

**WOMEN AND PEACEBUILDING IN THE POST-CONFLICT  
RECONSTRUCTION OF SIERRA LEONE, 2002-2016**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE  
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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, COLLEGE OF LEADERSHIP AND  
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, COVENANT UNIVERSITY, OTA, NIGERIA**

**JANUARY, 2022**

**ACCEPTANCE**

This is to attest that this Thesis is accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Leadership Development Studies, Covenant University, Ota.

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**DECLARATION**

I, **ADEPOJU OLUWAYEMISI AJOKE, (14PAH00846)**, declare that this research work was carried out by me under the supervision of Prof. Bonny Ibhawoh of the Department of History, McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada and Prof. Daniel E. Gberevbie of the Department of Political Science and International Relations, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State. I attest that this thesis has not been presented either wholly or partly for the award of any degree elsewhere. All sources of data and scholarly information used in this thesis are duly acknowledged.

**ADEPOJU, OLUWAYEMISI AJOKE**

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**Signature and Date**

**CERTIFICATION**

We certify that the thesis titled **“WOMEN AND PEACEBUILDING IN THE POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION IN SIERRA LEONE, 2002-2016”** is an original work carried out by **ADEPOJU OLUWAYEMISI AJOKE, (14PAH00846)**, of International Relations in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Leadership Development Studies, Covenant University, Canaan land, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria. We have examined the work and found it acceptable for the award of a degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration.

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my Father Rev. Dr. (Engr.) Wole Adepoju who gave me the wings to fly. He is my number one mentor and supporter of my dreams, and also my late mother Mrs. Efundunke Elizabeth Omotosho who instilled the value of education in me. She taught me that education is the best legacy a child can have.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

- CEDAW- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- CSO- Civil Societies Organization
- DDR- Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration
- ECOMOG-Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
- FSU-Family Support Unit
- MARWOPNET- Mano River Women's Peace Network
- RSLAF- Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces
- RUF- Revolutionary United Front
- TRC- Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- STRC- Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- UN- United Nations
- UNWOMEN- United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and The Empowerment Of Women
- UNSCR 1325 (2000)- United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (October 2000)
- UNSCR 1820- United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 (June 2008)
- VSV-Victims of Sexual Violence
- WANEP- West African Network for Peacebuilding

## ABSTRACT

The role of women in resolving conflicts and ensuring a lasting peace and security in a society cannot be undermined. Conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding are not only concerned with those involved in war or military conflicts, which are overwhelmingly men but also women who were affected by the war as victims and also as perpetrators. However, the participation of women at peace tables has historically been minimal. According to the UN Women reports, between 1992 and 2019, women constituted on average, 13 percent of negotiators, and 6% of mediators, 6 percent of signatories in major peace processes worldwide. About seven out of every ten peace processes did not include women mediators or women signatories. Women bring valuable expertise, experiences, and knowledge to dispute mediation and peace-building efforts. As a result, their direct involvement in decision-making is needed. Drawing on the extant literature on Women and Peacebuilding, this study examined the efforts of Peacebuilding by women in the State of Sierra Leone. This study examined the roles men and women played before the war, during the war and after war as victims, perpetrators, as peacekeepers and as heads of households. The study used the qualitative and quantitative research method of data collection which gathered analysed and interpreted data on the subject matter of women and peacebuilding in post-conflict Sierra Leone. In particular, it employed the review of extant literature on Women and Peacebuilding, and primary data collection using the questionnaire as instrument of data collection, Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews. The findings of this study showed that the barriers women faced in a post-conflict society arise from the fact that women are only seen as victims and men as perpetrators. This study also concludes that to ensure a gender inclusive and culturally sensitive peacebuilding, the patriarchal perception on leadership and decision making should be eradicated. Some of the steps to be taken to actualize sustainable peace should involve a multifaceted approach to sensitization, education and policy enactment and procedures that is gender inclusive. It recommends that the Sierra Leone government should ensure that all Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) use affirmative action in the recruiting and promotion of women in their organisations, in order to ensure Sierra Leone's long-term peace and stability.

**Keywords:** Culture, gender, gender-inclusiveness, peacebuilding, women