



## **IMPACT OF USAID WORK ON WOMEN'S PEACE BUILDING ACTIVITIES IN NAKURU COUNTY BETWEEN 1991 AND 2013**

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### **Abstract**

A recurrent finding in the literature is that women remain largely unrepresented at the peace table, where key decisions about post-conflict recovery and governance are being. A UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) study looking at 31 major peace processes since 1992 shows that women have accounted for a strikingly small number of negotiators, and there has been little change in this since the passage of UNSCR 1325. In addition, no woman has ever been appointed chief or lead peace mediator in UN-sponsored peace talks, although some women have been included by the African Union as conflict mediators. The absence of women from peace negotiation processes is deemed problematic because there seems to be a correlation between women's participation in such processes and levels of gender responsiveness in the eventual political and peace agreements. In Nakuru County of the former Rift Valley Province, various non-governmental organizations have been involved in peace building activities since the advent of ethnic clashes in 1992. However, the contribution of the INGOs in implementing the UNSCR 1325 in relation to enhancing women's participation in peace building from the onset of the ethnic clashes through the ethno-political violence of 1992, 1997 to the PEV of 2007/2008 and the tension-saturated political tensions environment that surrounded the 2013 general elections remains unclear due absence of systematically investigated and documented empirical evidence. It would therefore seem that not enough has been made to increase women's participation in conflict prevention, peace processes and post-conflict recovery in Nakuru County. To ascertain this, the study investigated the role that INGO have played in promoting women's participation in peace building activities in Nakuru County between 1991 and 2013. Specifically, this study focus on the role of USAID, which is an international nonprofit making, non-partisan, non-governmental organization based in the country and has an office in Nakuru County.

### **Introduction**

International Non-Governmental Organizations play a critical role in women's empowerment. Many of these programmes focus on peace and democracy education or education on women rights. They support the forming of women groups, training in governance or peace and democracy, and women's involvement in decision making in traditional conflict-resolution structures (GPWG and CPCC 2005). Others develop workshops and engage in livelihood promotion, and advocacy around women's affairs. Despite the variation on how women experience intra-state violence, they often organize in grassroots activities to end intra-state violence or facilitate the reconstruction process by establishing nation-wide NGO'S (Peace and Research, 2009). Security Council Resolution 1325 has provided the international community with a concrete framework that theoretically brought gender issues into the mainstream, and

created a space or entry point for the participation of non-traditional actors (Barrow, 2008). Since the creation of the United Nations in 1945, the origin of Resolution 1325 has been attributed to the increasing vocal campaigns by women's groups for the recognition of gender issues as governance concerns (UN, 2005). SCR 1325 continues to be a landmark resolution, providing the first legal and political international framework recognizing the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and the role of women in peace building. The resolution provides both a broad 'blueprint' and concrete suggestions to help the international community incorporate gender perspectives into the peace and security agenda. First, the resolution characterizes women's roles beyond 'victims' to equal participants and decision-makers across peacemaking and peace building issues. Second, through its 18 provisions, SCR 1325 provides a framework for participation in activities such as: negotiating peace agreements, planning humanitarian and peacekeeping operations, and rebuilding war-torn communities. Third, the resolution places firm obligations and accountability upon all Member States, the Security Council, and the Secretary General (SG) and non-state actors to protect women's human rights as well as to ensure a gender lens across all peace and security initiatives. Its home in the Security Council reinforces the historic nature of the resolution: mandating a gender perspective in all Security Council resolutions, mission mandates and SG reports (Krista and Gina, 2005). Finally, the resolution acknowledges and endorses the role of civil society in all aspects of the peace process, providing women's organization and other INGOs formal recognition for their efforts. The resolution was reinforced in October 2009 with Security Council Resolution 1889. This resolution affirms measures within SCR 1325 and calls for improved women's participation and empowerment across all stages of the peace process (UN Security Council Resolution 1889, 2009). SCR 1889 also incorporates more concrete measures for funding and access to resources, renewed efforts to involve women in the peace building process, and stronger provisions on monitoring and reporting. Critical to monitoring and accountability is the request to the Secretary General for the development of a set of global indicators to track implementation of SCR 1325 (Cook, 2009). Finally, SCR 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009), which focus on responses to gender-based violence also incorporate strong participatory language. All the four resolutions are the result of decades of advocacy by civil society and are based upon a series of important international instruments and treaties. The most relevant of these are: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979), Windhoek Declaration (2000) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). Building on this international framework, regional organizations have made a range of commitments that support SCR 1325 and at times have propelled action within their regions. The European Union (EU) has specified that women's participation is key to the advancement of human rights, and necessary to fully address "specific needs and concerns of women" (Lidén, 2009). In November, 2000 the European Parliament passed a hard hitting resolution calling on European Union members (and the European Commission and Council) to promote the equal participation of women in diplomatic conflict resolution; to ensure that women fill up at least 40% of reconciliation, peacekeeping, peace-enforcement, peace building and conflict prevention posts. It also purposes to support the creation and strengthening of INGO'S (including women's organizations) that focus on conflict prevention, peace building and post conflict reconstruction (International Alert, 2004). Men and women often have different experiences from war and peace and therefore usually also different priorities and expectations in peace processes (UNIFEM, 2005b). Among themselves, different experiences of women during periods of conflict have major influence on their post-conflict needs and priorities thus it is crucial for these experiences (and especially those of local women) to be taken account of and have a role in the various stages of the peace process (Onugbogu and Etchart, 2005). Women's peace building work is also often originating from their daily struggles connecting the matter of their participation to issues of socio-economic inequalities and exclusions which are disproportionately affecting women (Reilly, 2007). When

women are not democratically represented, neither are their interests represented and their exclusions hence affects the whole society, threatening justice, development and political stability (Ringera, 2007). Scholars such as Moola (2006) argue that by virtue of their sex, and as nurturers of life, women are deemed more caring, peaceful and non-violent and should therefore be included in all peace negotiations and peace-building efforts. Their emotional strength stems from their roles as mothers, wives and primary socialisers in shaping and protecting families during conflict and post-conflict situations. It is also important to note that women are often already active in community peace building but their political skills are often not recognized and therefore not made use of in formal arenas (Porter, 2003). Women are often involved in relationship building and conflict resolution activities that precede formal negotiations and their issues of concern involve political, social, civil, economic and judicial matters that don't always reach the negotiation table. It is argued that exclusion promotes women's insecurity, which would be addressed at the negotiating table. Embracing these issues is nevertheless important since peace negotiations are not only about ending a conflict but also an opportunity to contribute to the foundations of a reconstructed society based on justice, rights and equality (Karam, 2001). Porter (2008) argues that peace negotiations and agreements would be richer and more firmly rooted in the societies with a greater participation of women and issues important to them. Also, a peace agreement is more likely to be sustained when it is supported and consolidated at the grassroots level rather than if it is one negotiated among elites. Women bring understanding of the root causes of conflict and are part of the grassroots (Anderlani and Stanski, 2004; Anderlani, 2007). That women's peace building skills from civil society should be embraced and further cultivated is also important given Porter's argument that peace supported at grassroots level is more likely to be sustainable (Porter, 2003). UNIFEM (2005a) states that examples from around the world show how women can build a foundation for and catalyze peace negotiations as well as complement official peace building. Women can bring different perspective by raising issues otherwise ignored and also foster reconciliation and set examples to move societies forward. In countries emerging from conflict, supporting women's participation in decision making can serve as a shift away from the status quo that catalyzed the conflict (Anderlini, 2007). Cultural practices and laws that subordinates women, including existing patriarchal laws, unequal distribution of resources and the effects of war crimes and other violations of women's rights perpetuated against them, will readily be addressed if they are included in post-conflict processes. Finally, regardless of having a positive or negative impact, women, as well as men have the right to participation (Anderlini, 2007). UNIFEM (2005a) argues that inclusiveness is necessary to ensure the legitimacy of the decision-making process to encourage a broad base of participation and to make sustainable peace and development possible. Given that women are "50% of the population, they are an important resource. Overlooking their capacities and commitment to peace building is an indication of bad planning and implies a loss of resources and capacities thus compromising the peace process (Anderlini, 2007; UNIFEM, 2005a). Including women is hence a matter of social justice and their absence is minimizing the prospects for just politics in post-conflict periods (Porter, 2003). Women's participation is argued to facilitate both peace and security and a strong economy (Ali, 2011). In the peace building arena women are often more active through informal community structures aiming to ensure that women's rights and gender perspectives are incorporated into local programs. Minimal representation of women within political structures or in leadership positions (at local and national levels) have led women's organizations to rely on extensive networks, strong advocacy skills and resourceful means of achieving their objectives. Women are often confronted with challenges including cultural barriers, traditional patriarchal structures, minimal legislative support and lack of resources. These are critical obstacles inhibiting the transfer of their learned knowledge and first hand experiences into a recognized and formal peacemaking and peace building environment. The architects of SCR 1325 sought to address some of these

limitations by “endorsing the inclusion of civil society groups in peace processes” and by “[calling] on all actors involved in such processes to adopt mechanisms supporting local peace initiatives” (Falch, 2010). The UN and member states have also repeatedly called for civil society engagement through, for example, Security Council Resolution 1366 (2001), the formation of the Panel of Eminent Persons on UN-Civil Society Relations, (Sen, 2005) and convening such as the Commission on the Status of Women. Women’s organizations and networks are often at the forefront of civil society initiatives to build peace, working as community mobilizers, mediators, facilitators of dialogue and reconciliation initiatives between conflicting parties. Women’s Initiative for Peace in South Asia (WIPSA) led by veteran Gandhian Nirmala Deshpande enabled women from India and Pakistan to build peace between the two countries. This was done through a bus journey by 40 Indian women in March 2000. The women representing different faiths, generations and diverse political perspectives were creating space for themselves and were also contributing to the creation of an atmosphere for the building and rebuilding of human relationships and for substantive dialogue on contentious issues including the Kashmir conflict (Pakistan Horizon, 2004). Women have also taken initiative in drafting principles for comprehensive settlements. The Platform of Jerusalem Link, a federation of Palestinian and Israeli women’s groups, served as a blueprint for negotiations over the final status of Jerusalem during the Oslo process. In Latin America, the Catholic Church played a significant role in the Guatemalan conflict. They provided a strategic entry for women to organize ‘mothers’ movements. In June 1984, a group of indigenous wives and mothers of the ‘disappeared’ formed a Mutual Support Group and later the National Coordinating Committee on Guatemalan wives. This was an important strategy to ensure that peace prevailed in Guatemala. The ‘Motherly’ facet of Latin American women’s movements was also seen in Argentina. The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo in Argentina was a conscious effort made by women to capitalize on the Catholic belief in the ‘good mother’ when opposing repressive regimes (Global Governance, 2003). In the African continent, the African Union has been instrumental by adopting a gender policy which mandates the ‘mobilization of women leaders in all levels of peace mediation and related processes.’ (African Union Gender Policy, 2008). Adoption of the African Union’s Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) is also very significant. This framework calls for the universal adoption of the protocol on the rights of women in Africa and stresses the enforcement of gender sensitive programmes in order to ensure the full participation of women in peace processes. PCRD calls on states to support civil society organizations, especially women’s organizations involved in peace processes, and to promote the rights of women and girls and other vulnerable groups in particular. In South Sudan, women working together in the New Sudan Council of Churches conducted their own version of shuttle diplomacy without the panache of jetting between capitals. They organized the Wunlit Tribal summit in February 1999 to bring to an end the bloody hostilities between the Dinka and Nuer people. As a result, the Wunlit Covenant guaranteed peace between the Dinka and the Nuer, who agreed to share rights to water, fishing and grazing land, which had been key points of disagreements. The Covenant also returned prisoners and guaranteed freedom of movement for members of both tribes. In Liberia, women in Peace Building Network were critical in bringing about an end to the fighting in the country. The role of women in a conflict in Sierra Leone was quite diverse. On one hand women were victims of rape, slavery and displacement, on the other hand women mobilized resources to build schools that had been destroyed during war. In Rwanda, women who had survived genocide later formed networks bringing together individuals from the two communities (Hutus and Tutsis) to help reconstruct local services and facilities in the wake of the conflict (United Nations, 2012). Women have been instrumental in the attaining of peace in many African countries. This includes Kenya which has faced conflict between 1991 and 2013. The tension in Kenyan politics regarding ethnic division did not arise in the past few years. The problem that Kenya has, and that many countries in Africa share is that the ethnic composition of

their states was decided long before their independence in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. During this period of rapid colonization, arbitrary borders were drawn without concern for families, historical alliances, or grudges, placing some members in another. Often, the only contact that these people had with each other was through trade, so being forced to cooperate with each other in the capacity of countrymen created tension and instability. Today, this is a factor because some countries in Africa, not just Kenya, comprise of several ethnic affiliations without a common history to unite them. When the British arrived in Kenya, they overly emphasized the differences between the various ethnicities and made that identity more important than it initially was (Apthorpe, 1968). Additionally, they used it to divide Kenyans and keep them malleable and under British control. For example, the Kenyans were only allowed to be politically active within the confines of their ethnic land which perpetrated the idea of ethnicity and the end to band together in politics with those you lived with (Orvis, 2001 & Ajulu, 2002). From the inception of Kenya as a nation-state in 1963, the state of affairs was rife with ethnic division and political games. The political party Kenya African National Union (KANU) was formed by and consisted mainly of Luo and Kikuyu forces creating a network from which to gain power. To counter what many saw as a power grabbing attempt by the two most prominent ethnicities in Kenya, the minority groups formed the political group Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) in 1960 (Bennett, 1961). This group was formed on the basis of regionalism with the premise that devolution of power from the major ethnic groups to the various regions would redirect power away from the Luo and Kikuyu so other groups would have a chance to gain influence. The leaders of KADU were purposefully stoking the fear of ethnicity in order to gain power. Due to the perceived division along ethnicities, it became an issue at independence where "... sixty years of struggle for freedom and independence [and] victory now should see the long battle for equality of black and white ended only to be replaced by new and more bloody conflict between black and black" (Manners, p 10). Interestingly, initially, many Kikuyu were marginalized because they were displaced from their homes in Nairobi by the Mau Mau rebellion. The Mau Mau rebellion which occurred between 1952 and 1960 was a reaction by anti-colonial, Kikuyu individuals seeking independence (Berman, 1991). In the beginning, majority of the land confiscated from the British was granted to the Kikuyu for resettlement; however, President Jomo Kenyatta seized the opportunity to strengthen his network of allies and reward them rather than benefit Kikuyu and Kenyans as a whole. This, as well as Kenyatta's affiliation as a Kikuyu, meant that the distribution of resources built resentment and created focused mainly on traditionally Kikuyu regions. This asymmetric distribution of resources built resentment and created infrastructure inequalities within the country and the initial victims became the predators of the structural violence (Miguel, 2004). Additionally, the way in which Kenyatta formed the nation was ill equipped for national pride. He chose English and Swahili as their national languages rather than just one and maintained the British School System (with a primary and a General Certification of Secondary Education (GSCE) test (British Council, n.d.) and created a cabinet system with a Prime Minister (US Department of State, 2012) which did not create a sense of national pride and only served to emphasize the lack of cohesion and lack of a common identity among the various identities within the country (Miguel, 2004). In the very beginning, when Kenya had a chance to come together under the banner of independence, the policies of Kenyatta only furthered to alienate the members of the various ethnic affiliations. When Kenyatta died in 1978, his Vice President Daniel arap Moi took control of the state. Rather than steering from ethnic divisions that had weakened Kenya, Moi "retained Kenyatta's self-preservation in politics, insatiable greed for land and wealth, tribalism and nepotism" (Munene, 2003). According to the Akiwumi report (2008), on the clashes in Rift valley, Nakuru district which was the administrative headquarters of Rift Valley province was most hard hit by the inter-tribal clashes of 1991-1998. In post independence Kenya and more particularly in Nakuru district, opposition politics had been unwelcome. For instance in 1965, the Nakuru district ex-

freedom fighters had to organize a meeting in addition to raising funds to purchase land, to refute insinuations that they were secretly supporting the opposition. Such insinuations by KANU stalwarts against opponents within KANU have not been uncommon in the print and electronic media. The majority of parliamentarians in Nakuru, during the one party era having been Kikuyu raised a feeling of unease and suspicions among Kalenjin politicians, who felt that the position of their own tribesman as President was threatened by the Kikuyu who were in the forefront of the clamour for multi-party democracy. This therefore explains why Nakuru which had a high non-Kalenjin population was hit hardest by the inter-tribal clashes of 1991 to 1998. The Waki report (2009) brings to fore the fact that, the clashes of 1992 and 1997 was to wilt the so called non-indigenous communities who were perceived to be unsupportive of KANU. Nakuru district however still remains one of Kenya's most cosmopolitan districts where most of Kenya's ethnic communities are found though the dominant ones are the Kikuyu and Kalenjin with substantial numbers of Kisii, Luo and Luhya. The Waki Commission established that violence in Nakuru district occurred in two phases. The first wave of violence started on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2007, following the announcement of the results of the presidential elections and was largely triggered by spontaneous, election more planned and systematic nature, pitting well organized ethnic based criminal gangs against each other. The commission was able to establish that much of the violence in Nakuru in the late December 2007 and early January 2008 was the culmination of ethnic tensions built up during the electoral campaign and a reaction to perceived attempts to rig elections. It is important to note that, contrary to previous election related ethnic clashes which were, mainly confined to rural areas, the December 2007 violence affected urban as well as rural areas of Nakuru district. According to the Waki report, the estates of Kaptembwa, Free Area, Kiti and Githima were hardest hit by the Post-Election Violence which lasted from 24-27 January 2008. Kiamunyi, a middle and upper income neighborhood was unaffected. The Commission heard that in one night alone, the 26<sup>th</sup> January, 48 people were killed in aforementioned estates of Nakuru.

## **Results and discussion**

The primary objective of this study was to examine the role of USAID in promoting women's peace building activities in Nakuru County between 1991 and 2013. Primary data was collected from the study participants using interview guides as described in the previous chapter. In this chapter, therefore, the findings of the research study are presented, interpreted and discussed. The main sub-sections of the chapter cover the three objective areas of the study, namely: factors that motivated the USAID to focus on Nakuru County in promoting women's peace building activities, extent of USAID's support of women's peace building activities and the impact of USAID's work on women's peace building activities in Nakuru County between 1991 and 2013. However, the preliminary sub-section of the chapter is a description of the sample profile for the study.

### **Sample Profile**

The study reached a total of 50 women peace builders in Nakuru County and 12 men who were either community leaders or worked for peace-building organizations. These figures represented a total sample size of 62, (80.6%) female and 19.4% male. Six (12%) of the women peace builders were aged 18-25 years, twenty four (48%) were in the age category of 26-35 years while twenty (40%) were 36-45 years of age. In terms of education, 28% of the women peace builders had primary level education, 56% had secondary school education while the remaining 16% had college level education. Among the male respondents, 50% were university graduates, 25% had tertiary level of education while the other 25% had secondary level education.

The women peace builders were all married. Whereas to some of them the conflict they understood broadly was the 2008 post-election violence around which all of them participated in

peace building activities, only a few understood too well the previous episodes of ethnically-instigated clashes that began around 1991 and reached their pick in the successive election periods of 1992 through to 1997 and 2002, culminating in the 2008 post-election violence. Essentially, all the women peace builder interviewed had participated in peace building activities prior to and following the 2008 PEV and in the lead-up to the 2013 general elections in Kenya.

The foregoing findings show that majority of women peace builders are mothers who are in their active reproductive age, probably taking up the mantle of peace building due to the acute pain they are subjected to when their children or husbands are killed through conflicts. This is in part due to the fact that for some of them, their sons and husbands are in their most productive ages to either aggressively take part in the conflict or become targets of the aggressors. On the other hand, women often find themselves thrust into being providers as their husband joins the war, is killed or incapacitated. This forces the women to adapt to these newfound identities that affect them either positively or negatively. The mothers' peace building tendencies are buttressed by Sara Ruddick's (1989) arguments in relation to maternal thinking, that care and relation-based thinking is a major precondition for a more peaceful society.

According to Gnanadason, Kanyoro and McSpadden (1996), women play the role of peacemakers within their families and their communities. It follows, therefore, that women more than men, bear the greatest responsibility of raising children and maintaining cohesion in the family. The pain they feel when the family fabric is lost becomes insurmountable and thus they find themselves assuming the responsibility of peace building to build and maintain strong family relationships. In post-conflict situations, women find themselves in a dilemma in the sense that while they are undertaking hitherto new roles, there is the urge, either internally or externally, to revert to roles played before the conflict.

The findings also indicate that most of the women peace builders were just foundationally literate; with a good number of them having only attained primary school level education and only a few possessing higher level tertiary education. These incidences of low education levels for women generally is attributable to societal patriarchal norms that have consistently fabricated women as the "other", thus denying them equal opportunities to education as men. The low levels of education adversely limit women's participation in structured peace building processes. More so, the participation of women is also likely to be low in areas that are highly technical in nature such as peace negotiations and meditations. Maina (2012), in his study of the challenges of women participation in peace building in Africa identifies challenges arising from lack of education and skills. These findings are also supported by ActionAid, Institute of Development Studies, and Womankind (2012) and Cardona *et al.*, (2012).

### **Motivational Factors for USAID to Focus on Nakuru County**

Interviews with the women peace builders and all the other key informant male study participants revealed that hitherto the PEV of 2008 in Kenya and particularly Nakuru County, USAID's focus and activities in peace building were not well understood. Although it was noted that the USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) which supports peace building and post-conflict stabilization initiatives/activities was created in 1994 (3 years after the ethnic clashes that rocked parts of Nakuru County), it was not until after the 2008 PEV that OTI projects were designed to engage and build bridges among Kenya's ethnic groups (USAID – OTI, 2009). Nakuru being one of the worst hit areas by the PEV was meant to benefit from these projects. According to a male key informant who claimed to clearly understand the mandate of OTI, the events that occurred may not have been within the scope of OTI's priorities hence the lack of interventions targeting peace building activities in general during the PEV of 2008.

The OTI was created to provide fast, flexible, short-term assistance to take advantage of windows of opportunity to build democracy and peace. It aims to lay the foundations for long-term development by promoting reconciliation; jumpstarting economies and helping stable

democracy take hold in countries of strategic interest to the US (USAID – OTI, 2008). The OTI engages in countries only when the situation meets four criteria:

- i. The country is important to U.S. national interests
- ii. There is a window of opportunity
- iii. OTI's involvement would significantly increase the chances of a successful transition
- iv. The operating environment is sufficiently stable

Beller, Klein and Fisher (2010) quote OTI's Director Rob Jenkins' explanation that "OTI is biased towards small grants, community-focused initiatives, bottom-up approaches, and finding change agents at the local level". Although many of OTI's activities don't necessarily look like peace building, they are part of a larger peace building and stabilization effort. While many of its activities can be categorized as traditional development programs - micro-enterprise, income generation, education, community development, etc. OTI designs its activities through the prism of the anticipated positive impact on resolving or reducing local disputes and conflict (OTP, 2009).

The Kenya Transition Initiative (KTI) is a project implemented through USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives that advances U.S. foreign policy objectives by contributing to a stable Kenyan policy centered on national identity rather than ethnic identities. KTI was launched in June 2008, in the wake of the devastating inter-ethnic violence that followed the December 2007 national elections, to work towards the restoration of the nation's confidence and capacity in addressing instability, political marginalization and vulnerability to violence. KTI aims to achieve its goals by providing fast, flexible, and uniquely targeted assistance to Kenyan state and non-state actors that are conducting innovative transition activities. This strategy targets pivotal local actors and support small, grassroots organizations to meet the unique needs of the evolving Kenyan environment. The factors that influenced USAD-Kenya Transition Initiative's current programming interventions included:

- i. The national elections in March 2013 which raised concerns of the election violence and mass displacement that had followed three out of the previous four national elections in Kenya.
- ii. The ongoing International Criminal Court (ICC) trials of four Kenyans charged with crimes against humanity for their involvement in the 2007 post-election violence that threatened to exacerbate ethnic tensions. The persistent attacks by extremist groups and the recruitment efforts of these groups among Kenyan youth.
- iii. The challenges facing the effective and efficient implementation of the provisions of the 2012 Constitutional Referendum.

The goal of USAID-OTI's programme in Kenya was to promote national unity rather than ethno-national divisions through organized dialogues with local elected officials, training in reconciliation concepts, civic education focused on official investigation, and reporting of post-election violence. To this end, USAID-OTI made has so far made good start on implementing grassroots conflict-management activities in Kenya. The office has successfully supported local organizations working with in Nakuru County to build peace among the warring communities. According to a majority of respondents, USAID funded project have made impacted positively on women's social and economic activities. Local women groups have addressed conflicts involving different ethnic or religious groups, neighborhoods and regions, and groups with different access to resources. OTI's efforts have demonstrated success in changing attitudes toward conflict, helped resolve specific conflicts, prevented or reduced violent conflicts, and generated interest in addressing conflict county-wide.



## Conclusion

The study has shown that USAID's work has indeed positively impacted women's peace building activities in Nakuru County. By and large, the study has shown that USAID - OTI's interventions can play an important role in transition situations by countries, complementing USAID's longer term country programs. However, OTI's activities which are often short-term or one-time events should be replicated or extended to achieve lasting results. The innovative and timely USAID's interventions through the OTI are extremely relevant to a country like Kenya. The results produced by such interventions are once replicating especially when validated and sustained through timely and appropriate follow-up. Longer term support for promising activities is important to achieve fuller and sustainable impact on peace building. USAID and other mission entities involved in peace building must coordinate and communicate effectively to develop mutual understanding, build ownership of transitional initiatives, and integrate all USAID efforts.

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