

**T.C.
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**CIVIL SOCIETY AND PEACE BUILDING IN GERMANY: THE
ROLE OF “RUBBLE WOMEN” AFTER WORLD WAR II**

MASTER’S THESIS

Sarah Ahmed Ebrahim AL-GAAMANI

**Department of Political Science and International Relations
Political Science and International Relations Program**

SEPTEMBER, 2023

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SEPTEMBER, 2023

ONAY FORMU

DECLARATION

I hereby declare with respect that the study “Civil Society And Peace Building In Germany: The Role Of “Rubble Women” After World War Ii”, which I submitted as a Master thesis, is written without any assistance in violation of scientific ethics and traditions in all the processes from the Project phase to the conclusion of the thesis and that the works I have benefited are from those shown in the Bibliography. (13/ 09/2023)

Sarah Ahmed Ebrahim AL-GAAMANI

FOREWORD

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the people who have been with me on my journey to completing my master's degree. Without their consistent support, I would not have been able to achieve this milestone in my academic journey.

My father, Ahmed Algaamani, you have always been my biggest cheerleader, believing in me even when I doubted myself. Your steadfast support has given me the strength and courage to pursue my dreams. I deeply appreciate you and hope that I have made your dreams come true.

To my dear sister, Samar, I cannot express in words how much you mean to me. You have been my best friend, my confidant, and my unwavering source of inspiration. Your unrelenting belief in me has given me the strength and courage to pursue my dreams, and your love and support have sustained me through the toughest of times.

You have always been there for me, through thick and thin, and I am forever grateful for your steadfast presence in my life. Your kindness, generosity, and compassion know no bounds, and I feel so blessed to have you as my sister.

I also want to express my appreciation to your husband, Abdulaziz Aledrisi, for his constant support. You two are the epitome of true love and commitment, and I am so grateful to have you both in my life.

I am grateful to God for granting me the resilience and fortitude to reach where I am today. And for blessing me with so much in life, including a supportive family, and loving friends Salwa, Fahd, Kholoud, Amani and Hala.

Finally, I want to thank my supervisor Dr. BATURAY YURTBAY for guiding me through the process of completing my thesis. Your insights, feedback, and unwavering support have been invaluable, and I am grateful for the knowledge and skills that you have imparted to me. I am honored to have had the opportunity to work with you, and I will always be grateful for your mentorship.

“To Mom in heaven, this thesis is dedicated to you.”

September, 2023

Sarah Ahmed Ebrahim AL-GAAMANI

CIVIL SOCIETY AND PEACE BUILDING IN GERMANY: THE ROLE OF “RUBBLE WOMEN” AFTER WORLD WAR II

ABSTRACT

The study aims at evaluating the role of Rubble Women as a civil society in the nation building of Germany after the World War II. The research answer how does rubble women contribute to provide sustainable peace after that massive war. The devastating impact of World War II had left major cities in Germany in rubble, as such the onus of rebuilding of the nation was on the shoulder of women bearing in mind, that the population of women outnumber the population of men due to the loss of several men while some others were prisoners of war, injured or not mentally fit for meaningful contribution to their families and the society at large. The skewed population of men ushered the rubble women that became a beacon of hope, also making necessary sacrifices to ensure that Germany enjoyed sustained peace. The activities of rubble women translated beyond the removal of rubble into other humanitarian activities such as the running of soup kitchen, distribution of clothing, supplies and provision of medical care and support to the vulnerable citizens of the society. The work of rubble women contributed to also restoring the stability and functionality of cities and communities affected by war through the reconstruction of homes, infrastructure and public spaces, hence, laid a foundation for peaceful coexisting and social cohesion.

Keywords: Traummerfrau / Rubble Women, Civil Society, Peace building, World War II, Germany.

ALMANYA’DA SİVİL TOPLUM VE BARIŞ İNŞASI: II. DÜNYA SAVAŞI SONRASINDA “TRÜMMERFRAU” ROLÜ

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın ardından Almanya'da ulus inşası sürecinde "Trümmerfrau" sivil toplum içindeki rolünü değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmanın amacı, savaş sonrası sürdürülebilir barışın nasıl sağlandığını anlamak ve bu süreçte Trümmerfrau katkılarını analiz etmektir. İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın yıkıcı etkisi, Almanya'nın büyük şehirlerini enkaz yığınlarına dönüştürmüştür. Bu durum, ülkenin yeniden inşa sürecini büyük ölçüde kadınların üstlenmesine neden olmuştur. Savaşta hayatını kaybeden birçok erkek ve bazıları savaş esiri ya da yaralı olan erkeklerin sayısındaki artış, Almanya'nın kadın nüfusunun erkek nüfusunu geçmesine yol açmıştır. Ayrıca, savaşın etkisiyle birçok erkek, ailelerine ve topluma anlamlı katkı sağlayamayacak zihinsel veya fiziksel durumda bulunmuştur. Trümmerfrau Kadınları, bu zorlu dönemde umut kaynağı olmuşlardır. Sadece enkazı temizlemekle kalmamış, aynı zamanda çorba mutfakları işletme, giysi ve malzeme dağıtma gibi insani yardımlar sunarak ülkelerinin yeniden inşasına önemli katkılarda bulunmuşlardır. Trümmerfrau Kadınlarının faaliyetleri, savaşın etkilediği şehirlerin ve toplulukların istikrarını ve işlevselliğini yeniden sağlamada kritik bir rol oynamıştır. Evlerin, altyapının ve kamu alanlarının yeniden inşası konusundaki çabaları, barış içinde bir arada yaşamının ve toplumsal dayanışmanın temellerini güçlendirmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Trümmerfrau, Sivil Toplum, Barış İnşası, İkinci Dünya Savaşı, Almanya.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the wake of World War II, amidst the ruins of a shattered Germany, emerged - the "Rubble Women." This group of resilient individuals, predominantly comprised of women due to the stark demographic imbalances of the time, played a vital role in the nation's journey towards peace and prosperity. This research delves into the intricate dynamics between civil society and nation building, with a specific focus on the extraordinary contribution of these "Rubble Women" to Germany's enduring peace.

Employing a qualitative methodology, this study embarks on an exploration of the symbiotic relationship between civil society and the construction of a nation. By analyzing a wealth of secondary data, including a review of pertinent literature on civil society and peace building in Germany, it aims to uncover the hitherto less explored facets of the "Rubble Women's" role in fostering sustainable peace in post-World War II Germany.

The significance of this study extends far beyond historical analysis. It underscores the critical importance of civil society in the intricate tapestry of peace building and nation reconstruction. Germany, despite the economic devastation wrought by the war, emerged as a thriving European powerhouse and the world's fourth-largest economy. The lessons drawn from this research provide a roadmap for other nations grappling with the aftermath of conflict, showcasing how the involvement of women as a crucial component of civil society can be instrumental in the process of rebuilding and forging lasting peace.

This study, therefore, not only sheds light on the remarkable contributions of the "Rubble Women" but also advocates for the broader inclusion of women in civil society as a driving force behind the pursuit of peace and the revitalization of nations in the aftermath of conflict. In this way, it underscores the enduring relevance of this historical chapter and the lessons it holds for a world still grappling with the consequences of war.

A. Problem statement

The current research looks into the role of civil society in peace building while focusing on the contribution of “Rubble Women” in the aftermath of Second World War. The role of “Rubble women” became significant due to the demography of German population at that time having more women population as compared to the male population.

B. Methodology and Research Question

The study brings into light the relationship between civil society and nation building with much emphasis being laid on Rubble Women as civil society and their role in ensuring that Germany were ushered into peace that the country still enjoys till date as such the study would be making use of qualitative method which would involve the analysis of secondary data such as review of past literatures as it pertains to civil society and peace building in Germany. Bearing in mind that the study is built around providing answers to some research questions, an inductive approach of qualitative methodology would prove to be more impactful and significant in achieving of the overall aim of the study considering the exploratory nature of the research. The main research questions of this study are:

1. “How rubble women contributed to provide sustainable peace in German after World War II?
2. To what extent did women and in particular, the “Rubble women” contribute in the development of Germany into an economic prosperous nation with sustained peace since World War II?

C. Significance of the Study

The role of “Rubble Women” in the sustain peace that Germany has enjoyed have not been carefully spelled out as peace building ensure a thriving environment for economic development and nation building. It’s no surprise that the country had emerged as the prosperous economy in Europe and the forth prosperous Economy in the world despite the economic setback of the war. The significance of the study would aid in showcasing the road map utilized by Germany in the overcoming the adverse effect of the conflict so that other countries can emulate when caught up in similar

unwanted situations and more also, the study would help advocate the involvement of women as a civil society in the process of peace building.

The study is significant as it highlights the importance of civil society in peace building and nation building, particularly in countries like Germany that were severely impacted by World War II. The contribution of women, particularly the "Rubble Women," is immense as they had to take on new roles to rebuild the country after the war. This research offers a new perspective on the role of civil society, particularly women, in peace building. It also provides a blueprint for other war-torn nations to follow in their rebuilding efforts. Germany's success in overcoming the challenges of post-war reconstruction can serve as a model for other countries.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The impact of the war was more immense among the male population and as a result, the women had to come out to work and also contribute to the swift development of the country, thus, the birth of Rubble Women which became a civil group that aided in the rebuilding of the country to ensure sustained peace which the country currently enjoys. Their effort served as a foundation to which Germany has been able to fend off hunger and starvation that might have brought internal political instability and resulted into a progressive nation with sustained peace.

Traummerfrau /Rubble Women: “Trummerfrau is a German word that refers to women who participated in the post-World War II clean-up and reconstruction effort in Germany, particularly in the rubble-strewn cities. The word literally translates to “rubble women” in English. These women played a crucial role in rebuilding their communities and helped to clear the rubble and debris left behind after the bombing raid of the allied forces. They were often volunteers, and many of them were widowed or had lost family members during the war. Rubble women were celebrated and seen as symbols of resilience and determination in the face of devastation (Stark, 2003).

Civil Society: The term civil societies have raised several questions on its ideal meaning. Civil Society represents the voice or need of individuals and collective interest which exist outside the control of Government which brings the notion of Merkel and Lauth (1998) into focus as the arena of voluntary, uncoerced collective actions around shared interests, purposes and values.

In the course of conflict and its aftermath, more attention is placed on civil society with the hopes of managing conflict and ensuring that sustained peace is achieved in such regions and with this view, the principal actor in overcoming coming, war and organized violence would be placed on the shoulder of the citizens, communities and civil society organizations (Paffenholz & Spurk, 2006). Paffenholz & Spurk (2006) went further to give a general definition that civil society can be understood as a realm of voluntary engagement within organized structures that stand apart from the domains of government, family, and the market. It's important to

acknowledge that, in reality, the lines dividing these realms can frequently be intricate and indistinct. Their definition goes to show that civil society serve as a link between the state, family and market.

.This concept draws its theoretical root from philosophers of the modern era such as John Locke (1632- 1804): He stressed the independence of civil society from the state and further showcasing the first role of civil society which is the protection of citizens' rights and properties (Merkel & Lauth, 1998; Daya, 2016). John Locke defined the role of society and state through the introduction of the law of nature which states that men are in natural state of freedom and equality. The law buttresses the significance of equality in societies and when the rights of men are neglected, the ugly situations of war arises (Daya, 2016).

Throughout history, prominent philosophers have offered diverse perspectives on the concept of civil society, each contributing distinct dimensions to our comprehension of its role in society. Charles Montesquieu (1689-1755) famously presented a model emphasizing the separation of powers, wherein civil society acts as a critical regulator bridging the gap between citizens and the government. This model underscores the importance of subjecting the state to the rule of law. Similarly, Alexander de Tocqueville (1805-1859) articulated a vital civil society theory centered on voluntary organizations serving as a bulwark against oppressive regimes. His insights shed light on the role of civil society in promoting democratic values and functioning as a safeguard against tyranny. Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), on the other hand, provided a Marxist perspective, highlighting civil society's capacity to either maintain or challenge the established order, offering a lens through which we can analyze societal power dynamics. Jürgen Habermas (1929) focused on the role of civil society within the public sphere, stressing its pivotal function in articulating and organizing the interests of marginalized groups. Habermas's work underscores how civil society can shape the discourse and influence the decision-making processes of political bodies, thereby enriching our understanding of the public domain. Collectively, these thinkers contribute to a multifaceted understanding of civil society's intricate role in shaping governance, promoting democracy, and challenging power structures.

The paragraph above provides an overview of each philosopher's perspective on civil society and briefly comments on the significance of their contributions to the

field of political and social theory.

Peace Building: Paffenholz and Spurk (2006) describe “Peace building” as the engagement in activities whose primary objective is to avert or stop conflict or to sustainably manage violent conflicts with a long-term view in mind. This concept is built around series of activities whose aim are geared at ensuring peace by either trauma healing, reduction of poverty and negotiation which is mostly observed in the aftermath of a long-term crisis to ensure sustained peace and also serve as a platform for economic flourishing, development and reconstruction of nation ravaged by war. Peacebuilding refers to the process of promoting sustained peace through the removal of the root source of crisis, hence, preventing the recurrence of violence or conflict in societies that have experience or are experiencing violent conflicts (Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2013). The central task of peacebuilding according to Haugerudbraaten (1998) is to create positive peace, a “stable social equilibrium in which the surfacing of new disputes does not escalate into violence and war”.

Women and the aftermath of Second World War in Germany: The statistics of Germany’s women demography in the aftermath of the War reveals that the country is dominated by women with the census carried out in 1946 showing that within the age group of 20-29, there were 124 women to every 100 men and this figure later went as high as 171 women for every 100 men OMGUS (1999). The implication of the census indicates that 55% of the general population of Germany then were female. However, the statistics might not reveal so much disparity between male and female population. The actual difference would be observed in the ratio of healthy one as the war had significant effect on the young male population (Stark 2003).

The importance of peace-building cannot be overemphasized as it forms the foundation to any meaningful development and nation building, most especially, in countries that have been significantly impacted by war. The concept of peace-building is tied to the engagement in activities that deescalates conflicts and ensuring adjustment of conflict nation into a peaceful environment which in turns lays foundation for Nation’s development. These activities could be economic, physical and psychological which brings the role of civil societies in peace building into focus. The UN (2015, 2012) documented that civil society are crucial in peace-building as they legitimize the process and project, mediate between communities, highlights the perspective and priorities of local communities, and implement tangible peace building

programmes. One of the objectives of peace building is to reduce and eliminate the frequency and brutality of violent conflicts which, in the case of Germany were observed in the establishment of policy that enables the involvement of civil societies in fighting poverty, rebuilding process and growing the national capacity, thus proving to be a useful tool in sustaining the peace of the country.

The rubble women were particularly significant in the peace building of Germany. The activities of these women might have started as a means of survival. However, the collective efforts of the rubble women in rebuilding their communities fostered a sense of solidarity and cooperation among the affected population. Through the tireless contribution, resilience and resourcefulness demonstrated by rubble women in the aftermath of the war help generate social bonds and mutual trust among individual and groups which became a vital tool in peace building.

The increased role of civil society in the last decade in peace-building and conflict resolution has been advanced by the shortcomings of the traditional mechanism of peacebuilding and conflict resolution that majorly involved military interventions in the 1990s. Paffenholz and Spurk (2015) argue that the 1990s was the decade for civil society and the emergence of non-state actors in conflict resolution. Civil society is the sector of voluntary action within institutional forms that are distinct from those of the state, family and market, keeping in mind that in practice the boundaries between these sectors are often complex and blurred. Civil society is independent from the state, but it is oriented toward and interact closely with the state and the political sphere. The function of civil society indicates that they have an active role to play in ensuring sustained peace of a nation, most significantly, in a war-ravaged region which was the case of Germany at the end of World War II.

Rubble women were particularly important in Germany peacebuilding. The role of these women was crucial in the post war reconstruction efforts in Germany. The reconstruction efforts were significant in creating physical infrastructure necessary for rebuilding and recovery. The collective efforts of rubble women in rebuilding their communities fostered a sense of solidarity and cooperation among German population through the engagement in common activities of rebuilding of their communities. The bond gained through their cooperation is essential in peacebuilding in enhancing trust and understanding. While the experience of rubble women are specific to post- World War II, their contribution holds broader lessons for

peacebuilding efforts worldwide which ultimately contributed to lasting peace and stability.

III. WORLD WAR 2 AND GERMANY

World War II commenced on 1st September, 1939 with Germany attacking of Poland and the entire war lasted a duration of six years with the War coming to an end on 2nd September, 1945. The war is known as the deadliest war in human history, recording great casualties in terms of human and material resources. Scholars and historians had considered the second world war as a continuation of the first World war as the struggle in both wars were same and more so, same nations fought both wars. The attack of Germany on Poland led to the initiation of war against Germany (then Nazi Government) by both the French and British Government which for almost six months, there was no physical combat. Within the duration of one year (1939-1940), the Nazi Government had successfully conquered Czechoslovakia, Poland, Netherland, Belgium and France while Sweden, Finland and Switzerland remained neutral and by no way did they represent a threat to Hitler's intention. The only country that still poised viable threat to the Nazi conquest of the entire Europe was the Soviet Union and Britain (Murray & Allan, 2001).

The Conquest of France was a big surprise to the world while the German red army turned their attention to the invasion of Soviet Union which caught Soviet political leader unprepared despite the stern warning on the intended German Invasion. The Invasion of Soviet Union by 3 million German soldiers represents the largest German force devoted into the war (Operation Barbarossa). By the end of September, 1941, the German forces had conquered Ukraine. Despite the massive attack of the Red Army on Soviet, the invasion failed to achieve Hitler's objective. The second attack by German force saw the Soviet launch counterattack against the German Red Armies; and by January, 1944, the counterattack strategy adopted by the Soviet began to produce considerable result as they had successfully drove the German red Army to the region of Poland, Czeslovakia and Hungary with the Soviet army successfully liberating most of its conquered region from the German force (Overy, 1998).

The conflict between Britain and Soviet Union saw the United States assistance

in more of a passive role but the conflict in Asia between Japan and China had prompted the United State active participation in the war. The Casablanca conference in Morocco saw the agreement of three major forces (U.S, Britain and USSR) against Japan, Italy and Germany. The conference was held in January, 1943 and by July of same year, both British and U.S armies attacked Italy and by 1945, West Europe was liberated from the Nazi forces while the Soviets conquered and liberated East Europe (Murray & Allan, 2001).

The Political heads of Britain, United State and Russia decided to have a meeting on 7th February, 1945 in Soviet Crimean Peninsula in the Black Sea to decide the fate of the Eight (8) nations that have been liberated from control of Nazi government and to discuss the necessary peace building approach that would be utilized after the conquest of German. The conference is known as the Yalta conference. It was in the conference that it was decided that the German state would be divided into different region which would be controlled by the three big nations that participated in the conquest and also the accommodation of France into the Nation that would have regional control of Germany. The Allied nation further promise to ensure the conduction of election in the nations liberated from the Nazi Government to ensure the spread of democracy. Within three months of this meeting, the war in Europe was over (Weinberg, 1995).

After the conquest of Germany, the nation was broken into four separate occupational zones based on the agreement between the three big nations in the conference held at Crimean Peninsula in stipulated the division of Germany into occupational region with also the inclusion of France among the countries having equal control of Germany. The negotiation among this nation saw the capital of Germany, Berlin shared among the four nations; however, the western allies refused the Soviet intention of splitting Germany into separate state and the payment of huge amount of reparations to Germany.

War always has devastating effect on the economy and stability of any nation and World War II had similar effect on the countries that engage in this war, with Germany, among the leading countries based on casualty level. Stark (2018) reported that Germany suffered about 6.9 million casualties with 3.3 million being soldiers while 3.6 million of the casualties were civilians, due to the intensified allied bombing campaign and invasion of Germany territory which as a result, the losses in both

material infrastructure and capital were huge. Yuksel, Khamis and Yuksel (2011) lay emphasis on the destruction of both physical and public infrastructure, and the reduction of the economic strength were some of the effects of armed conflicts. The Allied air forces invasion of Germany's cities with more than a half million tons of bombs was estimated to have decimated over 40% of the nationwide total housing stock and as such the country's major cities were reduced to rubble, leaving many homeless in the process (Diefendorf, 1993). Similar view was shared by Muller (2016) as she noted that major Germany's cities such as Berlin, Hamburg and Munich were left in ruin as a result of the devastating impact of the war.

The history of World War II holds significant importance in enabling us to learn from past mistakes and avoid repeating them. By examining the causes, consequences and outcomes of the war helps to identify patterns and factors that lead to violence which would help prevent future war. For World War II, it could be seen as a continuation of World War I as similar nations engaged in this conflict, thus, for any meaningful peace resolution, addressing of the root cause of the violence is imperative and the root cause can be traced from history perspective of war.

World War II had a significant impact on Germany, with the aftermath of the war causing foundational and structural crises (Hockerts, 1986), particularly in relation to the welfare of the state. The immediate impacts of the war were observed in the depletion of both human and material resources. The war resulted in the loss of 5 million housing units and 1.63 million homes, making several German citizens homeless and overcrowding refugee situations (Fröhlich, 2013, p.12).

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of cities in the year 1939, with each city represented by a circle. The size of these circles corresponds to the population size of the cities at that time. The largest circles represent cities with over 500,000 inhabitants, the medium-sized circles depict cities with populations between 100,000 and 500,000, and the smallest circles represent cities with less than 100,000 inhabitants.

Additionally, the shaded areas within the circles indicate the extent of destruction these cities suffered by the end of World War II. This shading offers a clear perspective on the magnitude of damage and devastation inflicted upon these urban centers during the course of the war.

This visual representation, sourced from Knopp (2001), offers an effective way to understand the relationship between the pre-war population size of cities and the extent of destruction they experienced during World War II, providing valuable insights into the impact of the conflict on urban areas.

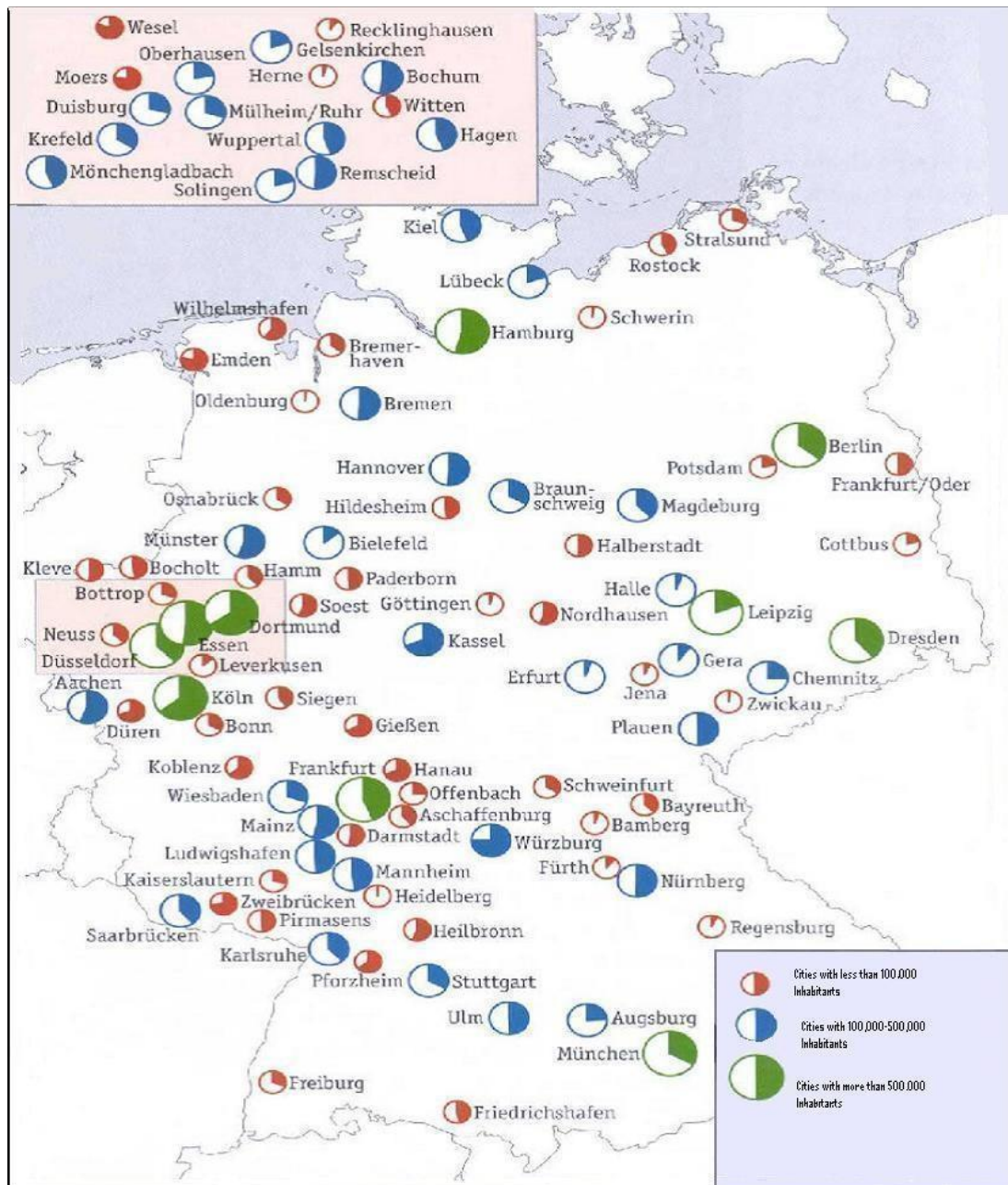


Figure 1: The size of the cities is reflected in the size of circle as at 1939. Largest circle (cities with more than 500,000 inhabitants), middle-size circle (cities between 100,000 and 500,000 inhabitants) and the smallest circle (cities with less than 100,000 inhabitants) while the shaded area is the magnitude of destruction by the end of WWII.

[Source: Knopp ,2001]

In the aftermath of the war, Germany's female population dominated, with a census carried out in 1946 showing that there were 124 women to every 100 men in the age group of 20-29, indicating that 55% of the general population of Germany then was female (OMGUS, 1999). However, the actual difference was observed in the ratio of healthy males, as the war had significant effects on the young male population (Stark, 2003). The disparity between Germans grew even further when displaced foreigners and working prisoners of war (mostly male) were removed from the equation.

The impact of the war was more intense among the male population, and as a result, women had to come out to work and contribute to the swift development of the country, giving rise to Rubble Women, a civil group that aided in rebuilding the country to ensure sustained peace. Their efforts served as a foundation for which Germany has been able to fend off hunger and starvation that might have brought internal political instability.

The Allied Control Council and United Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) had to create change in her social policy to accommodate various groups (Slave labourers, Prisoners of War, Inmates of concentration camp among other refugees) that were still in the region controlled by Western Allied when the war stopped, with over a million of them not repatriated (Cohen, 2008).

The war was observed to have a significant impact on Germany's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with the increment in social spending of around 30% in 1950 due to expenditures on war-related expenses, and in 1960, the figure shows an increase from 15.7% to 18.1% of GDP, indicating a 15% increment (Zöllner, 1963, p. 43). The intervention programmes in Germany at that time were geared towards compensation of death during military service, rehabilitation of housing and other institution (Hockerts, 2001).

Germany was held responsible for starting World War II, and as a result, they had to take responsibility and pay reparations to France, Soviet, and the United Kingdom, amounting to 121 billion dollars (equivalency of 2016 dollars) mainly in the form of dismantled factories, forced labor, and coal between 1945 and 1951. The Allied Force Council policy at that time aimed at destroying Germany's ability to wage future wars by de-industrializing the nation (Krause & Hoffman, 2001). The reparations also contributed to Germany's economic trouble, with the Allied forces at

that time unwilling to render Germany assistance on its economic challenges.

World War II was observed to have catastrophic impact on Germany with the destruction of properties and a high casualty of both civilian and soldiers with Starke (2018) noting that Germany suffered about 6.9 million casualties which 3.3 million are soldiers and 3.6 million Civilians due to the intensified allied bombing campaign and invasion of Germany territory which as a result, the losses in both material infrastructure and capital were huge. However, there had been nagging question of women not getting the recognition they deserve for their role in the economic and peaceful society that Germany currently enjoy despite a popular image of the aftermath of the war showing a chain of women with bucket removing piles of collapsed building in the country's reconstruction phase (Figure 2).



Figure 2. A chain of women with bucket removing piles of collapsed building in the country's reconstruction phase.

[Source: BBC, 2023]

The War which lasted a duration of six years within 1939 and 1945 had a massive impact on all parties involved, with Germany suffering catastrophically from the aerial assault of Allied Forces. To considerably understand the role that women played in the rebuilding of Germany, the impact of the war, the position of women during the Nazi regime, during the War, and in the aftermath of the conflict should be reviewed. More so, literatures on the emergence of the rubble women which represent a symbol of hope in the rebuilding phase of Germany and how important these women

group were to the social, political and economic stability of the country with consideration also placed on the policy of different occupation political head that aided women function in the different occupational unit of German. The literature review would be within the boundaries of the concept of civil society bearing in mind the function of civil society and how the activities of rubble women fits into the general function of civil society.

The position of women during the Nazi regime was a bit complex considering that women played an active role in the assumption of power by Hitler. The National Socialist German Workers' party (NSDAP) gained much power in the early 1930's, just after the economic depression of 1929. The rise of the party was observed to be quite exponential and impressive considering the fact that the party moved from just a minor party into a significant national parliament (Reichstag) faction and in the 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed as Germany's political head with majority of women in support of Hitler. Helen Boak noted that "because of the preponderance of women in the electorate, the NSDAP received more votes from women than from men in some areas before 1932 and throughout the Reich in 1932" (Boak, 1989: 303). The reason for the great support for Hitler stems from the fact that he was viewed as a charismatic leader that would stand for the people in a time of economic downturn and came up with a policy that encompasses all facet of life of the common man as such he was seen as leader in a dire time of need.

However, to properly understand the position of women during the Nazi regime, it is imperative to look back at the impact of the First World War and the emancipation of women which was notable with the right of women to vote in Germany in November 30th of 1918 (Evans, 1980). The first world war had given women a level of independence due to the engagement of men in the war and, as such, there was a high demand for women in the workforce and even in the production of weapons which was in contrast to the tradition role of women that was usually centred around domestic activities in home and the raising of children. The statistics of women in the workforce as at 1918 shows a staggering 11 million women that were actively working which represent 38% of the workforce (Evans, 1980). The high employment of women was beginning to become a cause of concern to male considering the position of women had changed after the first war and German men were nursing the fear that women were stealing their jobs and have moved from their traditional role of

nursing the home and raising of children. More so, the loss of the first war had damped the ego of German men. According to (Mosse, 1996) The rise of the Nazi regime presented an opportunity for the men to establish their dominance and the return of the traditional gender roles in the society for the betterment of the German society. Therefore, women would be viewed as mothers while their male counterpart as warrior/breadwinner.

One of Hitler's social policies was geared at returning women to the role of motherhood as he believes in the increasing of German population. To further his agenda, the July 1933 law of marriage was passed which ensures that newly married couple were given a baby bonus of 1,000 Reichmarks which represent state loan with a quarter of the loan paid after the first child of the couple (Somcutean, 2022). The loan would be fully paid after the couple had given birth to four children as such over 695,000 married couple were beneficiary of the loan between 1933 and 1936. Hitler believed that the utmost duty of a woman is centred on bearing and raising of children. In a 1935 speech, the Nazi leader said that

“The granting of equal rights to women, which Marxism demands, in reality does not grant equal rights ... it instead constitutes a deprivation of rights, since it draws women into realms of society where they are inferior. The woman has her own battlefield. With every child that she brings into the world, she fights her battle for the nation” (Stephenson, 2001).

It's no surprise that Nazi government of Hitler greatly discourages abortion as they consider it a crime against the body of the woman and importantly, a crime against the state which was the reason that the requirements for the termination of pregnancy was stiff and usually on medical ground. The strong discouragement of abortion applies to pure Aryan couples while Jewish women were fully allowed to abort their babies. The stiff requirement led to the statistics of the number of German women who filed for abortion dropping from 44,000 with 34,698 approved before 1932 while the prior mentioned figured dropped to 14,333 between 1935 and 1940 and 9,701 approved. This showed a high drop in child mortality rate and signifies the significance placed on the development of pure Aryan population (Stephenson, 2001).

Hitler did not encourage the engagement of women on employment which he believes will strip them of their femininity. As at the time that the Nazi government took over power, there was an estimate of over 100,000 female teachers while the

number of working doctors stood at around 3000 with a huge number of them sacked and forced into marriage (Stephenson, 2001). While beginning from 1936, women were prohibited as judges, Principals, lawyers and host of other profession. Therefore, Hitler's policy influenced women position with his action against high ranking female professionals. Stephenson (2001) noted that despite the existence of the myth that women were driven out in large number from work force which was considerably true with women in upper rank of civil service and professional, for instance the exclusion of women from judiciary and bar, however, the number of women working in lower level increased. The position of women in Germany was already threatened by the economic crisis of the early 1930s which had a massive impact on the labour force of most nations which Germany was not excluded (Gupta, 1991).

A. Peace Building And Civil Society

The argument of Salamon and Anheier (1996) and Paffenholz and Spurk (2006) is on the basis of peace-building being necessary for the prevention of relapse into armed violence or conflict which is a short term objective and may not primarily bring about sustained peace. The perspective of these scholars is indicative that peace-building process goes beyond the immediate aftermath of armed conflict or peacekeeping. Therefore, the definition of peace-building should capture a broader approach that is consistent with the view point of several actors. It is in that view in mind that Laderach and his team discussed a broader approach to peace –building which they noted “is the development of constructive personal, group, and political relationships across ethnic, religious, class, national, and racial boundaries. It aims to resolve injustice in nonviolent ways and to transform the structural conditions that generate deadly conflict. Conflict prevention, conflict management, conflict resolution and transformation, and post-conflict reconciliation are all part of peace building” (The Kroc Institute, 2012). This definition of peacebuilding is consistent with the view point of Galtung (1996) as it encapsulates the concept of negative and positive peace which in return provides an avenue for stable structural transformation. The lack of a precise definition of peace-building has led to scholars such as Haugerudbraaten (1998) to stress that the term definition of peacebuilding still remains vague considering that various actors ranging from government to non- governmental organization all possess their theory and viewpoint to the concept.

John Galtung had been known and credited for his role in peace studies and also for the invention of the term peacebuilding which comes from two separate words “Peace” and “building”. This term when put together is a process of peace development. World War II laid the foundation for peacebuilding despite the word was coined long after the war and as such organizations such as United Nations among many others were established to help in preventing the outbreak of conflict, de-escalation of conflict and laying the framework for the transition of war countries into peaceful and stable countries by making and implementation of peace agreements. Alif (2014) noted that peace building became a term with wide spread usage after the secretary general of United Nations, Boutros Boutros Ghali highlighted the agenda for peace in 1992. The then secretary general announced that “Action to identify and support structures which tend to strengthen and solidify peace to avoid a relapse into Conflict” which proves important in the sustenance of peace in mostly regions that have been plagued by war and internal crisis. Since the earlier usage of peace building, the term has become synonymous with crisis prevention, management and peace sustenance. Alif (2014) noted that “peace building has become a broadly used but often ill-defined term implying activities that go beyond crisis intervention, such as long term development, building of governance structures and institutions or building the capacity of non-governmental organizations (including religious institutions) for peace-making and peace building”. United Nations secretary noted that Peacebuilding encompasses a diverse array of actions aimed at diminishing the likelihood of a return to conflict by enhancing a nation's ability at all levels to handle and resolve conflicts. It also aims to establish the groundwork for enduring peace and progress. Effective peacebuilding plans should be harmonious and customized to suit the unique requirements of the country involved. They should be grounded in the ownership of the nation itself and should encompass a well-defined, step-by-step, and relatively focused set of initiatives designed to attain the aforementioned objectives (United Nations, 2010).

Miller and King (2005) explained the concept of peacebuilding as a process that enables social political institutions which in return provides a platform for the sustenance of peace. They noted further that this platform can be policies, programmes and other forms of initiative that are geared towards peace sustenance. Tschirgi (2003) proposed the significance of peacebuilding to include approaches that are targeted at prevention and resolving conflict and important, the reconstruction activities that aid

preventing the relapsing into conflict in post conflict situation and therefore, peacebuilding effort are aimed at tackling the underlying causes of conflict which could range from environment to social economical to structural and political factors (Lederach, 1997).

Peace building are programme set up to address the root cause of violence and the setting up of agenda necessary for the settlement of previous grievance that would ensure lasting peace. Licklider (1995) pointed that “despite violence can be averted or ended through peace agreement or military victory, it does not imply the presence or achievement of peace but the ending of violence or a so-called ‘post-Conflict’ situation provides a new set of opportunities that can be grasped or thrown away”.

Peace building, according to Cousens and Chetan (2001), are plans set up to ensure the promotion of sustained peace through the meeting of the population basic needs so as to ensure that conflict do not reoccur or the relapsing of those nations into conflicts and as such, several authors noted the importance of negative and positive peace to ensure broader peace among population.

The factors that cause violence are significant for a meaningful step to be taken in deescalating of conflict which brings in mind the quote taken from Spence (2001). She noted that the activities and processes that aim to address the root causes of a conflict, rather than just its effects, and promote the rebuilding and rehabilitation of all sectors of a war-torn society. These activities also encourage and support interaction between all sectors of society to repair damaged relationships and restore dignity and trust. They recognize the unique circumstances of each post-conflict situation and promote the participation of local resources in designing, implementing, and sustaining activities and processes. Additionally, they aim to promote lasting change beyond the initial emergency recovery phase (Spence, 2001).

Post conflict or post war peace building plan requires a more integral approach that are usually complex but when integrated properly would ensure sustained peace over time. The activities require the involvement of non-governmental organization, Financial institution and both local and national actors. The United Nations Security council president noted in his speech the importance of peace building which he informed encapsulate the activities that are designed to prevent the outbreak of conflict or stop an on-going armed conflict and therefore, both short and long term effort such as developmental policy, humanitarian services, protection of human right laws, and

any other mechanism that are targeted at reduction of poverty and improving standard of living should be put in place. These activities are channelled towards addressing the needs of the people and prevent relapse into conflict. More so, these actions should ensure unity by providing good and accountable governance, development of quality democratic governance and the total obedience to the rule of law (United Nations, 2010).

The task of peace building has been reported by several authors as no simple feat and it is therefore dependent on several factors such as the nature of the conflict, the economic structure of the country, region and the status of the country in international community. Peace building in post war scenario requires both the tools for peace and war economics to enable the sustenance of peace. The war economics in question deals with the repairing of physical and social infrastructure with scholars of the school of thought that the starting point of peace building in war plagued region should have commenced with reconstruction. However, other long-term goal should be targeted at the reconstruction of political, cultural and social economical institution (Carbonnier, 1998).

International actors such as UN and the international community have been heavily involved in the aftermath of conflict to ensure the sustenance of peace within specific time boundary and more importantly the aiding of nation in the reestablishment of both political and structural development with this process requiring ample fund which are not usually available as resources are scarce and there are also other conflicting nation that further requires their service which therefore, makes their effort a short term and as such, it is expedient for local actors to step in to ensure the long term sustainability of peace-building process within their communities. The combination of international organization, the international community and local actors are necessary for the sustenance of both short and long term peacebuilding.

The importance of civil society has been observed to hinge on essential values that cut across good governance, human right and democracy and as such, these voluntary group have become integral in the debate for good governance across all levels of political and social institution from the national to regional and international level with the driving force behind these voluntary group based on shared goal and in the interest of the common man. World Bank (2010) defines civil society as the wide array of no-government and non-profit organization that has a presence in public life,

expressing the interest and values of their members or others based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations. Civil societies encompass a wide array of organizations: community groups, non-governmental organizations, faith based organizations, professional associations and foundation.

The definition of civil society according to World Bank buttresses the importance of the interest of her members and the public as this society encapsulates a wide range of non-profit organization ranging from community to faith base. Merkel and Lauth (1998, p. 7) definition of civil society collaborates with World Bank definition as they believe that civil society based on shared interest, value and purpose. The enrolments into these societies are based on their voluntary and un-coaxed intention. Merkel and Lauth (1998, p. 7) defined Civil Society as “independent from the state, but it is oriented toward and interacts closely with the state and the political sphere. This definition already implies a particular understanding of the interaction between civil society and the state, government and business. Although civil society interacts with these other sectors, especially with the state, it does not replace these sectors and its political actors, but rather aims to improve their effectiveness and responsiveness”.

Civil societies are in different category and structure with these differences enables them to effectively represent numerous interest and value. More so, the diverse forms which they exist enables them pursue the goals of the society in which they are representing adequately.

The history of Civil society dates back to the era of Aristotle, the famous Greek philosophers while other scholars such as John Locke (1632- 1804), Charles Montesquieu (1689-1755), Alexander de Tocqueville (1805-1859), Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) and Jürgen Habermas (1929), all stamping their opinions on the concept of civil society. The recent of these philosophers, being Merkel and Lauth as they were cited in Ho-won Jeong (2005), show that civil society “has recently gained prominence as a tool to check the excess use of power by the state and to reduce its potential to oppress its citizens and interfere in the exercise of individual freedoms. Civil society is composed of a diversity of actors made up of all types of alliances independent from the state”. The role of civil society by this author is suggestive of their importance as a check and balance to the state and also serving in the interest of the people. The definition of Civil Society by World bank is in agreement with the role of the societies

as stated by Merkel and Lauth (1998) as they comprise of several non-governmental organization in synchronization with the people and as a result provides a voice and further advocating the value they represents. These organization ranges from labour union to women association to traditional association that are aimed at improving their community which set them apart as a voluntary organization that are distinct from the state, family, economic group and brings the concept of civil society according to Paffenholz and Spurk (2010) into fray. They describe Civil society to “operates in the space between the state, business and the family and some scholars have coined the term “third sector” to describe its independence from the state and business, profit making sector” (Salamon & Anheier, 1996, p.3).

According to Paffenholz and Spurk, civil society can be described as a realm of voluntary activities that stands apart from the state, politics, the private sector, and the economic sphere. It is essential to acknowledge that in practice, the boundaries between these sectors often become intricate and blurred. Civil society encompasses a vast and diverse array of voluntary organizations, all of which compete with one another and are oriented towards specific interests. These organizations are not solely driven by private or economic motives; they are autonomously organized and engage actively within the public sphere. Consequently, civil society maintains its independence from the state and the political sphere while closely aligning with and interacting with them.

Lederach (1997) noted the contribution of civil society (especially NGOs) to the development of sustained peace. He stressed on the inclusion or contribution of local civil society which forms the foundation of long term sustenance of peace considering that they possess the ability to provide cultural and local solution to their issues while international civil society might provide the short term solution to this problem, they usually lack the resources necessary to ensure the long term sustenance of peace as such, the contribution of local and international civil society is vital in the process of peace building. He further made suggestion of a model that accommodates these three actors and strategies to peace building. “The levels range from top level leadership who have limited scope, middle level leaders who engage in problem solving activities and the grassroots level leadership who engage in local peace commissions and relationship building among the parties in direct conflict to build sustainable peace”. The approaches or strategies proposed by Laderach are based on

actors in civil society approach while the second approach is based on the function of civil society approach. However, scholars have debated that function based approach provides a robust and broader understanding of civil society roles in peacebuilding. Merkel and Lauth (1998) proposed seven function of civil society which include protection of lives and properties of citizens against destructive capacity of violence, monitoring to check against infringement of human right and to ensure that government remains faithful to its citizens, advocacy for the upholding of human right to ensure peace, socialization as a core value to promote democracy and unity within group, social cohesion for uniting of conflicting group, facilitation and mediation function to promote dialogue by bringing conflicting groups together by a neutral mediator and service delivery.

B. Relationship between Civil Society and peace building

A strong relationship has been observed between Civil Society and Peace building. Paffenholz (2015) provides the instance were civil society comes to play in post war situation in which they noted to be germane in the process of development of sustain peace and conflict resolution situation. They stressed that the role of Civil society in peace building have grown since the 1992 UN agenda for peace establishment which as a result, aids Civil society and play pivotal role in peace process. Consequently, the role of civil society has increased in the last two decades (John & Kew, 2008). The growth of civil society is attributed to the fact that it's difficult for both government and international organization to secure sustained peace without the cooperation of the larger population which therefor shows the significance of the society, as the act in the interest of the public (Galtung, 1969) and providing the frame work for peace building.

The function of civil society and its role in the process of peace building set these societies apart from other governmental organization. Paffenholz and Spurk (2015) noted seven (7) major contributions of civil society to the process of peace building which are:

1. Protection

A fundamental role of civil society is the provision of adequate security of its members which they perform either in collaboration with other agency or alone despite

protection of lives and properties being the primary responsibility of the government, civil society tends to also support in this regards. This function is a primary responsibility of the state but in conflict situation, there tend not to be inadequate communication and relationship between the state and the people, therefore, the onus now lie on civil society to ensure the safety of members mostly during conflict or in the aftermath of such violence. It is noted that diverse forms of civil society exist with each distinct group having different function and as such, some civil society takes up responsibility of protection of members considering the responsibility of others could be limited by the activities of violence. Some of the example of protection civil society is the peace brigades' international that serves local actors in activities that pertains watchdog or through direct protection.

2. Monitoring

This function becomes more effective when combined with other approaches such as advocacy and protection. For instance, several international organizations such UN serves as a monitoring agency over any infringement or human right violation by military personnel and the government of conflicting nations with channel of information usually through local monitoring organization. The role of both local and international civil society as it pertains to the function of monitoring is to serve as oversight on relevant issue such as infringement to human right, ensuring of the implementation of agreement between two or more parties, and proposing of recommendation to decision makers and advocacy groups. The function of monitoring carries potency as it serves as a check to government and armed groups to check against the abuse of power.

3. Advocacy:

The advocacy group consist of the public and non-public channels with public advocacy comprises of press release, protest, petition, public or social media campaigns while non-public advocacy are usually back channels and informal relationships and dialogues. The significance of such civil society is for the application of pressure that can kick start the process of negotiation and importantly, the implementation of agreement between both parties. Advocacy campaigns have been able to achieved considerable result through the process of lobbying for instance

campaigns against women and child molestation by soldier, blood diamond among many others. The effectiveness of advocacy campaign is dependent on civil society in depth knowledge and their ability to base their movement base on the report of monitoring team. More so, they should possess the ability to maximise the potential of social media to provide support for their cause, for Instance, “in Northern Ireland, civil society groups managed to lobby successfully for the integration of human rights provisions into the peace agreement” which stress the significance of civil society groups.

4. Socialisation

This value showcases the growth of a democratic, peaceful environment through the process bounding within groups. The realisation of socialisation is usually through the encouragement of participation of citizens in various movements, association or network. Socialization can only happen between members of same group but not of opposing or adversary group. Virtually all local and national association that coexist are practical example of socialization and further showcases this function. Socialisations for peace and identity development group are basically the two type of socialization as it pertains to the function of civil society in peace building. Peace socialization is aimed at activities directed towards the development of peace within group and in the society at large while the later plays the role of aiding marginalised group in developing a sense of belonging or identity and consequently, assisting their behaviour in a peaceful manner. “The key institutions in society that influence how people learn democratic and conflict-response behaviour are families, schools, religious groups, secular and cultural associations, and the workplace”. In the aftermath of conflict, socialisation ensures unity, thus bridging the cracks that exist.

5. Social cohesion:

The significance of this function is for upholding unity between diverse opposing group as the bound between group tends regress or destroyed during conflict between these groups and therefore, it is necessary to back the ties between these groups for the development of sustained peace. The major aim of social cohesion is to enable these groups live together in harmony and peace. However, civil societies, rarely makes their desired impact in social cohesion due to diverse challenges they encounter. The conflicting groups could be united through social institution such as

schools, families, religious group and if these social institutions are separated, social cohesion tends to become non effective for example, in clan base conflict. To maximise the outcome of social cohesion, there should be a common cause for bringing people together rather than focusing on the reconciliation agenda and as such the effectiveness of these approach is more centred on long term systematic initiative rather than diverse short-term plan.

6. Facilitation and Mediation

Civil society under this function act as intermediaries between both aggrieved parties for the reason of finding lasting peace or aid the process of transition into peace. Mediation can take place at different levels ranging from local to national for instance, “in Afghanistan during the Taliban rule, traditional mediation was the only resource for facilitating peace between the Taliban and the various Afghani communities. The Tribal Liaison Office helped organise local peace jirgas with religious and local leaders to explore options for peacebuilding” while on the national or international level, some international non-governmental organization act as intermediaries between parties. A good mediator must have a proper understanding of the conflicting issue in order to serve both parties without any form of prejudice.

7. Service delivery

This function is mostly very active during armed conflict as it involves the rendering of essential service such as vaccination and food programmes among many other service to population that are starved due to weaken state structure. The civil societies that function in this capacity are usually NGOs and possess the capacity of rendering aids and other social assistance. Consequently, service delivery has a significant on peacebuilding process with agency under this civil society possessing the ability work in protection and social cohesion capacity and this function is more prominent in the aftermath of a large-scale violence.

IV. RUBBLE WOMEN

In this part, the thesis focuses on the position of women during the war, the aftermath impact that the war had on women and the contributions of rubble women towards the development and the rebuilding of the country from its rubble which will answer research question. The significance of this section showcases the state of Germany at that period which goes to say that Rubble women contribution should not be taken as a mere feat bearing in mind that the country was in ruin and devoid of hope at that period and women had to take up responsibilities within the society to ensure the survival of their family and communities.

A. Impact of the War on Women

Women were mostly in the receiving end of the war considering they had to take on the challenge and the gap left by the devastating nature of the war. The impact of the war was significant in Germany with the destruction of over 40% of the country's housing stock as a result of the detonation of over a half million ton of bomb through her aerial attack of the cities (Diefendorf, 1993). The effect of the aerial attack of the Allied force had led to many German families to be displaced from their houses and created a situation of overcrowding in the few available houses still left. Heneiman (1996) noted that at the end of the war, over 14 million people were left homeless as a direct consequence of the war with women and their families living in either partially destroyed building or in rubble or they had to live in the area of their apartment that was still in partially good condition due to their need for their survival while others had to move in with neighbours.

Starvation and malnutrition were a major challenge that was faced by German women in the aftermath of the war with many women having to starve so that their children could have a bit more to eat. Women had to find ways to support their family despite the unavailability of food and as such, trading in black market or travelling long distance to secure food became vital for their survival with poverty a major challenge during that period (Yuksel et. al., 2011). To increase women participation in

the country's rebuilding, the Allied force Council had mandate women between the ages of 15 and 50 to register with the labour force. This announcement was made in January, 1946 via command Nr. 3. The penalty of not registering and engaging in rubble removal and reconstruction means the loss the individual food ration card. The announcement became a foundation for the introduction of rubble women (Yuksel et. al., 2011).

The challenge of safety represents a major problem faced by German women and girls in the aftermath of the war with several women becoming a victim of rape, sexual molestation and different manner of assault. More so, the attacks had a disastrous consequence on the male population with the loss of a high percentage of the male population due their active engagement in the war front which resulted in the death of many, the capturing of some as prisoners of war and the disabilities that befell some as a result of engagement in the war. Stark (2018) reported that Germany suffered about 6.9 million casualties which 3.3 million are soldiers and 3.6 million Civilians due to the intensified allied bombing campaign and invasion of Germany territory which as a result, the losses in both material infrastructures. Consequently, with the depleted number of male populations placed the responsibility of rebuilding on women, thus, acting in the capacity of removal of rubble and further reconstruction of the nation

B. Position of women during the War

The position of when change during the course of the war as a result of the gap left by German men considering majority of men within working age were involved in the war and there is need for war production which places the need for the participation of all citizens. Gertrud Scholtz-Klink, leader of the *NS-Frauenschaft* noted that "Our men at the front do their duty in the face of death – we women at home, with the same unflinching courage". The prior mentioned statement goes against the earlier policy of the Nazi regime that restricted women to the traditional role as mothers. More so, in the bid to boost the morale of men who were on the warfront, the government ensured that their family were taken care of by providing generous compensation for women whose husband is actively engaged in the war. The income giving too women had affected the number of women employed in Germany within the duration 1939 and 1942 as women were not actually persuaded to go back to work

(Jonathan, 2011).

The position of women during the tail end of the world changed as they were much vulnerable due to the offensive nature of the Allied force on Germany. Several millions of German women lost their homes and lives while some had family members separated. In Hamburg, between 40,000 and 100, 000 loss their lives in a week long raid while almost 60% of the city was in alter ruin which left 750,000 people homeless while at the end of the War, 14 million loss their homes and 600,000 loss their lives (Heineman, 1996). The loss of their homes meant that they had to move in with relative, friends or with a total strangers just for the survival of their family. Heineman (1996, p. 362) noted that by that at the beginning of 1943, “10 million people, mainly women and children, were evacuated from Germany's cities. But being a woman did not qualify an adult for evacuation; rather, nonemployee status or responsibility for small children did. Working women without children remained in the endangered cities, as did most working mothers; only women caring for very young children could accompany their children into evacuation”. This meant that working class women were in constant fear over the safety of their lives.

After the conquer of Germany, many Germans were observed to flee towards the Western allies which is understandable considering the fear that most German have of the Soviet with the fear steaming from the from the fact that most German expect much hash revenge from the Soviet (Beiss, 2023). More so, rumours from refuges was about the widespread cases of rape and slaughter in the hands of the Soviet. The presence of men even when available when unable to provide cover for women as such they were seen as a burden and not helpful and might even consider trading the women safety for their own. For the women, the fear of the rape was not the only danger, but the sporadic shooting that ensues after some of these episodes represent the real danger (Heineman, 1996). The mounting pregnancy, widespread internal injury and cases of sexually transmitted diseases leaves women in a more vulnerable state. It was odd that Rape was widespread at that time yet it was not considered as war time injury due to no lasting physical damage sustained, therefore, rape victim were not supported and even compensated (Beiss, 2023).

C. Contributions of Rubble Women

The contribution of rubble women in each of the occupational zone became a

beacon of hope considering the tedious nature of the work. Heineman (1996, Pg. 45) noted that the “Woman of the Rubble quickly came to suggest a story that began with the bombing of German cities, focused on terrible hardships, and promised renewal by the cooperative efforts of ordinary Germans. Women of the Rubble-women projected an image of political neutrality, equality in sacrifice, and an ability to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps”. Therefore, women role is critical to development of Germany.

According to Mingus (2017), the German Nazi Government had surrendered to the Allied forces on May 8th, 1945 and its central Government was dissolved with the country under full control of the Allied forces as at 5th June, 1945. The major challenges that faced the country as a result of the war includes malnutrition as result of Starvation and food scarcity, destruction of residential building and factories, the drastic reduction of goods and services (Mierzejewski, 2004). The onus faced by the Allied forces Government was to help restart the economy by repairing the damaged structures and also provides employment in the process for German citizens. This prompted the Allied Command Nr. 3 that mandated women within working age (15-50) to participate in the process of rubble removal and reconstruction thus, initiated the role of “Rubble Women” which represents virtuous women actively involved in the process of peace building in a country that could have succumbed to internal conflict if the challenges faced by the country as at that time were no addressed.

Women should be given an active voice in the process of peace building as the term can be defined as a concrete action taken to support and promote peace, or as an aggregate process that a modification of social structure (political, social, economic, cultural and psychological) through a number of broad developments, notably democratization, economic development and demilitarization. The adjective ‘aggregate’ is used to highlight the fact that peace-building in this sense is an outcome that depends on the combined effect of a number of actions occurring at different levels (Goyol, 2019). From the stand point of this definition of peace building, it shows that women’s active role in development of Germany after the war places their involvement as an important role in the process of peace building in Germany. The role of these women is quite immense as they perform the dual responsibility of reconstruction and also the sustaining the needs of their families, following both the physical and psychological trauma that accompanied the war.

The women's contribution as rubble workers were not limited to physical labour, they also took on administrative and organizational roles. They played essential roles in coordinating the reconstruction efforts, managing supplies and supporting the overall rebuilding process. The work of the rubble women was not only physically demanding but emotionally and mentally taxing as well. Many women experienced resilience and determination in rebuilding their country through the reconstruction of schools, hospitals, factories and restoring the destroyed infrastructure (Stark, 2003). These activities might not only be the reason for Germany sustained peace but to a large extent played a contributory role

It has been observed across countries that are suffering armed conflicts and in the post conflict period that women and children still remain vulnerable to several inhumane acts which necessitate the involvement of women in the process of peace building as they hold different perspective to the state concept of peace building. Women in third world countries where intra-state conflicts were prevalent are vulnerable to war committed atrocities such as raping, kidnapping, harassment and so on. In addition to these vulnerabilities, there had been the pre-existing gender imbalance in level of political, economic and social power that women were already suffering (United Nations, 2002).

Truemmerfrauen which could be translated in English as rubble women represent German women who assisted in the clearing of the collapsed cities of Germany from its rubble and the reconstruction of these cities due to the skewed statistics of men in Germany after the war with a percentage of male population unfit for work due to physical and psychological trauma sustained from the war. The Truemmerfrauen included both volunteers and regular women; therefore, the name rubble women came as a result of the action carried out by women in Germany. Despite it could be argued that the prior mentioned law prompted the entry of "Rubble Women" into the active reconstruction of German cities as a result of daily food ration with the duration of daily work based on the extent of damage on each of the city. The women organized themselves in an efficient manner which set the foundation of the sustained peace that the country have enjoyed over time with some researchers arguing that this point prove to be useful in the emancipation of women in Germany. More so, the level of their organization proved important as it set the foundation for women involvement in political party which was more exemplified in women contribution in

the Soviet occupation (Stark, 2003).

The women in the Soviet were instrumental to the organization of women in the other Occupation. Stark (2003) noted that the organized manner at which the women in the soviet occupation handled the clearing of rubble prompted the political leader of the Soviet, to organise these women into the Democratic Women's League of German in 1947 with Anne-Marie Durand-Wever being the pioneer chairwoman. Though the Soviet showed the earliest interest on women organization, the other occupation were not far behind aside the French occupation that never set up activities geared towards the empowerment of women as women in the French occupation were seen from a view point of threat. The reason for the French perspective of women is not far fetch from the fact that German women were seen as sisters, daughters and mothers of German men who had ravaged their country" (Stark, 2003, p. 367) as such they felt that the women were as well guilty as the men. The French soldiers were emasculated by the 1940 German force victory. It was until 1947 that the French zone began to record the activities of women and they did so as if German women group were a dangerous activist group that could become a potential source of unrest and even generate resistance against French occupation government.

D. The role of Women in Peace building

The voice of women is significant in the process of peace building, most notably in the aftermath of conflict such as the Second World War; as this category are usually victims of the animosity that have brewed between the surrendered party and the control party, and as a result, several violent crimes are directed towards them. The cases of German women were no different as there were several reports of rape cases between Soviet soldiers and German women coupled with some other inhumane acts.

The role of women in peacebuilding has been limited despite the impact of war on this gender.

"Peacebuilding will be defined as a 'range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development', and reconciliation will be included under this term" (Khodary, 2016,

p. 499).

The role of women in peace building has not been considerable research. Moghadam (2005) buttress that women have been neglected in in peace building and peace negotiation with the author going further to dispel the sociological theory that it's a man's world. It is quit unfortunate that the construct of masculinity and femininity are imbibed in children from an early age. Moghadam (2005) argument reflects that gender does not control our actions and contribution to the society but base on our personal development. Their argument on women's role in peace building should negate the perspective that they are naturally peaceful but should come from the fact that they possess equal right as the male. They further assess some of the role women perform in peace building to include advocacy, running campaigns, promotion of democracy and the protection of human right, relief aid workers, facilitation or mediation, counselling and policy making. The authors' further stress on the negative stereotype of perceiving women from the stand point of victim considering that the stereotype creates difficulty for women to enter into the process of peace building as workers and further, having significant contribution in negotiation processes.

Jordan (2003) research on women in peace building indicates that women often don't get the deserve recognition that should be extended to them in comparison to their male counterpart. She stressed that despite the ever presence of women in this process, they are still not visible. The same view point was shared by Manchanda (2005) who examined women as been seen as inferior and not giving same recognition as the male. The author cited (UNIFEM, 2004) that noted that women are recognized in peace building as important but not in the aspect of reconstruction. "This is in large measure due to the fact that women's contributions 'usually are informal, ad hoc and rarely part of formal peace processes, so their stories often drift, unacknowledged'" (Porter, 2007 , p. 1).

Pankhurst (2003) discussed that more women are been drafted in the process of peace building in recent years, however, their roles have not evolved into a better and safer life for women in the aftermath of conflict. She further made reference to the notion of women being better suited for advocacy based on their peaceful nature. The author further compared the roles of women to men in the process of peace building as she observes that these roles are contrary to each other. She concluded that the duties performed by women are often seen from the perspective of women empowerment.

This stereotypic role makes women to follow suit with same antecedent roles when they live in society that practice such advocacy roles. The focus of the author was on women being seen as victims in the aftermath of conflict due to the rape, sexual abuse and displacement. They concluded that the opinion of women in the aftermath of conflict could be controversial due to their negative role of being a victim and their participation in conflict in a different manner as the male. However, the contrary view of women could be seen by authors as the foundation to the development of peace building due to its representation contrary to usual norms.

Women contribution on peace building should not be limited to ad hoc participation but the encouragement of women that are peace builders to share their stories which would enable the understanding of the challenges faced by women as well as having a proper scope to their contribution when giving active role in peacebuilding

E. Rubble women, Germany reconstruction and development

The impact of allied force on German cities was immense as majority of the city's buildings were in ruin or partially levelled to rubble. More so, the war had significant impact on the male population who were directly involved in the battle with a significant amount of the male population killed, injured or taken away as prisoners of War. Meiners (2011) noted that "Germany also lost a fraction of its male population during WWII". Thus, the responsibility of clearing the rubble and reconstruction now lies on women considering that they make up large percentage of the population. This necessitated the introduction of rubble women who aided in reconstruction. The Allied Control Council took steps to encourage the participation in this exercise, through the announcement of Command Nr. 3 on January 1946 which lasted duration of 9 years till February, 1955 in West Germany.

The Law indicates that women within the age of 15 and 50 are expected to register with labour office for allocation of duty for the rebuilding of the country with the punishment of not registering would lead to the forfeiture of the individual's food ration card. Women began to dig out the country from rubbles with their efforts rewarded by the Soviet's zone permitting them to organize "anti-fascist" committee. The newly established socialist party at that time took advantage of this organized women force by inviting working class and more influential women into their party

(SED) which proved effective in the protection of members against some of the brutality of the soviet soldiers who were in search of revenge while some women that were not part of this party were not as lucky (Stark, 2003).

The significance of these women group was observed in the formation and strengthening of political party in Germany which formed a major foundation in the reconstruction of Germany. The Soviet military had entrusted these “anti-fascist” committee with social responsibility of clothing, feeding, counselling and aiding the German population with their roles responsible from building Germany back and preventing their relapse into internal conflict (Stark, 2003).



Figure 3: *Trümmerfrau*, Berlin Schönefeld, 1945.

[Source: John, 2003]

V. RUBBLE WOMEN: CHALLENGES AND OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES

This chapter focused on the division of Germany into four separate zones which are the Soviet zones, British zone, American zone and the French zone. The significance of the thesis's inculcating the division of Germany into zones govern by each member of the allied force was to reflect the reality of what women went through during this period and how women were able to overcome the challenges of their lives which marks a significant feat in the journey of rubble women as a civil society in ensuring lasting peace and also their assistance in creating political stability in the country with one of the major challenge faced by these women is the reality that the allied force soldiers were seemly unprepared for the role of women in Germany as both community and family leaders considering the incapacitated number of male population which answers the research question. The aim of diving into the zones occupied by the allied force is to show the policy that proved effective in propelling and encouraging women's activities as civil society. The rebuilding of the German Society encompasses activities such as constituting of political structure, physical construction and psychological building.

A. Soviet Zone

The soviet zone is an occupation under the Russian authority with a population of around 17.3 million with 9.9 million being women represents over 62% of the total population of the zone that covers a landmass of 108, 000km. This indicates that the demography of the soviet zone were women and meant that they were on the receiving end of the brutality that ensued after the war (Naimark, 1995).

During this duration in time, the East Germany Socialist Unity Party (SED) was formed and the Military head transferred power to the newly formed party which was observed to have significant impact on German development. More so, the Soviet occupation was in an extreme ruin condition physically as well as in population number, the ratio of female to male was massively affected due to the male population

direct involvement in the frontline of the War which meant that the onus now rest on women to simply clear out the rubble of destruction and commenced the process of development. This process was initiated through the organization of “anti-fascist” committees which allowed for an organized building process.

The Soviets utilized the advantages of co-opting German female working class into the newly formed socialist party and with time, many other women joined the party which made the party an organized force that created massive different in the Soviet zone. These women were also organized under group of Red Cross, Church and other private institution with the Communist press heaping massive praise on the activity of these women which was a major difference between the Soviet zone and other zone occupied by Western occupation force. More so, the soviet had an immense recognition of the skills of women in terms of organizational strength which to a large extent were able help other citizens of the country. As at 1947, about two million Germans were already part of the SED socialist party with many women benefitting from being associated or being a member of the “anti-fascist” committees (Stark, 2003). Membership brought great benefits of protection from imprisonment for minor offences.

Despite women in this zone were already organized and carrying out the clearing of rubble, but it was in November 3rd, 1945 that Marshal Zhukov gave official permission for women groups to hold meeting for the purpose of organizational contribution to the society which mark a significant feat in German women contribution to the current success Germany enjoy. These groups had immense success in the reconstruction of Berlin, then other areas of the zones which later spread to the rest of the country. The Soviet Governor’s decision had led to efficient and planned social duties by these groups with women being the bulk of the population and more importantly, they also gained recognition for their duties considering the Soviet could not carry out the social responsibility of German citizens as such these women were tasked with feeding, clothing, counselling and aiding of German population back to its feet. The Soviets knew that the population of male was significantly low and as such no committee was organized for the male population and as they could not be entrusted with social responsibilities as they women were handling (Henry, 1995).

More so, the Soviet were aware of the fact that assigning these social task to women would not bring about a cause for concern to the political agenda of the

communist and to ensure that these women committees stay in line with their given mandate, the anti-fascist committees are orientated in a manner that it may not oppose the interest of the Soviet.

The effectiveness and efficiency at which these women group carried out the basic task of the removal of rubbles from the dilapidated street of the Soviet zone ensure that the Soviet could entrust them with more political in nature activities which led to the founding of DFD (Lexembourg, 1971). The decision by Zhukov pave way for women social and political equality, despite these changes not happening instantly, but came as a result of these women lending hands, putting hard work to clear their communities and also help each other in meeting their basic needs.

Initially non-political, the committee underwent a political transformation in 1947, albeit with stringent restrictions that excluded former Nazi members. Importantly, no subcommittees aligned with political parties were permitted, leading these women's committees to emerge as a distinct movement with specific objectives. These objectives included fostering the cultural and political education of women on the basis of anti-fascist and democratic principles, raising awareness among women about their potential engagement in public life and their role in the reconstruction of a democratic Germany, and providing support to young mothers in instilling democratic values in the upbringing of their children (Stark, 2003).

The 3rd November, 1945 Soviet military order no. 5 was significant in German democracy which came as a surprised considering that one might not have attributed Germany's democratic mentorship to the Russians. This decision enabled women from all facet of life to meet and discussed issues that concern women development and the development of communities at large. Though the motive to the decision might have been communist in nature and the women adherence to the decision might be borne from the fact that these women groups wanted to show loyalty to their new masters, yet the success achieved was immeasurable (Earl, 1986).

The Central women committees engaged in appealing for women in very major county and cities to organize their committee with the aim of social work meant to reduce the suffering caused in the aftermath of the War and the major migration that have ensued in the aftermath as a result of the dilapidated housing. They went on to establish Nursing homes, health clinics and soup kitchen not minding the size of the committee (Christian, 1991). In Leipzig, the women's committee organized a soup

kitchen that ensured that an average of 14, 877 meals were served at lunch time alone which revealed the accomplishment of these women. More so, they began to carry out task of reuniting families by creating a system that allowed for the searching of parents of lost children mostly during the forced migration of the eastern territories (Koonz, 1987). They furthered their duties by even the establishment of kindergartens so as to enable their mothers to continue working while the children are also educated in the process.

The invaluable and gritty efforts undertaken by these women played a fundamental role in laying the groundwork for German industry's revival. Consequently, the "Trümmerfrau," or rubble woman, swiftly emerged as an emblematic urban figure, persevering tirelessly to restore physical order from the very foundations of a Germany that was largely devoid of male protectors and laborers. The Soviet occupation government recognized the significance of this and initiated a media campaign centered around the resilient rubble women. The initial series of articles that celebrated these women appeared in the 81st edition of the Berliner Zeitung, a socialist newspaper that had started circulating in May. On August 17, 1945, the newspaper devoted an entire second page to articles focusing on women workers. These articles highlighted individuals like Tscherkassowa, who was credited with personally laying 63,000 bricks during the reconstruction of a building. She was also actively involved in clearing streets to gather quality bricks for rebuilding and assisting wounded individuals. These articles aimed to encourage greater participation of German women in the rebuilding efforts, and they were proving successful (Stark, 2003).

Women began to take over traditional duties that were meant for men such as traffic directing, train driving and other field assignments and considering the scarcity of fund necessary for the payment for these duties, volunteering of women to these duties proved effective. While "Hundreds of articles about the "rubble woman" would appear in all German publications even long after most of the streets were cleared

A multitude of newspapers, including The Daily Lookout, The German People's Newspaper, The New Times, The People, The Berliner, The People's Will, The Morning, The Courier, The Free Work Place, The Daily Mirror, Free Time, Forwards, The Telegraph, and New Germany, all frequently commended and celebrated the efforts of women working amidst the post-war rubble. These publications featured photographs of women engaged in coal-shoveling tasks, often

dirty from soot but wearing smiles that reflected their determination. There were also appeals for additional warm clothing to support these women, encouraging the citizens of Berlin to fulfill their civic responsibilities, as outlined in Stark's work from 2003. These articles were effective in giving hope to these women that their contributions were appreciated which further boosted their morale to continue working.

Despite women in the other western zones were also carrying out social work and the clearing of rubbles but the manner at which German women in the Soviet zone carried out these tasks in an organized manner made them a force. While one might argue that their duties alone did not improve the standard of living in the zone but made them more competitive with other western occupation.

B. British Zone

The British zone covers 95, 312 km and it is relatively one of the smallest sized zone with a population of 23 million which by implication, 240 persons occupies a square kilometre in this zone. The comparison of the population ratio with the land mass indicates that despite the land mass of the British occupation is twice that of the French, the population in the British zone is four time that of the French, while the American zone being the largest with 110, 075km but the number of population in this zone is 16million (Naimark, 1995). The prior mentioned comparison means that the British zone is the most populated which comes with challenges that are associated with huge population among which includes shelter, feeding with little agricultural activities going on at that time. Consequently, majority of the British Occupation policy were geared towards Economic policy considering that Ruhr which produces 80% of German Crude steel is located in this zone (John, 2001).

The implementation of this policy which would be important to both the British as well as German economy, German Women needed to be Educated and also convince on the opportunities that comes with capitalism. The need for the Education of women can be attributed to the fact that the formed the majority of the demography. The Majority of German rates the British as friendlier and as such, it's not surprising that this zone has the highest population than the other occupation.

The British zone differs from the soviet in that despite women participated in

the clearing of rubble within the street and also carrying out other social responsibility of helping the injured, the women in this zone were not organized into anti-fascist committees (Stark, 2003). The British believe that without economic stability in this zone, there would be a high tendency of anarchy that would deviate the German from the path of democracy. So, women were pivotal to liberalization of voluntary organizations in this zone.

C. American Zone

The American zone covers a land mass of 110, 075km which is the largest of the zone with a population of 16 million and as with the other zones, women forms majority of the population with majority of the male demography either captured, dead or incapacitated (Naimark, 1995).

According to Stark the Americans were somewhat slow to recognize the significance of German women in their efforts to shape the post-war landscape and deal with the emerging Cold War dynamics. It wasn't until late 1947, well after similar initiatives by the Soviets and British, that the Americans established a Women's Affairs Section within their occupation government in Germany. However, this perspective shifted dramatically when they first arrived in Germany in September 1944. At that time, Germany's population was predominantly composed of women. Even though a few German men were still in authoritative and influential roles, this demographic shift was notable. (Stark, 2003). Women were not of significant interest to the Americans.

Though, the American zone did not quickly anticipate the need to target women in its democratization of Germany, they later became aware of the situation and made fund available to enable women's participation in the new government but there effort was a bit late as it did not yield outstanding result which indicates that the American had little understanding of the significance of German women myth as *Trümmerfrau* which showed women working to ensure the rebuilding of destroyed cities and help in social duties of ensuring the survival of family (Ziemke, 1975).

Despite women domination of the zones work force, majority of this women were working in lower levels of industry as a result of lack of experience due to the impart of Nazi regime on the women population. More so, there was male dominance

in this zone and in particular in leadership role which indicates the lack of preparation from women in taking up such responsibility.

The establishment of women affair branch had a pivotal role in improving the lives of German women despite its late start and limited resources. The German women continued to put hard work into their task to show their significance in the American zone and as such they deserve to be treated in same manner as the male population and in 1949, women were observe to begin to have better opportunities but at that time two mistake had being made which was the Americans not targeting women population and secondly, when they realized the importance of women and established the women affairs, they realized that it takes time to get a new division running as it took almost 6 months to get the women affairs running.

D. French Zone

The French zone is the smallest zone in terms of land mass and the number of population. The French did not officially recognize German women as a group of interest nor provide aid to German women bearing in mind that the form the bulk of the population across the four different zone. Just like the Americans, the French adopted a non-fraternization policy that ensures that there was no emotional relationship between Government official, military officer and the general civilians as such they were separated from the general population. This strategy aided in maintenance of security (Stark 2003). Aside the policy, the feeling between French and German women is that of hostility considering that the French still view Women as mothers and husband to men that waged war against them. Therefore, German women organization in the French had minimal contribution towards the recovery of their communities despite carrying out social responsibilities under the umbrella of Red Cross, churches and other private institutions.

The attitude of French towards German women is no surprising considering that women had just earned the freedom of voting in France as such the French at that time believed that the duties of a woman is in the kitchen and their families (Willis, 1962).

The French did not have a proper record of women activities at that period in time and even when they started to record the activities of women, they were treated

as a potential source of trouble or a source of resistance against the French Occupation. Unlike the American that had a delayed support for women, the French did not support women at any point within the duration of 1945-1949.

Meaning that they choose to maintain their position concerning women all through their occupation period in Germany.



Figure 4: Map of the zones occupied by the allied forces

VI. WOMEN'S POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AND REPRESENTATION

Women political engagement and representation have seen notable advancement over time, contributing to the country's evolving political landscape. The progress made by women would be traced from the historic root and the rise of women movement prior and in the aftermath of World War II. The political suffrage gained by women has enabled their enhance participation in political activities.

A. Women's Suffrage and Political Rights

Rubble women were particularly instrumental in the regaining of women suffrage. While the efforts of the rubble women were not directly linked to women's suffrage, their contributions helped shaped the perception of women's roles in post-war Germany. It showcases their ability to participate in vital tasks traditionally associated with men and challenged gender norms prevalent at the time (McElroy, 2017). The post-war period was a time of significant social and political change in Germany. Women's suffrage had been established earlier, and the experience of the rubble women, along with the overall contributions of women during the war and reconstruction helped pave the way for greater recognition of women's capabilities and rights in various spheres of society. It contributed to the gradual advancement of women's rights and opportunities in the decades that followed.

Germany granted their women the right to vote during similar period as other Nation such as Soviet Union, British and United State within 1917 and 1920. The suffrage movement gained momentum in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During the German Empire (1871-1918), women's suffrage was not granted, and women were excluded from participation in political processes (Werner, 1973).

After World War I and the fall of the German monarchy in 1918, Germany went through a transformative period that paved the way for significant political changes. On November 12, 1918, the Weimar Republic was established as a

democratic government. During this time, women's suffrage became a prominent issue and activists fought for their right to vote. On November 30, 1918, the Council of people's representatives passed a law that granted women the right to vote and stand for election (Werner, 1973). Consequently, Germany became one of the first countries in Europe to grant full suffrage to women. This achievement was a significant step forward for gender equality and women's right in Germany.

However, it's worth noting that women's rights and political participation were severely restricted during the later years of the Weimer republic, especially after the Nazi party came to power in 1933 (McElroy, 2017). The Nazis dismantled many of the gains women had made, and women's suffrage effectively ceased to exist during their regime. The Nazi promoted traditional gender roles and suppressed women's participation in public life (Koonz, 1987).

After World War II, with the defeat of the Nazi regime, the issue of women's suffrage and women's right regained prominence in Germany. As a result, when West Germany was established as a separate state in 1949, women's suffrage was reintroduced and women were granted the right to vote, and stand for election in all German federal elections. In East Germany (German Democratic Republic), women were also granted suffrage in the immediate post-war period, with the first elections taking place in 1949. However, it's important to note that despite legal rights, gender equality was not fully achieved in both East and West Germany during the post-war years. It was only after Germany reunification in 1990 that women's suffrage became fully applicable across the entire country.

B. Women in Political Parties and Movements

Prior to women's suffrage in Germany, women's participation in political parties and movements were limited due to the prevailing societal norms and traditional gender roles. Despite these challenges, women found ways to engage in political activities and advocate for their right (Schlaeger & Vedder-Shults, 1978). The major aim of these political movements were to raise awareness on women's right and advocating for gender equality. Women's groups such as the German Union for Women's suffrage which was established in 1902 played significant role advocating for women's right to vote. They fought for women's suffrage, gender equality in the workforce, and the recognition of women's work in society. Women actively

participated in the founding and organization of political parties and advocated for their interests.

Some notable women during period were Clara Zetkin and Rosa Luxembourge who were notable voice for women's right (Stark, 2003). Despite women's movement on gender equality gaining momentum after the right for women's political participation was established in 1918, the rise of Nazi regime in 1930s had reverted women to the traditional responsibility of domestic activities as such their influence in the public sphere was greatly reduced (Koonz, 1987).

Post-World War II, women in Germany experience increased political participation and representation, leading to significant advancement in women's rights and gender equality (Evans, 2009). The aftermath of the war brought about changes in societal attitude, and women's contributions during the war effort and post-war reconstruction effort were recognized. After World War II and its devastating impact in Germany, women played a significant role in political parties and movements. Particularly noteworthy were the "rubble women" who played a crucial part in the post-war era and the country's reconstruction. Despite the devastating impact of the Nazis' attack on women's education and employment, numerous women demonstrated resourcefulness and resilience, refusing to conform to the state's attempts to control their behaviour (Mouton, 2010).

In the aftermath of the War, women organized themselves into committees which were targeted at the rebuilding efforts of their cities and communities. In addition to their role as "rubble women," many women also became politically engaged in parties and movements. After the war, Germany's political landscape was marked by new ideas and a search for a new identity. Women saw this as an opportunity to get involved in politics and raise their voices (Mouton, 2010).

The formation of the CDU (Christian Democratic Union) in 1945 saw the involvement of women who contributed to shaping the party's policies and direction. The FDP (Free Democratic Party) also saw notable contributions from women who worked to promote liberal ideals and advocate for women's rights.

Furthermore, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) had women leaders who fought for social justice and workers' rights, advancing the cause of gender equality within the party and beyond. The participation of women in political parties and

movements after World War II marked a significant step towards gender equality and women's empowerment in Germany. Their efforts and contributions have had a lasting impact on the country's political sphere and continue to inspire women's participation in politics to this day (Holtkamp & Dressman, 2022).

C. Representation in Government and Public Institutions

Women's representation in Government and public institutions developed rapidly in the 20th century with the right for women suffrage obtained in 1918 after the establishment of Weimar Republic. The early 20th century showed a remarkable period for women as many active members of the German Communist Party (KPD) were women (Werner, 1973). Despite the drafting of Weimar constitution granting women equal voting rights to men and women, allowing women to vote and run for political office for the first time in German history, the representation of women in government and public institutions during the Weimar Republic remained relatively low. Only a small number of women were elected to Reichstag (parliament), and women's participation in government was limited (Werner, 1973).

The rise of the Nazi regime in the period between 1933 and 1945 led to massive regression in women's rights and political participation. The Nazis propagated traditional gender roles, promoting women as wives and mothers, and suppressed women's involvement in public life and politics. Many women were forced out of political positions and public institutions, and their representation in government significantly declined (Koonz, 1987).

However, after World War II and the defeat of Nazi regime, Germany underwent a period of reconstruction. Women's Political representation saw some improvement during this time, as women were actively involved in the post-war recovery efforts. The most notable change at this period was seen in the Soviet Union occupation as women were rewarded for their post war efforts through their encouragement to participate in politics. The 1947 election saw a gradual rise in the number of were elected for Landtag with the Soviet Union women holding more seat when compared with women from other occupational zone (Stark, 2003).

Table 1 Women in the *Landtagen*, 15 August 1947

Place	Seats	Women
US Zone	470	470
British Zone	545	43
French Zone	222	--
Soviet Zone	520	107
Berlin	130	31
Total	1887	209

[Source: Stark , 2003]

The Soviet zone provided the best support for women which are evident in the number of women holding Landtag seat in the zone. Despite the total number of seat held by women is relatively low when compared with the overall number of seat, the number of women holding political seat could be seen as encouraging. In government roles at different administrative tiers, women's involvement exhibited fluctuations, ultimately leading to women occupying 16.4 percent of the elected positions across community (Gemeinde), county (Kreis), and state (Land) levels collectively. Out of a total of 116,675 governmental positions within the Soviet zone, 19,180 were held by women (Stark, 2003, p.71).

Divided Germany - East and West (1949-1990): With the division of Germany into East and West, the experiences of women in government and public institutions diverged. In East Germany (German Democratic Republic - GDR), women's rights were constitutionally guaranteed, and women were encouraged to participate in the workforce and politics. Women held positions in government and public institutions, and there were notable female leaders within the Socialist Unity Party. In West Germany (Federal Republic of Germany - FRG), women's representation in government and public institutions increased over time, but progress was gradual. It was not until the 1980s that women's representation in the Bundestag (parliament) began to increase significantly (Holtkamp & Dressman, 2022).

The evidence put in place by women in Germany is quite evident as notable women figure such as Angela Merkel who served as Chancellor of Germany between 2005 and 2021 (Connolly, 2016). More so, 35% of the current German Bundestag are women which shows how far German women suffrage has come since its early stages in the 20th century.

VII. DISCUSSION

The current chapter discusses civil society and peace building making reference to the role of Rubble women as civil society in the sustained peace that Germany have enjoined which had translating effect on every sector of their Economy. the country has one of the largest Economy in the world and such a feat can only be obtain in a peaceful and civil society. The discussion section of the thesis draws knowledge from the impact of war on Germany's Human and Material resources with the aim of showing the obstacle which civil society and in particular women committees had to overcome to ensure that Germany survive and thrive considering that countries with history of war often have a tendency of relapsing back to civil war when the well-being of the citizens are not considered. The role of Rubble women in the thesis was not only to carry out the removal of rubble in Germany and the laying of bricks in the rebuilding phase but translate to other social responsibilities that had significantly improve the country at large considering that the male population had been massively hit as a result of the war. These women had to take up responsibilities that were traditionally male responsibility so as to fend for their family in an organized manner which consequently laid the foundation upon which Germany have been able to enjoy sustained peace over a long duration of time. Civil Society is defined as "independent from the state, but it is oriented toward and interacts closely with the state and the political sphere" (Merkel & Lauth, 1998, p. 7) which implies that this society are the voice of the people and are not part of the Government but interact with the state in achieving sustained peace which proves that they are an agent of peace building. It's no surprise that their effort has help in the propelling Germany into the largest economy in Europe and the 4th largest economy in the world which many term an economic miracle when you compare how devastating the war was on German industry and human population. Therefore, the role of civil society in Germany in peace building cannot be over emphasised as these societies laid the foundation for the peace whose impact can be seen in Germany's quick recovery after World War II.

A. Impact of War on Germany's Human and Material Resources

The impact of War on Germany's Resources which is in terms of Human and material was immense is attributed to the aerial assault by the allied forces that rendered the major cities of the country in a state of rubbles. This assault led to the surrendering of Nazi soldiers and the period after the war was characterised by rebuilding process that laid the platform for sustained peace.

World War II represent one of the most expensive War considering the material resources that were put into it and widespread nature of the conflict in terms of the number of countries that were involve in the war and in particular, the calibre of the countries that fought the war. These countries were all global forces and as such the devastating impact of the War was severe with several statistics putting the range of 70-85 million death as direct consequence of the War with majority of death being Civilians with the number of German death estimated to be over 7 million people, therefore, the War marks the most devastating conflict in human history (Oneil, 2022).

Diefendorf (1993) recorded that the war left over 7 million people homeless and had severe consequence on the housing units and housing structure with 45% of the housing stock in major cities destroyed. He gave instance of Wurzburg were "89% of built-up area was destroyed, while the figure in Remscheid and Bochum was 83%, in Hamburg and Wuppertal 75%". More so, along with the loss of housing unit comes the loss of other institution such as schools, railways, hospital, place of worship and other recreational facilities that are meant to improve the lives of citizens considering that the bombing by allied forces were more centred in the cities and these facilities are urban facilities. The damage to the housing unit were to an extent that part or even half of the living space were affected and as such some citizen have no access to food, water, electricity, bathroom and gas (Meiners 2011). The consequence of loss of houses and housing unit comes situations of overcrowding, taking into account that several other refugees have also being displaced, thereby placing competition for the few available good apartment. The challenge of housing and overcrowding when not properly manage can have negative impact on sustained peace.

Heineman (1996) recorded the loss of over 14 million Germ an home after the war. "In addition to the large-scale physical destruction, there were a large number of

war casualties in each German city due to bombings and war combat. About 3.6 million of the civilian population and 3.3 million soldiers had died during WWII” (Meiners 2011). 11 million soldiers were prisoners of war by the end of WWII (Meiners 2011). As such, the demography of Germany after the war showed that the country was more populated by women bearing in mind that majority of the male population were either dead, disabled or even prisoner of war.

Women were particularly on the receiving end of the crisis that ensued after the war as they had to fend for their families despite the high rate of starvation, which many of this women had to search for food in black market and also compete for the available resources considering that the war had an immense impact on the male demography that were in direct forefront of the war. The war led to high mortality rate of the male population and left majority other with physical and emotional trauma, prisoners of war and displaced. As such, the onus now rest on women to carrying out much of the rebuilding of the country.

These women had to overcome assault from military officer as they were subjected to rape and other forms of abuses as reported by Barbara Brennan, which was mostly in the Soviet occupation. The policy of non-fraternization established by other occupation had considerably limited the extent of rape in the other occupations. Therefore, women carried the responsibility of not just digging out their family but the entire country from rubble and prevent relapse into conflict.

B. The role of policies in encouraging women into Germany’s nation building

The policies by the government of the allied forces were quite instrumental in propelling women back into the work force while bearing in mind that some of these women had gotten use to the home duty policies of the Nazi regime. More so, the challenges of building Germany from the ruin or rubble was a daunting task that requires the contribution of all abled hand to ensure that the country survives their period of uncertainties. Therefore, policies played significant roles in Germany’s nation building and the roles of these policies further led to the emancipation of German women.

One of the prominent policies taken by the allied forces was the mandating of individual within the age group of 15 and 50 which represent the active working age

group. The Policy command Nr. 3 of the allied forces may have represented one of the foremost laws that stimulated the active participation of women in their nation's reconstruction (Yuksel, Khamis & Yuksel, 2011)

C. Rubble women's contributes in the development of Germany Post World War II

One of the objectives of the study was to evaluate the extent at which rubble women contributed in the development of Germany into an economic prosperous nation. Rubble women represent all the women that had laid foundation for the sustained peace that Germany have enjoyed since the end of the Second World War till date considering the fact that prior to this period. Germany had been in the centre of two of the deadliest wars in human history fought within the duration of 30 years which brings into focus Walter's (2011) remark on the relapse into conflict as a result of past grievances and non-settlement of the foundational crisis that ensues after War. Therefore, it would take more than just the effort of Government to ensure the security of lives and resources but also other bodies known as civil society, of which rubble women could be categorised as one.

Rubble women were saddled with the responsibilities of rebuilding of the country, though it was not official, but their activities were recorded to have aided the quick recovery of the nation. This women group were an organized force that carried out the clearing of rubbles in the streets of Germany. Their rebuilding efforts encompass the building of public facilities that are needed to make life comfortable for citizens considering the extent of damage on both houses of residence and public establishments such as schools, hospitals and other recreational centres.

One may argue that these women groups should not be termed civil society; however, the responsibility which they carried out puts them within the boundary of civil society bearing in mind the function of civil society according to Paffenholz and Spurk (2015) which include socialization which implies the unity of members of same units towards a common goal or the activities performed with the sole aim of promoting unity, service delivery and other advocacy duties performed by women are some of the notable civil society activities carried out by these women. These activities have gone a long way in providing the necessary foundation that had led to the economic recovery of Germany.

These women carried out responsibilities that would have proven difficult for the allied forces to handle with some of their social responsibilities included feeding, clothing, counselling and aiding of German population back to its feet. The Soviets knew that the population of male was significantly low and as such no committee was organized for the male population and as they could not be entrusted with social responsibilities just as women were handling during that period (Henry, 1995). These women committees also carried out major activities such as the building of soup kitchen that went on to feed thousands of mouth, the establishment of nursing homes, clinics and the building of kindergarten which would enable mother that participated in rubble removal to not be distracted as such, their kids were also taken care of. More so, the manner at which they were organized in the performance of these tasks came as a surprise to the leaders of their various zones with the women in the Soviet the most effective in these regards.

The organization of these anti-fascist committees were impeccable, one would not notice that the period during Hitler's reign in Germany that women were confined to duties such as teaching and Agriculture. Heineman (1996) noted that women both professional and non-professional were mostly restricted to duties of house wife' and the raising of children during the Nazi regime but with the shortage of human resources, women have to emerge from their home to ensure the survival of their society and their family. The mandatory law put up by the allied forces also contributed in prompting these women movement active participation in the rebuilding. The law by the Allied Control Council announced Command Nr. 3 on 17th January 1946 (Allied Control Authority Germany 1946) which required citizens that still possess the ability to work that means women within the age range of 15 and 50 and male within the age range of 14 and 65 to register in the office of labour for the allocation of duties. While for individuals that did not comply with this directive would lose their privilege to food ration card and employers might risk imprisonment, fine or even persecution. The law should not take away the contribution of these women considering that they went beyond the law to ensure the survival of their neighbourhood and cities.

The action of these women could be notable in the foundation of sustained peace that Germans have enjoined considering that their action have helped improve the standard of living at that duration in time. More so, women were beginning to take up the responsibilities that were previously termed male responsibilities. Cousens and

Chetan's (2001) definition of peace have helped put into perspective what peace building meant as it relates to German women. In her definition, she noted that peace building are plans set up to ensure the promotion of sustained peace through the meeting of the population basic needs so as to ensure that conflict do not reoccur or the relapsing of those nations into conflicts.

The allied force government in German had to look inward, prompting the rise of civil society of women despite the existence of other civil societies such as Red Cross, churches and other private institution that were independent of the Government which served in providing humanitarian service and also in the rebuilding of the nation, therefore, these women should be regarded as one of the pillars in the re-building phase of Germany. Consequently, the action of women committees and the rubble women had promoted peace through the meeting of demands of country's citizens, most especially, those in vulnerable condition.

The discussion section of the thesis shows the relationship that exist between Civil society and peace building bearing in mind that these societies perform the act of peace building through the de-escalation of conflict through function which includes the protection of their members, advocacy roles, monitoring, socialization and social cohesion, Facilitation and Mediation and service delivery. For the context of this thesis, service delivery was observed as one of the primary responsibilities of these societies as it aided in providing the help necessary for the transitioning of the country into an era of peace that has helped propelled the country's Economy.

The role of women and in particular, rubble women was examined bearing in mind that the war had immense impact on the male population as such the responsibilities of the nation's re-building from the rubble fell on women. They went on to handle these responsibilities in an organized manner. The soviet zone acknowledged their effort and always appreciated them through the publication of their exploit in newspapers publication.

The anti-fascist committees organized by women went on to become political pillars in Germany, thus, the lesson of Germany's use of civil society can become the roadmap for other countries that have been plagued by war and to break the circle of civil war relapse in these countries. Therefore, civil society should be in the forefront of peace building process to help manage conflict as they form the organization for the people.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Building upon the insights garnered from this thesis, several avenues for further research can be explored to deepen our understanding of the pivotal role played by rubble women in post-war Germany and its implications for contemporary peace-building efforts.

1. **Comparative Analysis:** To gain a more comprehensive perspective, future studies could undertake a comparative analysis of the experiences of women in post-war reconstruction in different countries. Investigating how similar roles and activities were carried out in other war-affected regions, such as Japan or Eastern European countries, can shed light on the universal relevance of women's contributions in post-conflict societies.

2. **Gender and Conflict Studies:** A more nuanced examination of the intersection of gender and conflict dynamics could provide valuable insights. Research should delve into the specific challenges faced by women in war-torn regions, not only in terms of their humanitarian roles but also in their efforts to secure gender equity and women's rights amidst the chaos of conflict and reconstruction.

3. **Oral Histories and Personal Narratives:** Collecting and analyzing oral histories and personal narratives from surviving rubble women and their descendants can offer an intimate view of their experiences. These firsthand accounts can provide a richer understanding of the emotional, psychological, and social dimensions of their efforts, as well as their long-term impact on subsequent generations.

4. **Policy Analysis:** Investigating the policies and strategies implemented by the Allied forces in collaboration with German authorities can provide critical insights into the facilitation of women's roles in reconstruction. Evaluating the effectiveness of these policies and their applicability to contemporary conflict zones can inform the development of more inclusive and gender-sensitive post-conflict strategies.

5. **Contemporary Relevance:** Extending this research to contemporary conflicts and post-conflict settings is crucial. Studying the role of women in recent conflicts,

such as Syria or Afghanistan, and their contributions to peace-building efforts can help identify best practices and lessons learned that can be applied in today's complex geopolitical landscape.

6. Long-Term Impact: Investigating the enduring impact of the rubble women's activities on German society, particularly in terms of gender norms, women's rights, and civil society engagement, is a pertinent area for longitudinal research. Understanding how these efforts have shaped Germany's socio-political landscape can provide valuable guidance for other post-conflict nations.

In conclusion, further studies in these areas can not only deepen our historical understanding of the invaluable contributions of women in post-war reconstruction but also inform contemporary peace-building efforts worldwide. The resilience and resourcefulness of rubble women offer valuable lessons for fostering sustainable peace, gender equality, and social justice in conflict-affected regions globally.

IX. CONCLUSION

The study reveals the significance of rubble women which reflects the activities of women who had participated in the clean-up of Germany considering the disastrous nature of the war which was noted to have claimed lots of lives both civilians and military, psychologically impacted the lives of citizens that were part of the war either directly or indirectly, destruction of housing and other facilities. Starvation and malnutrition was a major challenge that was faced by German women in the aftermath of the war with many women having to starve so that their children could have a bit more to eat.

The role of women cannot be over emphasised considering the alarming responsibility they had to shoulder for the rebuilding of their lives and city which prompted the rise of rubble women. The activities of these women cut across the removal of rubbles to the organization of social support activities to help their communities back up. These activities are pivotal role of Peace building which involves strategies, actions and plans put in place in removing obstacle that would deter a nation towards achieving long term peace or sustained peace. These activities could be social in helping the society back to its feet through the giving of aids to the disable or disadvantaged citizens or in an advocacy role.

The United Nations Security Council President noted in his speech the importance of peace building which he informed encapsulate the activities that are designed to prevent the outbreak of conflict or stop an on-going armed conflict and therefore, both short and long term effort such as developmental policy, humanitarian services, protection of human right laws, and any other mechanism that are targeted at reduction of poverty and improving standard of living should be put in place to prevent the relapse of a nation with history of war into violence considering that violence encapsulates the psychological and physical well-being of individuals within a nation.

The Humanitarian activity of rubble women included the provision of aid and support to refugees, war victims and others in need. They engaged in the running of soup kitchen, distribution of clothing, supplies and provision of medical care and

support. More so, the ensured advocacy for other women rights such as lobbying for women access to education, healthcare and employment opportunities. The activities of these women concise with some of the basic functions of civil society group, thus, showcasing the immense contribution of women in ensuring the sustained peace of Germany which has propelled the nation into an economic prosperous nation.

The progress made by rubble women were ushered by the policies of the allied forces and the heads of each occupational zone which indicates that to a large extent policies were instrumental to women's progress in meeting the needs of themselves and communities. The Soviet zone benefitted more from the activities of rubble women. Therefore, women played a massive role as civil society actors. They were instrumental in rebuilding and reimaging of German society in the aftermath of the War and in promoting peace, justice and democracy.

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