. Key among those values is equality, which is a positive step. The article provides that all youths are entitled to participate in the youth training programmes, regardless of race, gender, etc., and that training must be conducted in a non-partisan manner.

However, the article makes no provision for the training programmes to encourage or enhance the gender sensitivity of the youths that will be trained. Given that they are trained to serve their community, it would have been useful to highlight a deliberate effort to change the attitude of youths to respect and promote gender equality.



Article XVI: Humanitarian and Food Assistance

This article recognises the need to provide food and humanitarian assistance to Zimbabweans in times of need. Reference is made to the fact that food assistance should be given irrespective of, among other issues, gender, whether by the State or by Non-Governmental Organisations. The article also makes reference to humanitarian assistance being rendered to internally displaced persons. However, the article does not define what constitutes humanitarian assistance. Given that both this article and Article 18 refer to internally displaced persons, it would have been appropriate to have some indication of what the parties perceive to be humanitarian assistance. Further, given that humanitarian assistance means different things for women and men, beyond food and shelter, there should have been an effort made to define humanitarian assistance to take into account gender dimensions.

Article XVII: Legislative Agenda Priorities

The article provides for the legislative agenda to be prioritised to reflect the letter and spirit of the GPA, which is to promote democracy, fairness, justice and equality. Given that gender equality and parity have been long-standing issues, the parties to the GPA could have articulated a clearer framework for the legislative agenda to promote gender equality.

Article XVIII: Security of Persons and Prevention of Violence

This article addresses the issues of political violence and the March 2008 electoral violence. The article also acknowledges that political violence led to the internal displacement of persons. It is disappointing that, in its preamble, there is no acknowledgement of the disproportionate suffering of women and sometimes children in this violence. There is also



no reference to the specific violence that women suffered, which is both a reflection of gender and sex discrimination. It is commonly accepted that women suffered more political violence because of their location at home, whereas men were able to escape.

The article's provisions are gender blind in that they do not include gender-specific guidelines. They do not indicate that, in the implementation of these key security and violence provisions, there will be a deliberate effort to ensure that violence targeting women will be addressed as a specific issue. Thus, while this is a peace agreement created to cease hostilities, it fails the key test of ensuring that women are protected in the post-conflict phase.⁶

Article 18.5(j) seeks to expedite political violence prosecutions. However, there is no regard for the fact that violations against women cannot be left to the determination of prosecuting authorities in assessing the sufficiency of evidence given the nature of the violence women suffered. This article could be misinterpreted to give prosecuting authorities the decision-making power to proceed either way with a prosecution, without taking into account the gendered nature of violence against women in conflict situations. This is because violence against women, especially sexual violations, can be difficult to prove for a number of reasons, from delayed reporting to the fact that women will not talk about sexual violence but will publicly acknowledge physical violence or assaults. Thus, the article fails to protect women or enhance gender equality.

Article XIX: Freedom of Expression and Communication

The article addresses the question of the media, in particular the electronic media. It focuses on external radio stations to the exclusion of other media, concerning itself with the regulation of broadcasters. It does not address other media issues that have been outstanding from a gender perspective,



such as the marginalisation of women in the media, and, where women are given coverage, how it is mostly negative, undermining or trivialising. This article could have addressed the question of how media, especially radio, which is more accessible to the majority of Zimbabweans than print media, should be promoting gender equality and positive images of women.

Article XX: Framework for a New Government

This article sets out the structure of the new government, including the powers attached to each level, from the President to the Council of Ministers. The preamble clearly states that it acknowledges ‘... the need for gender parity, particularly the need to appoint women to strategic Cabinet posts’, and then sets out the various levels of executive power in the new government. However, this acknowledgement only appears in the preamble and not in the main provisions of the article, indicating lack of political will to address gender parity in the new executive.

Article 20.1.6 provides for the composition of the executive and Article 20.1.6(2) sets out the provision for two vice presidents, but does not make gender specification provisions. It simply states that there will be two vice presidents, without providing for 50% representation. Zanu PF, however, must be commended for ensuring, as it has over the last few years, that one co-vice president is a woman. The MDC-T must also be commended for appointing a woman deputy prime minister on their allocation to that position. However, the sensitivities of the political parties seem to be based on their benevolence, since this is not mandated.

Article 20.1.6(5) gives the numerical breakdown of how many seats each party will get in cabinet. There is no provision in this detailed allocation of cabinet positions that addresses how the parties will ensure gender parity. This is the reason why there is under-representation of women in the present cabinet. Even Article 20.1.7, which provides for the presidential



senatorial appointments and the creation of additional senatorial seats, does not make reference to or take into account gender parity as stated in the preamble. The provision simply speaks to the numerical allocations for each party, with no specific or inferred gender-equality criteria.

Article XXI: Electoral Vacancies

The article basically provides that, for a year from the signing of the GPA, if an electoral vacancy arises at local authority or parliament level, the party occupying that seat is entitled to nominate a candidate to fill the vacancy. The article must be commended for two issues, namely that it addresses the question of electoral violence and the need for the people of Zimbabwe to heal. It is probably one of the few provisions of the GPA that acknowledges that the GPA is a peace agreement.

This article falls short as it could have promoted women's participation in the leadership and decision making. When the GPA was crafted, the parties were aware of the under-representation of women in elected bodies. Ensuring that any vacancies that arose were taken up by women candidates would have been an opportunity to enhance women's representation in these bodies.

Article XXII: Implementation Mechanisms

Article XXII creates a Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC), which is the platform for monitoring daily implementation of the GPA. The article provides for the numerical composition of this body and, while there is a provision for gender to be taken into consideration, there is no requirement for equal representation of women and men seconded from the political parties. Thus, while the numbers suggested – four persons per political party – could have been used to ensure 50% representation, this is not the case. JOMIC's current composition has



25% representation of women. This has hampered the gender-sensitive implementation of the GPA. JOMIC is male dominated and, therefore, not entirely able to appreciate the challenges of women regarding non-compliance with certain provisions of the GPA.

JOMIC is tasked with monitoring and ensuring the speedy and full implementation of the GPA, and its terms of reference generally are set out in this article. However, there does not appear to be any meaningful powers given to the body and essentially will operate on the goodwill of political parties. This is noteworthy because there have been many instances in which gender equality could have been promoted in line with the intentions signified by the parties' commitments in the preamble. However, these have not been followed up on or implemented effectively for lack of appreciation of the issues by JOMIC. There is no sanction or enforcement mechanism available to JOMIC to compel the promotion of gender equality. This is particularly important in light of Article 22.4, which provides for '... complaints, grievances, concerns and issues relating to compliance' with the GPA to be channelled through JOMIC.

Article XXIII: Periodic Review Mechanism

The article provides for periodic review, specifically the annual monitoring of the GPA by a team comprising two representatives of each party. The first challenge is that it places the responsibility of monitoring effective implementation of this agreement within political parties. Given the political interests of the parties regarding re-election in the aftermath of the transition, one wonders how honest the political parties will be in reviewing themselves. It would have been prudent for this responsibility to be lodged outside of political parties. This could have been left to the facilitation team, or given to local civil society, including women's organisations, to monitor how well the political parties are adhering to their commitments under the GPA and fulfilling the post-conflict agenda



of promoting democracy, equality and justice as espoused in the preamble and the various articles.

This article addresses the numerical composition of the monitoring team, but not its gender composition. Since the GPA is an opportunity for reconstructing Zimbabwean society, it would have been prudent to articulate that representation on the monitoring body take into account both gender composition and gender sensitivity.

The article addresses four areas of review: the economy, politics, security and communication. While it is clear what will be monitored, because of the provisions that relate to those areas, it is unclear what will be monitored from a gender perspective since the provisions are gender blind. The article addresses the question of reviewing security, relating to security of persons and violence, but there are no indications in the GPA that the security of women is regarded as an issue. Given that the GPA was aimed at ending hostilities, it would have been prudent when designing the review mechanism to address specific issues of security of women and violence against women, both in private and in public.

There are no provisions for the specific monitoring of political participation by women, which is critical given the losses suffered in gender equality in the last decade. There is also no provision for a general reference for gender as a cross-cutting issue, which should be considered in the annual review of the GPA.

Article XXIV: Interim Constitutional Amendments

This article puts in place mechanisms to incorporate some of the parallel processes that had been ongoing in the negotiation of the GPA. This article incorporates Amendment 19 to the Constitution, which the parties had already agreed to and was the basis for the 2008 elections. This is more of



a housekeeping article, together with the ensuing Article 25. Of note is that, at this point, the parties to the GPA agreed to certain sections of the Kariba Draft Constitution.⁷

Article XXV: Commencement

This article states the commencement of the GPA upon signature of the parties. The GPA was signed by the three political party principals, who are all male.

It is clear that the GPA is a peace agreement, with a strong focus on the sharing of political power. The GPA also raises several opportunities for enhancing gender equality in post-conflict Zimbabwe.

The importance of the participation of women in national processes, particularly peace building and security

In 2000, United Nations Resolution 13258 was adopted with a view to enhancing women's participation in peace-building and conflict-resolution initiatives. This resolution was a result of the fact that, traditionally, women have been excluded from peace processes, despite their being disproportionately affected by conflict. Thus, the resolution aims to increase women's participation in peace processes and developing peace agreements that take into account women's experiences of conflict. This realisation has led to the development of civil society monitoring mechanisms to ensure the enhanced participation of women in peace-building and conflict-transformation processes on the continent, such as the Nairobi Declaration,⁹ which focuses on women's rights to remedy and reparations in the aftermath of conflict. The Nairobi Declaration also highlights the importance of women's participation in the peace-making process, rather than having decisions made for them.

The crafting of the GPA should have taken into account the provisions of this resolution, but it did not; several factors limited the participation of women in the GPA process. Because of the high polarisation in Zimba-



between politics, the GPA process was initiated by the political parties who seconded persons they perceived to be diplomats best able to represent their political party interests. This resulted in the official team that drafted the GPA having only one female negotiator. This negatively impacted the drafting of the GPA in that more could have been done to enhance gender equality in the language of the agreement.

However, the female negotiator who participated in the crafting the GPA must be commended for ensuring that it was not totally gender blind. While the GPA drafting process was dominated by men, there are several provisions in the GPA that reflect gender sensitivity. This was because the female negotiator kept in constant communication with women's organisations and activists, although their influence in the process was limited.

Towards the end of the negotiating process, the political parties increased the number of women in their broader negotiating teams. However, questions have been raised about the level of influence of this group, which was perceived to be advisory and outside of the real process in terms of negotiating.

Recommendations for maximising opportunities arising from the GPA

The provisions of the GPA offer opportunities for gender parity and equality as enunciated in the analysis of the various articles. Given that the GPA is a peace agreement and is being implemented by an inclusive government pending elections, it is prudent to consider opportunities that can be maximised in the current context:



- Sensitisation to the provisions of the GPA

There is a need for women in the country generally to be sensitised to the provisions of the GPA. This would involve women reading and understand the GPA, with a view to providing periodic gender-sensitive evaluations of the agreement.

- Respect for National Institutions and Events (Article VIII)

The article provides for participation in ‘... all national programmes and events without let or hindrance’. This provision could afford women opportunities to claim a stake in key national programmes, such as the indigenisation processes. While there are strict criteria for nationals in indigenisation, there does not seem to be an equal requirement for gender parity.

- State Organs and Institutions (Article XIII)

This article creates an opportunity for women and women’s organisations to influence the re-training of State functionaries to ensure that they execute their duties in a gender-sensitive manner. Training in human rights could be expanded to include training in women’s rights, which is an extension of women’s rights. It could also address how to enable State functionaries to deal with women in the various ways that they interact with the State, from being recipients of State services to being stakeholders and sometimes violators of the law.

- Electoral Vacancies (Article XXI)

The political parties to the GPA could, as part of the forthcoming review of the GPA, agree to a policy that ensures that any electoral vacancy will be filled to reflect gender parity, both in the political parties’ representation and in elected bodies. This is an opportunity that could be advocated by the women’s wings of political parties and women’s organisations focusing on women’s political participation.

Conclusion

One of the greatest challenges in analysing the GPA is that the reality of the Zimbabwean context sometimes appears to be lost to the language and provisions. The provisions of the GPA seem to have been drafted in a context that did not provide for the failure or collapse of the GPA. Many issues were not resolved in the GPA, such as the violence suffered by women and internally displaced persons. There is a need, therefore, for constant gender monitoring of the implementation of the GPA.

Endnotes

- 1 There are various contentions on whether or not the GPA qualifies as a peace agreement, given that the conflict in Zimbabwe did not escalate into widespread civil unrest. Some have indicated that the GPA is no more than a power-sharing agreement. However, for the purposes of this paper, the GPA is considered as a peace agreement.
- 2 For example, the DRC Ceasefire Agreement: http://www.usip.org/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements/drc_07101999.pdf; The South African National Peace Accord: <http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/services/cds/agreements/pdf/sa4.pdf>
- 3 The participation of women in the process, though formally limited to Hon. Misihairabwi-Mushonga, fluctuated as the process progressed in 2008 and early 2009 and women were added informally to the negotiating processes by the three political parties.
- 4 For example, women may suffer political violence based on gender (i.e. because they are considered weaker). Women are more likely to be sexually violated because of the biological fact that they are female and suffer more physical consequences of sexual violation than their male counterparts.
- 5 For example, women experienced sanitary ware shortages as fewer international suppliers were willing to sell to Zimbabwe and because of the punitive taxes/tariffs that Zimbabwe placed on the imported sanitary ware in 'protecting' local business, which had stopped manufacturing due to lack of resources, lines of credits, etc.



- 6 In terms of United Nations Resolution 1325, women should not only participate in peace-agreement processes, but also the gender-specific issues of peace building and security of the person should be addressed. This is not the case with the GPA.
- 7 This is worth noting because the same political parties have gone on to misrepresent to some of their members that they did not agree to anything in the Kariba Draft Constitution. This is important, because for most people, especially women, who have never seen or read a copy of the GPA, the political party position becomes the truth. Thus, the political parties take advantage of their members' ignorance or lack of access to information.
- 8 http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf
- 9 Nairobi Declaration on Women and Girls' Right to a Remedy and Reparation (2007): http://www.womensrightscoalition.org/site/reparation/signature_en.php



This publication seeks to provide a gender analysis of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement (GPA) from the perspective of the participation of women in peace building and conflict resolution, and how peace agreements facilitate or hinder gender equality in post-conflict situations. These issues are addressed:

- Gender implications of the provisions of the GPA generally and, in particular, opportunities for the advancement of gender equality and women's participation.
- The relevance and importance of women's participation in national processes, particularly processes related to peace building and security.
- Recommendations on how to maximise opportunities for gender equality as provided for in the GPA.

