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FROM CONFLICT TO GENDER QUOTA ADOPTION:
THE CASES OF BURUNDI AND LIBERIA

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

From Conflict to Gender Quota Adoption: The Cases of Burundi and Liberia

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To investigate how the occurrence of high-intensity conflict affects the adoption of gender quotas, this study builds on different strands of research on conflict, peace processes, gender quota adoption, and female representation, and proposes a causal path linking high-intensity conflict to post-conflict gender quota adoption in developing countries post-1995 through distinct causal steps: gender relations change and women mobilize due to the conflict, peace negotiations provide a platform and open a window of opportunity, and women's activists, relying on their gained experience and networks, finally push for gender quota adoption in the post-conflict period. Examining the typical case of Burundi and the deviant case of Liberia with process tracing, this study finds that the proposed causal mechanisms are mostly present and hold some explanatory value. However, the difference in outcome and a brief reference to two additional cases demonstrate that the mechanisms in the proposed causal path are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions. Instead, they constitute contributing factors making the outcome of gender quota adoption more likely, while equifinality and causal heterogeneity in this research area should be emphasized. The study furthermore identifies theoretical implications for existing research as well as potential research areas for future studies.

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1. Introduction

While high levels of female political representation were long considered to be a marker of industrialized, “modern” states, rapid increases in women’s representation in the legislatures of countries around the world have partly refuted these assumptions and sparked new scholarly interest. One development in particular has puzzled observers: Developing countries which have recently emerged from high-intensity conflicts, have adopted gender quotas and increased their levels of female representation¹ at remarkable rates. But how does the presence and ending of high-intensity intra-state conflict affect the adoption, implementation, and effectiveness of gender quotas? This study aims to improve our understanding of this link by proposing and then tracing a causal path which links high-intensity conflict to the subsequent adoption of gender quotas through distinct causal steps, building on existing theories and findings.

This study first provides an overview of the various strands of research in this study area and of their findings regarding explanatory factors for varying levels of female representation and gender quota adoption. The study then turns to high-intensity conflict as a potential explanatory factor and outlines the existing theories to causally connect high-intensity conflict to gender quota adoption and increases in female representation. Building on this existing research, a causal path is proposed which links high-intensity conflict to gender quota adoption through a series of causal steps. Using process tracing, this proposed causal path is then examined in the two case studies of Burundi and Liberia. Finally, the two cases are compared, the findings discussed, and limitations and areas for potential further research are identified.

¹ Unless otherwise specified “female representation” refers to female representation in a country’s legislature.

2. Explaining Levels of Female Representation and Gender Quota Adoption

This section briefly describes empirical developments regarding female legislative representation around the world before reviewing existing research into factors explaining the diverging development and varying levels female legislative representation. It then focuses specifically on gender quotas as a policy instrument aimed to increase female representation, first defining the term, and then giving an overview of empirical developments, potential effects of the policies, as well as potential explanations for their adoption.

2.1 Female Representation

Historically, women have largely been excluded from the public sphere and from politics in particular. In response, women have demanded access to spheres of power and equal political representation based on normative and functionalist arguments. The normative argument for women's equal inclusion in politics is based on notions of justice and democratic ideals: Since women make up half of the population, they should be equally represented in political bodies (e.g. Bauer 2016; Hughes 2009). More functionalist arguments point to findings suggesting that women's inclusion in politics makes a tangible difference: Studies have found that legislative bodies with higher percentages of women produce different legislation and may more accurately represent women's political interests (e.g. Wolbrecht and Campbell 2007; Wang 2013; O'Regan 2000; Swers 2001).

Apart from this increased substantive representation of women, the presence of women in legislative and executive positions may also be of symbolic value and positively affect attitudes and opinions in the general public as well as women's representation in other areas of society. (Johnson et al. 2003; Barnes and Burchard 2013; Campbell and Wolbrecht 2006).

Empirical Developments

Great progress has been made in the struggle for access to the political sphere and equal political representation, beginning with women gaining the right to vote and be elected to political office. Progress has been uneven, however: The first country to grant women the right to vote was New Zealand in 1893, while Saudi Arabia granted women the right to vote only in 2011 (IPU). Currently, only 6.6 per cent of heads of state and only 5.3 per cent of heads of government are women (IPU 2019c). As of January 2019, nine countries have achieved gender parity or have more women than men in ministerial positions, while in eleven countries not a single ministerial position is held by a woman (IPU 2019c).

	Country	Parliament Unicameral / Lower House (Women %)
1	Rwanda	61.3
2	Cuba	53.2
3	Bolivia	53.1
4	Mexico	48.2
5	Sweden	47.3
6	Grenada	46.7
7	Namibia	46.2
8	Costa Rica	45.6
9	Nicaragua	44.6
10	South Africa	42.7

Figure 1: Countries with highest percentage of women in parliament, January 2019 (IPU 2019a)

In the legislative branch, women still make up less than half of the members in parliament in all but three countries in the world. But women have made considerable gains over time. While the world average of women in parliaments in 1995 was at just 11.3 per cent, the share of women in national parliaments has since increased to 24.3 per cent in 2019

(IPU 2019b). As with the right to vote, significant differences between regions and individual countries exist. Surprising many observers, many of the countries categorized as so-called developing countries have made great strides in increasing the percentage of women in their parliaments in recent decades, in many cases moving ahead of more industrialized nations and countries that are considered to be proto-typical liberal democracies (see Figure 1).

The surprise expressed by many observers in light of these numbers clearly indicates some preconceived notions held in the general public as well as among political scientists regarding the factors expected to determine levels of female representation.

Potential Explanations

A wide array of factors has been explored as potential explanations for the varying levels of female representation in legislatures throughout the world. Some explanations focus on the domestic characteristics of individual countries while others refer to international developments. So far, no clear consensus has emerged.

Democracy

One factor that is often cited as potentially affecting women's political representation is democracy. Since ideas of fairness, equality, and inclusivity of marginalized groups are often linked to the ideal of modern democracy and democracies ideally regulate access to political power through clear and transparent rules, it could be expected that more women are able to enter politics in democracies compared to semi-democratic or authoritarian regimes. These democratic ideals are furthermore frequently invoked to justify demands for women's equal political representation, thereby reinforcing the discourse on the supposed link between the two (Hughes 2009; Waylen 1996; Caraway 2004). While some correlations linking democracy and women's representation have been found (Inglehart and Norris 2003; Norris et al. 2002), it has been argued that this relationship may be confined to high-income countries (Tripp 2015). The vast majority of studies, using varying samples of democratic, semi-democratic, and autocratic regimes as well as focusing on individual cases, has not been able to establish such a link (e.g. Tripp and Kang 2008; Stockemer 2009, 2011; Paxton et al. 2007; Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Kenworthy and Malami 1999). In fact, previous studies have found that when authoritarian regimes begin transitioning to democracy, levels of female representation often decrease (e.g.

Yoon 2001; Matland and Montgomery 2003), potentially because authoritarian regimes are able to place women in political office without needing popular support to do so (e.g. Matland and Montgomery 2003) and without necessarily giving them real political power (Fallon et al. 2012). When democratic institutions are first introduced, women may then initially struggle in the open competition for political office.

Some researchers therefore emphasize the importance of democratic transformation processes over time to explain levels of female representation. Fallon et al. (2012), for example, find a curvilinear effect of democratization on women's political representation, with higher levels in authoritarian regimes, a drop during initial democratic transitions, and an eventual increase in levels of female representation over time (Fallon et al. 2012, 380ff.). Explanations for these findings point to civil liberties expanding throughout the democratization process, thereby creating increasingly beneficial conditions for women to mobilize and gain access to the political sphere (Paxton et al. 2010; Hughes and Tripp 2015) and necessary learning processes for female candidates in open democratic competition (e.g. Yoon 2001).

Socioeconomic Factors, Culture, and Religion

A related argument based on the ideas of modernization theory claims that industrialization and economic development along with democratization will bring about greater gender equality by increasing women's education levels, bringing women into the workforce, and eventually changing societal and cultural attitudes towards women (Inglehart and Norris 2003; Norris et al. 2002). These developments are expected to be moderated by cultural heritage and religion, with some religions, such as Islam and Catholicism, propagating more patriarchal or conservative views regarding women's appropriate role and status which may in turn constrain women's ability to enter politics (e.g. Paxton 1997). Arguing within a supply and demand framework for female candidates, these transformation processes are expected to, on one hand,

gradually expand the supply of female candidates qualified for political office by giving more women the opportunity to gain the necessary education, professional abilities, and experience. All the while, on the other hand, the shifting attitudes towards women increase the demand or at least acceptance of female candidates. Levels of female political representation are therefore expected to follow out of preceding economic, political, and societal developments (Norris et al. 2002; Inglehart and Norris 2003). However, other scholars have pointed out that these theories are largely based on industrialized nations that have had incremental increases in female representation over long periods of time. These scholars have had difficulties applying these models to less developed nations whose levels of female representation nevertheless rival those of many industrialized nations (e.g. see Figure 1 above). This has led to conceptualizations of differing patterns for change in levels of female representation in different sub-groups of countries. One model describes an “incremental track” to change, exemplified by Scandinavian countries, as well as a “fast track” to change through the implementation of proactive measures such as gender quotas, as exemplified by countries like Rwanda (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005; see also Hughes and Paxton 2008). Overall, findings regarding the link between socioeconomic factors and female political representation have been mixed, with multiple studies not being able to identify any significant positive effects of socioeconomic measures such as women’s adult literacy, secondary education, or labor force participation on levels of female political representation (e.g. Paxton et al. 2007; Yoon 2004).

Electoral Systems

Another factor thought to affect levels of female political representation is the design of political institutions themselves, especially the electoral system. Proportional representation (PR) electoral systems are believed to facilitate women’s entrance into politics compared to majoritarian electoral systems because PR systems usually lead to an emphasize of party over

individual candidates, for example with the use of party candidate lists (Paxton et al. 2006). Various cross-national studies have therefore repeatedly found that PR electoral systems have a positive effect on female legislative representation (e.g. Paxton et al. 2006; Paxton et al. 2010; IPU 2019b). It has been questioned, however, if these findings similarly hold true in developing nations (Fallon et al. 2012; Hughes 2009; Hughes and Tripp 2015; Tripp 2015).

Left-leaning Parties

The presence and political influence of left-leaning political parties has also been explored as a potential factor in women's political representation since those parties are expected to be more open to gender equality and the inclusion of women in politics. Some studies have indeed found that left-leaning parties have a positive effect on levels of female representation. However, this effect has been most pronounced in the past: In the 1980s, countries dominated by left-leaning parties stood out for slightly higher levels of female representatives but this effect mostly disappeared with the end of the Cold War (e.g. Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Hughes and Tripp 2015).

International Norms, International Organizations, and International Activism

Other than the explanations described so far, which are focusing on individual country characteristics, theories of international norm diffusion emphasize developments and transformations regarding gender norms and policies around the world as influential for developments in individual countries.

World polity theory posits that individual states and their behavior is shaped by global norms, "policy scripts," and international standards of appropriate behavior (Meyer et al. 1997; Boli and Thomas 1997). Various models of global norm diffusion describe how social change is brought about by a combination of international pressure from an ever expanding network of international organizations, like the United Nations (UN), transnational organizations and

movements, as well as domestic pressure by national movements or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) conceptualized for example as “spiral models” or “boomerang effects” (e.g. Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Risse et al. 1999).

The international women’s movement has been steadily growing and increased its activity, reach, and interconnectedness over the last century. Especially since the 1970s, the number of international women’s NGOs has grown significantly (Paxton et al. 2006). The international women’s movement has worked to change social attitudes and diffuse norms of gender equality to nation-states through various channels, for example by specifically targeting and working with influential international actors. International organizations, particularly the UN, are thought to play a central role in spreading global norms. Due to relentless lobbying and mobilizing by the international women’s movement, the UN has significantly expanded its commitment and activity on gender equality, making statements that clearly signal appropriate behavior and desirable gender policies to member states, while the signing of UN agreements by states may give domestic activists a formal basis to justify their claims (e.g. Krook and True 2012).

With a growing international women’s movement, increasing UN activity, and an overall expanding international network concerned with women’s rights and gender equality, it can therefore be argued that over time nation-states have been exposed to increasing outside pressure. Following the logic of the World Polity approach, this should gradually lead to conformity and greater similarity among states regarding the inclusion of women (Paxton et al. 2006). Some studies suggest however, that the influence of world polity actors is not even across all countries since some countries are linked more closely to the world polity, for example through more or closer ties to international movements, activists, and organizations (e.g. Meyer et al. 1997; Risse et al. 1999). Furthermore, building on this research, some

findings suggest that greater outside pressure and more linkages between domestic activists and the international network may not necessarily have a positive effect on women's political representation, particularly in developing countries (e.g. Hughes 2009). The relationship between embeddedness in the world polity, on one hand, and domestic gender policies and developments in female political participation, on the other, may therefore not be as clear-cut as World Polity Theory suggests.

A related argument suggests that countries which are more heavily dependent on foreign aid may be more exposed to international influences and pressure from international donors, and may therefore more inclined to comply with international norms on gender inclusion. However, previous research on African countries has not been able to establish a direct link between foreign aid and levels of female political representation (Tripp 2015; Hughes and Tripp 2015).

Colonial History

Finally, some studies focusing on developing nations have explored the colonial history of individual countries as one factor affecting levels of female representation today by shaping conditions for female leadership historically or influencing current policy making, for example through institutions like the Commonwealth. Quantitative studies of African countries have found a relationship with former Belgian colonies having higher levels of female representation compared to former Portuguese, British, and French colonies, in descending order. However, since the numbers here are small, these findings should be interpreted with caution (Hughes and Tripp 2015; Tripp 2015).

Overall, no clear consensus has yet been established regarding the most decisive factors explaining varying levels of female political representation. However, one policy instrument that clearly correlates with increases in female political representation are electoral gender quotas (Bush 2011; Fallon et al. 2012; Tripp and Kang 2008; Paxton et al. 2010).

2.2 Gender Quotas

There is no clear, universally applied definition, categorization, or typology of electoral gender quotas. While the use of both the term “gender” (instead of “sex” as referring to the biological differences between men and women) and the term “quota” (for its potentially negative connotations) have been controversial (see Krook 2014, p. 1271), “gender quota” has been established as the widely used term to refer to policies designed to increase the amount of women entering political office and will therefore also be used in this study.

While all electoral gender quotas have in common that they aim at bringing more women into politics, the policy design itself may differ greatly. Different conceptualizations and typologies have been developed, based on or emphasizing different approaches or aspects of these policies. Krook (2009), for example, distinguishes between reserved seats, legislative quotas, and voluntary party quotas. Reserved seats mandate a specific minimum proportion of women in legislative bodies, for example by setting a number of parliamentary seats aside to be distributed to political parties based on their share of the popular vote and filled by them with female legislators. Legislative quotas require all parties to nominate a certain minimum number or percentage of female candidates. Voluntary party quotas often work in a similar way but are voluntarily adopted by individual parties without being mandated by law. This study for the most part excludes voluntary party quotas from the analysis because most of the research this study builds upon excludes voluntary party quotas as well and may therefore not be applicable to them. Furthermore, this study focuses on country-level developments and since the adoption of voluntary party quotas is mostly linked to individual party characteristics, the adoption of gender quotas by individual parties may not reflect developments or characteristics of countries overall (Krook 2009; Hughes et al. 2015).

Empirical Developments

Since the quotas were first introduced in the 1930s, the adoption of electoral gender quotas has increased significantly, with big spikes in quota adoption occurring particularly since the 1990s (Krook 2009). This huge increase has lead observers to call the wave of gender quota adoption “among the most significant political developments of the last thirty years” (Hughes et al. 2015, p. 360). Gender quota policies have spread throughout the world with a significant increase among developing countries appearing since the early 2000s (Tajali 2013). The question still remains, however, why some countries to adopt electoral gender quotas to address gendered inequalities in their political system while others do not.

Potential Effects of Quota Adoption

As it has been outlined above, the inclusion and equal representation of women in the political sphere matters for normative and functional reasons. The adoption of gender quotas has become a popular instrument to address the global underrepresentation of women in political bodies by facilitating women’s entrance into politics (Tajali 2013; Tripp and Kang 2008; Hughes et al. 2015). Much of the research on quotas has been devoted on evaluating the effects of gender quotas on the levels of female representation around the world (e.g. Krook 2009; Tripp and Kang 2008). Gender quotas are not guaranteed to work in increasing female representation and their effectiveness varies: The thresholds for female representation stipulated in quota policies – which in itself differ between countries – have been exceeded in some countries and not been met in others. Different quota provisions and quota types may vary in effectiveness between countries and over time and no conclusive explanations for these variations have yet been found (e.g. Krook 2009; Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005; Paxton et al. 2010). But overall, countries with legislated gender quotas routinely elect more women: In the parliamentary elections held around the world in 2018, the IPU recorded a difference between countries with and without legislated gender quotas of 7 percentage points for single/lower

chambers (25.6% compared to 18.6%) and 17 percentage points (33.2% compared to 16.2%) for upper chambers of parliament (IPU 2019b). Electoral gender quotas are thus clearly linked to higher rates in female political representation and often cited as one of the main causes for the global increase in female political representation (Tripp and Kang 2008; Paxton et al. 2010).

However, the adoption of gender quotas may also have negative effects. Depending on the specific design of individual quota policies, it has been argued that gender quotas are artificial or unsustainable solutions to the problem of low female representation in politics. For example, gaining political office through quota provisions may prevent women from gaining the necessary skills and experience for the political process, potentially making them vulnerable to manipulation (Cornwall and Goetz 2005). It has furthermore been argued that quota policies could put unqualified women into political office and may thereby hurt the public perception of female politicians in the long-term. Others have pointed out that gender quotas may create images of “tokenism” or two-tiered political systems in which those women that gained access to political office through quota provisions are viewed unfavorably, as unqualified or undeserving (Bauer 2012). A related question pertains to whether women that gained political office through quota provisions actually hold real political power (Krook 2013).

Quota advocates, on the other hand, view provisions like reserved seats as a “training ground” for female politicians to subsequently compete for openly contested seats (Bauer 2012, p. 375). So far, findings regarding the sustainability of gender quotas are mixed: In some cases, female representation dropped again after gender quotas expired or were overturned, while female candidates in other cases continued to win de-reserved seats or successfully competed for openly contested seats (Krook 2009, 2013).

Potential Explanations for Quota Adoption

Different countries all over the world have implemented various quota policies. The factors explaining which type of quota is adopted where are complex, may interact with each other, and are still being explored today. Many of the potential explanations that have been theorized and investigated are based on or connected to the previously reviewed potential explanations for increases in female representation overall.

Democratization

The level of democracy may potentially affect the likelihood of quota adoption in different ways. On one hand, democracy or democratic transition increasing political freedoms and civil liberties may be preconditions for the adoption of gender quotas by allowing mobilization and activism for quota adoption (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005; Tripp 2015). On the other hand, non-democratic or semi-democratic countries may adopt gender quotas to use them as a tool to – sincerely or insincerely – signal compliance with internationally commended norms of gender equality (Krook 2009; Bush 2011, see below). Mirroring the previous findings of a curvilinear effect regarding levels of female political representation generally, some studies suggest that transition processes are particularly beneficial for quota adoption because they provide a window of opportunity for new, more radical policies, whereas stable democracies may “freeze” political institutions and policies (Fallon et al. 2012; Krook 2013; Bauer and Burnet 2013).

Socioeconomic Factors, Culture, and Religion

Reiterating claims of modernization theory, some previous research has linked the adoption of policies associated with liberal, egalitarian norms, such as gender quotas, to a country’s economic development, socio-economic characteristics, or cultural and religious environment. These theories expect a higher likelihood of gender quota adoption with increasing industrialization and secularization, or overall “modernization” (Tajali 2013). However, the

more recent patterns of gender quota adoption in countries with low levels of economic development and industrialization, as well as female labor-force participation and education contradicts these theorized links. A related religious argument suggests that the likelihood for gender quota adoption should be lower in predominantly Muslim countries. However, many examples of early and recent quota adoption show that the presence of large and even majority Muslim populations do not prevent gender quota adoption (e.g. Pakistan, Bangladesh, Senegal) (Kang and Tripp 2018).

Electoral systems

Some studies have found that countries with certain types of electoral system are more likely to adopt gender quotas. Certain types of electoral systems may even be linked to specific quota types, while PR electoral systems in particular seem to make quota adoption more likely (Tripp and Kang 2008; Hughes et al. 2015).

Domestic Activism

Based on the assumption that “states do not typically adopt feminist changes without pressure from organized groups of women” (Viterna and Fallon 2008, p. 669), many scholars point to the importance of domestic activism by quota advocates, usually various women’s groups and networks mobilizing for the adoption of gender quotas as an instrument to increase women’s political representation (e.g. Beckwith 2003). However, not all women are necessarily in favor of gender quotas. Even feminist movements are divided over the desirability of gender quotas with some arguing that quotas do not further the cause of gender equality in the long-term (see potential negative consequences of gender quota adoption outlined above; Krook 2009). The effect of women’s domestic activism for this type of policy change may also be shaped by multiple contextual factors (e.g. Viterna and Fallon 2008).

International Norms, International Organizations, and International Activism

Apart from women's groups mobilizing domestically, the international women's movement has also pushed for gender quotas to be included in "the repertoire of 'modern' state practices" (Hughes et al. 2015, p. 359). International actors like the UN have also furthered this cause, for example by recommending thresholds for female representation and linking the use of gender quotas to "modernism" and democracy (Paxton et al. 2006; Towns 2010). The UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 is often referred to as a turning point in this regard. Years of organizing and lobbying by the international women's movement culminated in the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action which entailed language on the desirability of greater female representation, including a numeric target of at least 30 per cent of women in decision making positions. The inclusion of a specific threshold in the Platform for Action legitimized the adoption of gender quotas, making it a valuable instrument in activists' campaigns in favor of quotas. Consequently, the timing of quota adoption around the world shows an increase in quota adoption post-1995 and scholars generally agree that Beijing 1995 did have an effect or was even central to the diffusion of quotas, especially for developing countries (Fallon et al. 2012; Tajali 2013; Swiss and Fallon 2017).

While various scholars posit that these thus formalized and legitimized international norms together with domestic and international women's activism and the growth of the international women's movement helped spread gender quotas around the world (Krook 2009; Swiss and Fallon 2017), other research suggests that increased linkages between domestic and international activists may not necessarily be helpful. Hughes et al. (2015) uncovered what they called a "recoiling effect": In recent years, states in which women's activists had *less* ties to international activist organizations were more likely to adopt gender quotas. The authors suggest that domestic activism combined with pressure from international movements could

be perceived as particularly threatening by some regimes while too many links to organizations with potentially diverse agendas could furthermore weaken domestic women's movements (Hughes et al. 2015). Swiss and Fallon (2017) on the other hand argue that this does not have to be the case if the goals of domestic and international women's organizations are well aligned (Swiss and Fallon 2017). Kang and Tripp (2018) also point out positive effects of domestic and international activists working together but emphasize the primary importance of pressure from domestic coalitions for the adoption of gender quotas (Kang and Tripp 2018).

In a few cases international actors have also directly initiated gender quotas after military interventions (e.g. Afghanistan, Iraq) (Paxton et al. 2006, p. 901; Krook et al. 2010) or leveraged international funding to push for gender quota adoption (Bush 2011; Hughes et al. 2015).

Regional Organizations and Regional Diffusion Effects

Beyond effects of international norms and organizations, some scholars have pointed out regional policy diffusion effects in gender quota adoption: One country's adoption of a new policy may serve as a role model for its neighboring countries or the whole region. Women's activists from one country may also encourage or train activists in surrounding countries. Additionally, regional organizations, like the African Union (AU) or the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Africa, may determine their own targets for women in decision making positions and accordingly pressure countries to comply (e.g. Bauer 2008; Hughes et al. 2015; Bauer 2016; Krook 2014, 2009). However, other studies have questioned the relative importance of regional effects (Bush 2011; Swiss and Fallon 2017).

Colonial History

Finally, some research suggest that gender quota adoption may be influenced by countries' colonial history and current ties to former colonial powers, for example by sharing and shaping

the discourse on gender equality (e.g. the concept of gender parity in France) or setting of aspirational goals for female representation (e.g. the 30 per cent goal for women in decision making positions established by the Commonwealth). However, these effects seem to be more indirect, are not particularly significant, and could also be explained by other factors, such as regional diffusion effects (see above) (Hughes et al. 2015).

This overview of the existing literature clearly demonstrates that the potential reasons for gender quota adoption are manifold and complex. One sub-group of countries with a particular prevalence to adopt gender quotas has emerged, however: developing countries that have previously emerged from a period of high-intensity conflict (Anderson and Swiss 2014; Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna 2012; Bush 2011; Hughes 2009; Hughes and Tripp 2015). The following chapter explores how conflict and gender quota adoption may be connected.

3. Theory

This chapter first describes findings regarding women's situation in conflicts and peace processes. It then reviews existing theories that aim to establish and explain the link between conflict and gender quota adoption. Building on these theories, a causal path is proposed which links conflict to gender quota adoption through a series of causal steps.

3.1 Women in Conflict and Peace Processes

Global patterns of conflict are volatile and always shifting and therefore difficult to capture clearly. However, since the end of the Cold War, the overall number of armed conflicts² has decreased substantially while the number of signed peace agreements has increased in recent

² Following the Uppsala Conflict Data Program's (UCDP) definition of armed conflict: "A state-based armed conflict is a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year." An armed conflict with more than 1,000 battle-related deaths per calendar year is furthermore classified as a war (UCDP).

years. And yet, many conflicts still break out or continue on. And even in countries that have emerged from conflict, the risk of returning to conflict is high. Overall, intrastate conflicts are the most prevalent type of conflict today (Pettersson and Wallensteen 2015).

Armed conflicts are devastating for affected countries. Conflicts can have profound long-term effects on a country's economy and political institutions, its population and demographic developments. The effects of conflict on the population are often gendered: While men are usually more likely to be directly involved in the conflict as active fighters and are therefore more likely to be injured or killed in battle-related contexts, women have been found to be more adversely affected by conflicts' indirect negative consequences, for example on food availability, infrastructure, or the public health sector. However, women may also be forced into or voluntarily join conflict parties as active combatants or in supporting roles, such as cooks or wives. Women and children also make up the majority of refugees and internally displaced people. During armed conflicts, women are furthermore often subjected to gendered violence such as rape (Bop 2001; Meintjes 2001; Bouta et al. 2005; Plümper and Neumayer 2006). These devastating effects of conflict on women's lives may continue after the conflict, with some research suggesting that gendered violence against women actually increases after a conflict has ended (Meintjes et al. 2001). Overall, some scholars theorize that conflict may increase gender inequality by producing "hypermasculine environments" which make it even harder for women to have their rights respected and make their voices heard (Anderson 2016; Meintjes et al. 2001; Sideris 2001; Turshen 2001).

While exact data on women's formal participation in peace processes is scarce, the available data seem to support this view: Overall, women are largely excluded from peace negotiations. A study by Castillo-Diaz and Tordjman (2012) of 31 major peace processes between 1992 and 2012 has shown that, on average, women made up only 9 per cent of negotiation delegations

(with percentages in individual negotiations varying between zero and 35 per cent), 4.7 per cent of witnesses, and only 2.4 per cent of chief mediators. Overall, only 4 per cent of peace agreement signatories were women (Castillo-Diaz and Tordjman 2012). Additionally, anecdotal evidence from numerous cases shows that women are often explicitly barred from participating in peace negotiations (e.g. Anderlini 2000). When women influence peace processes, they usually do so by mobilizing and organizing behind the scenes, often in cooperation with international organizations like the UN, participating in women's conferences, consulting with mediation teams, or working as mediators in an unofficial capacity (Tripp 2015).

Based on this, one would expect that conflicts negatively affect women's political participation and representation. This does not seem to be the case, however, especially when looking at the sub-group of developing countries: In recent decades, women's political representation in countries that have previously emerged from conflict have increased substantially (Hughes 2009). Among African countries, for example, the majority of the countries with the highest levels of female representation have experienced some form of conflict in recent years (Tripp et al. 2006). These high levels of female representation in developing, post-conflict countries are also for the most part linked to the adoption of some form of gender quota (Tajali 2013; Tripp 2015). Furthermore, gender quotas seem to more effectively increase female political representation in post-conflict countries compared to countries that have not recently experienced conflict (Tripp 2015; Hughes and Tripp 2015; Fallon et al. 2012).

Of course, exploring the potential political gains women may draw from conflict contexts should in no way be understood as minimizing or detracting from the immense suffering populations experience as a whole and that women experience in specifically gendered ways during and after conflict. While it is important to acknowledge that, it is also important to

recognize that beyond being victims, women are also actors with agency of their own that may become drivers for change in the face of conflict. It is therefore helpful to gain a better understanding of how conflict environments may facilitate changes and how and when women and other actors are able to solidify these changes and transform them into long-term gains.

3.2 Existing Theories and Findings

The findings mentioned above have prompted various scholars to more closely examine the relationship between conflict and female representation in general and gender quotas in particular.

Some have linked the end of conflict to democratization processes and focused on the reorganization of political and electoral institutions accompanied by changes in power relationships and elite turnover in post-conflict contexts to explain this relationship. In this view, the end of a conflict constitutes a window of opportunity for institutional adjustments and political renewal, which may facilitate the adoption of new policies like gender quotas and thus increase female representation. However, it should be noted that transitions from conflict do not always result in democratization (Anderson and Swiss 2014; Hughes and Tripp 2015). Furthermore, democratization processes and political reform are not unique to post-conflict contexts and could affect gender quota adoption and female representation in other contexts as well. In her earlier work, Hughes (2007) for example argues that elite turnover – both through democratic elections or through non-democratic “legislative interruptions” such as civil war – plays a role in increasing female political representation (Hughes 2007). Other research has therefore theorized that the explanation for the relationship between conflict occurrence and gender quota adoption or increases in female representation is connected to distinct mechanisms rooted in conflict itself that goes beyond the “window of opportunity” logic alone.

Building on her previous argument, Hughes (2009) finds that especially long, intense conflicts which contest the political system and alter the composition of the government affect female representation. She suggests seven structural, political, and cultural mechanisms that may be responsible for this effect. She posits that, on the structural level, armed conflicts may politicize women while also affecting a country's demographic setup when more men than women die in battle-related contexts, leading the potential pool of qualified female candidates to grow in relative size. On a political level, the armed conflict provides a window of opportunity when it causes regime change, institutional changes, and a wave of modernization. Finally, on a cultural level, gender roles may change when women take on traditionally male roles during the conflict. Women may furthermore gain in moral and political legitimacy when they are generally associated with peace while men are associated with warmongering (Hughes 2009). While they find no support for the effect of changes in demographic setup, Hughes and Tripp (2015) expand on this approach, emphasizing the effect of armed intra-state conflict fundamentally disrupting societal norms and structures including gender roles and gender relations.

Through the widespread absence of men (many of which may be involved in active combat, in hiding, taken prisoner, or killed) and often disrupted community structures (caused for example by population displacements) the conflict context allows – or forces – women to take on new roles and responsibilities, including those that were previously the domain of men. The number of female-headed households and female-run businesses increases during conflict. Some women actively participate in the conflict as combatants. Overall, women may gain access to public spaces previously denied to them and even emerge as community leaders (Bop 2001; Meintjes 2001; Turshen 2001; Anderson 2016; Tripp 2015; Hughes 2009). However, these transformations are not confined to taking on new roles in the family or the economy but may

also initiate internal transformations and thus change the perception women have of themselves (Meintjes et al. 2001). Periods of conflict may thus open new opportunities for women, provide them with new skills and experiences, transform their sense of self and their vision of what is possible.

However, some scholars have questioned whether such changes in gender roles during conflict can lead to a sustainable transformation in gender relations once the war is over. The end of the conflict could instead mean a “return to the gender status quo” or even a backlash against women trying to hold on to their transformed roles (Meintjes et al. 2001). Whether or not a backlash occurs could be connected to the wartime changes taking place not only in the women themselves but in society in general, especially potential changes in men’s perceptions of women’s roles and capabilities as well as men’s perceptions of themselves. As Sideris (2001) points out, periods of conflict may give some men a more “militarized and aggressive sense of manhood” while eroding other men’s feeling of manhood, for example when they fail to protect or provide for their families (Sideris 2001, p. 51). The extent to which men may, in turn, take on traditional women’s roles still remains relatively unclear (Tripp 2015). Hence, while wartime changes in women’s roles may be beneficial for women, wartime changes in men’s roles and identities may be detrimental. The combination of both may ultimately lead to the aforementioned backlash, preventing a long-term consolidation of women’s wartime gains. Other scholars have instead argued that seeing women move out of their traditional sphere and successfully taking on new roles and responsibilities may fundamentally challenge general assumptions about women’s appropriate roles and perceptions of women’s capabilities (Hughes 2009; Tajali 2013; Tripp 2015).

The increase in gender quota adoption and female representation in post-conflict countries does suggest that it may, in fact, be possible to avert a backlash and consolidate these gains. Hughes

and Tripp (2015) posit that these disruptions “allow for new understandings of what is possible and desirable” when new structures and institutions need to be constructed after the conflict has ended. The end of conflict thus gives women a window of opportunity to consolidate the changed gender attitudes and new roles they may have acquired during the conflict, and to furthermore take advantage of the superior political legitimacy they may hold relative to men since they are usually viewed as less involved in creating conflict. The ending of armed conflict therefore enables more substantial changes in women’s political representation compared to non-conflict settings, putting these countries on “fundamentally different trajectories” (Hughes and Tripp 2015, 1515f.). The authors’ study of countries in Sub-Sahara Africa shows that this effect becomes especially salient for election results after 2000, suggesting an effect of evolving international norms and influence of international organizations, for example through the UN’s 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (Hughes and Tripp 2015). However, the study’s quantitative approach did not allow for an in-depth investigation of this proposed mechanism.

Turning to a qualitative approach, Tripp (2015, 2016) has further elaborated on these mechanisms and explored how armed conflict may cause the emergence of new gender regimes. Tripp defines gender regimes as the gendered power relations in politics, the gendered division of labor and occupations, human relations, social and cultural attitudes towards women. She suggests that new gender regimes may be caused by armed conflict in conjunction with political openings, including political liberalization and increases in civil liberties and political rights. The new gender regimes then emerge through three main mechanisms: Armed conflict may firstly cause disruptions in gender roles and relations but, secondly, also lead to the emergence of autonomous women’s movements. The emergence of women’s movements is further facilitated by political openings which, thirdly, also facilitate the spread of international norms, which may furthermore result in interventions by international actors.

Tripp posits that all three mechanisms are necessary for armed conflict to have an effect on the emergence of new gender regimes. And while political openings alone may have some positive effects, these are expected to be slower or less substantial if armed conflict has not previously caused gender disruptions. Tripp furthermore points to some important conflict characteristics that facilitate the emergence of new gender regimes: High-intensity intra-state conflicts that affect a country as a whole (as opposed to localized rebellions) cause the most gender disruptions while conflicts that end in peace negotiations provide the best opportunity structures for women (Tripp 2016, 2015). However, the emergence of new gender regimes does not necessarily translate into higher levels of female legislative representation: As her case study of Liberia shows, the country did, according to Tripp, experience gender regime changes post-conflict but its levels of female representation in parliament remained relatively low (Tripp 2015).

Other research further emphasizes the importance of peace negotiations and agreements for the adoption of gender quotas after conflict. Anderson and Swiss (2014) find that countries which ended a conflict with a peace agreement more rapidly adopted gender quotas compared to those without a peace agreement. Furthermore, countries whose peace agreements contained provisions explicitly addressing women's rights, adopted gender quotas even more rapidly. The authors suggest that this difference depending on the inclusion of women's rights in the peace agreements points to a mechanism that goes beyond the social disruptions caused by the conflict and the opportunity structures presented by the peace process in general (Anderson and Swiss 2014). Anderson (2016) points out that most of the more recent peace agreements do not just address issues directly related to the conflict and its causes but rather constitute a comprehensive reconstruction of the state including aspects not directly linked to the conflict, such as women's rights. Peace negotiations, therefore, provide a unique arena for norm

diffusion but also for women to push for the inclusion of gender policy and their own inclusion in political processes. Anderson theorizes that on top of the social disruptions causing changing gender roles and relations, armed conflicts also galvanize women into action: Local women often mobilize in response to an ongoing conflict, usually across political and ethnic lines by rallying around a gender-based identity, e.g. “as mothers.” Once a peace process commences, these mobilization structures persist and help women activists demand a seat at the negotiation table. Social disruptions then not only occur during the conflict itself but also during the peace process: Demanding access to and participating in the peace process in a formal or informal capacity may help women activists gain political skills and build political networks but also transform the way society and they themselves view their role and capabilities as women. And these new capabilities and experience may then help them in successfully pushing for the adoption of gender quotas or obtaining political office themselves later on. Peace processes may therefore give women a necessary platform to transition from peace activism into formal politics, facilitating gains in female political representation in the long-term (Anderson 2016).

Other research emphasizes the role of the previously described international norms and international linkages for gender quota adoption in post-conflict contexts specifically. Bush (2011), for example, points to international gender norms as relevant to the adoption of gender quotas either through pressure to adopt gender quotas in the course of international democracy promotion by Western states and international organizations or through the adoption of gender quotas by post-conflict regimes to signal commitment to international norms and increase their legitimacy (Bush 2011). While democracy promotion and signaling may take place in non-conflict countries as well, Bush (2011) posits that these mechanisms will be activated and become particularly salient in post-conflict contexts that may make regimes more vulnerable and receptive to these international influences. She consequently finds that foreign aid and the

presence of UN peacekeeping missions with mandates supporting political liberalization in post-conflict situations are positively correlated with gender quota adoption (Bush 2011).

In addition to the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted in 2000, may also play a role for gender quota adoption or the issue of female political representation in post-conflict countries more generally. While its implementation has been criticized as insufficient, with UNSCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions, the issue of women and gender in conflict and post-conflict contexts has become a prominent aspect of the international community's approach to peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction (Bush 2011; Anderson 2016).

These existing approaches establish partial causal connections that, taken together, link conflict to the adoption of gender quotas and subsequent increases in female representation. The following sections distills their main arguments into one continuous causal path.

3.3 Proposed Causal Path

Building on this research, this study theorizes a causal path linking the occurrence and ending of armed conflict to gender quota adoption and a subsequent increase in female legislative representation. The explanatory power of this causal path is then tested in two case studies.

The causal path consists of multiple distinct mechanisms that occur simultaneously in conjunction with each other as well as subsequently (see Figure 2). Based on the existing research, three different groups of actors are identified as relevant to the process, all reacting to and influencing and other: The first actor group consists of a country's female population, the second actor group consists of a country's society in general and its elites in particular, and the third actor group consists of international actors, including international organizations as well as international women's activists. The timeline of the process is broken down into three

main stages: the conflict itself, the peace negotiations – which are conceptualized as windows of opportunity – and the post-conflict period.

This causal path claims explanatory power only for the sub-group of developing countries and the time period post-1995, since previous research overwhelmingly suggests that the patterns of gender quota adoption described above are particularly likely to occur in developing countries and are temporally confined to the post-1995 time period, when gender quotas first became legitimized and formalized as a global norm through the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (e.g. Fallon et al. 2012; Swiss and Fallon 2017; Bush 2011).

Stage 1: Conflict

The first time period is marked by ongoing high-intensity, non-localized, intra-state conflict which is fought to contest the government (based on Hughes 2009; Hughes and Tripp 2015; Tripp 2015).

In this first stage, the ongoing conflict causes societal disruptions including disruptions of traditional gender roles and relations. In adapting to the conflict context, women take on new roles and responsibilities in family, economy, and community. Some women take on leadership roles and participate in decision making processes. This transformation in women's roles also alters women's perceptions of themselves, their capabilities, and their aspirations (based on Hughes 2009; Hughes and Tripp 2015; Tripp 2015; Tripp 2016, among others).

Additionally, women begin to mobilize and organize in response to the conflict. The emerging women's movements for peace may mobilize and unite women across religious, ethnic, or enemy lines relying on a gender-based identity. These groups may protest, lobby conflict parties to end the hostilities, and appeal to international actors for help. With their calls for peace come calls for greater inclusion and participation in peace-making and the renewal of the state (based on Hughes 2009; Tripp 2015; Bop 2001; Anderson 2016).

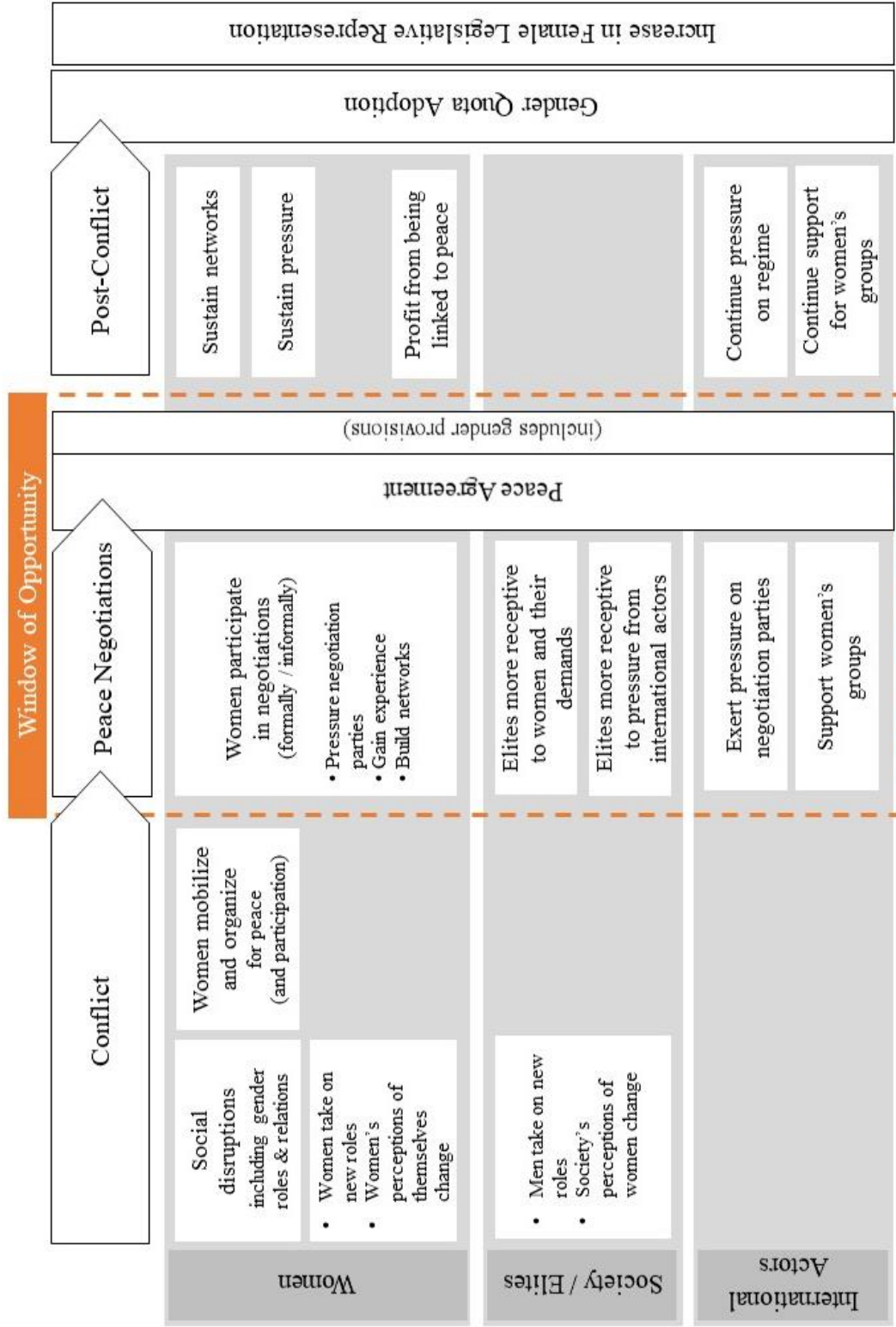


Figure 2: Causal Path

Along with the social disruptions and women successfully taking on new roles, society's and elite's perception of women, their appropriate roles, and their capabilities begin to shift and expand. In turn, men may take on new roles, for example in the domestic sphere (based on Hughes 2009; Tajali 2013; Tripp 2015).

At this stage, international actors may exert pressure on the conflict parties to end the conflict and resolve their differences through peace negotiations, thereby helping to open up the window of opportunity for women's activists.

Stage 2: Peace Negotiations

In the second stage, peace negotiations open a window of opportunity. Peace negotiations will likely focus on the causes of conflict, but beyond that also address the long-term restructuring of the state itself and the power relations within it, providing women's activist (and marginalized groups in general) with a window of opportunity to alter state structures, consolidate transformations, and lay the groundwork for long-term change. Eventually, the peace negotiations and the conflict end³ with a peace agreement. Ideally, this peace agreement contains gender provisions (based on Hughes 2009; Hughes and Tripp 2015; Tripp 2015; Anderson and Swiss 2014; Anderson 2016).

Leading up to this stage and throughout the negotiation process, women's activists demand to be included in the negotiations. They may lobby the negotiation parties and mediators directly or appeal to international actors to intervene on their behalf. It is therefore crucial that women are already organized to an extent that allows them to articulate and insert their demands before the second stage begins so that they are able to take full advantage of this small window of opportunity. Women may then participate in the negotiations formally, as official participants,

³ Unless differently specified, following Tripp (2015), "post-conflict" refers to countries in which there has been a significant decrease in hostilities and battle-related deaths, even when the threshold of 25 battle-related deaths per year defined by UCDP may still be exceeded.

or informally, by working behind the scenes and through consultations with mediators, or by protesting, organizing conferences, and publishing their demands, further pressuring the negotiation parties to include women and their demands in the peace process. Women's activists may purposefully work to reframe the peace negotiations as a platform to debate and fundamentally restructure state institutions and future power relations and women's roles within them. Additionally, seeing women assert themselves and work for peace on a national stage may further change society's perception of women's roles and capabilities in formal political processes. Participating in these processes further allows women to gain necessary political experience and skills, and to build political networks with national and international actors (based on Meintjes 2001; Anderson and Swiss 2014; Anderson 2016).

The predispositions and attitudes of elites and decision-makers may have shifted due to the previous social disruptions and shifts in gender relations, making them more receptive to including women and their demands in the negotiation process (based on Anderson 2016). They may also be more receptive to the influence from international actors, including regional and international organizations, donors, and mediators involved in the negotiation process (based on Bush 2011; Hughes and Tripp 2015; Tripp 2015).

While international actors may put pressure on the negotiation parties to include women in the process, international organizations and women's activists may also support women directly by providing them with resources, infrastructure, and trainings to organize and articulate their demands (e.g. by organizing conferences) or by consulting with them and carrying their demands into the negotiations on their behalf (based on Anderson 2016).

Stage 3: Post-Conflict

If no concrete gender quota is included in the peace agreement itself and assuming that the peace agreement is, in fact, implemented with the country not returning to conflict, the process towards the adoption of gender quotas continues in the third stage.

With most women's movements being primarily organized around demands for peace, they may lose momentum once their primary goal of an end to hostilities is fulfilled with the signing of the peace agreement. However, to bring about gender quota adoption, it is critical that women's activists sustain their networks as well as build on the experiences, skills, and political capabilities they gained during the conflict and peace process to either continue campaigning or run for office themselves. This way, they may sustain pressure from outside or inside the political system in the period after the agreement has been signed, to hold the new regime accountable and ensure their gains and demands are formalized in constitution or electoral law (based on Anderson and Swiss 2014; Anderson 2016; Tripp 2015).

In this stage, and the post-conflict political process in general, women may actually benefit from their previous marginalization from the political sphere that has left them untainted from associations with previous regimes or conflict parties. Instead, they may be associated with peace, either through general gender-essentialist assumptions of women's peaceful nature or through their visible participation in the peace movement. These associations may increase women's political legitimacy compared to men (based on Anderson 2016; Hughes 2009; Tripp 2015).

Elites, and society in general, may be more receptive to women's demands and their ambitions to run for political office due to the changes in gender attitudes throughout the first two stages and women's aforementioned increased political legitimacy. The new regime may also continue to be more vulnerable and receptive to international influences and may attempt to

use the introduction of gender quotas to signal its commitment to international norms and thereby increase its legitimacy in the international arena (based on Bush 2011).

International actors may incentivize or continue to exert pressure on the new regime to adhere to international norms and continue to support women's organizations.

Outcome

Building upon each other, these causal steps should thus create a favorable context that makes gender quota adoption more likely. Coming out of this causal path, the adopted gender quota should furthermore work effectively.

4. Case Studies

The following chapter first outlines research design and case selection. The proposed causal path is then examined individually in the two cases of Burundi and Liberia. Afterwards, the two cases are compared and the findings' theoretical implications are discussed.

4.1 Research Design

To answer the research question of how the occurrence and ending of high-intensity conflict affects the adoption and effectiveness of gender quotas, the method of causal process tracing is used to investigate and evaluate the previously outlined causal path and its causal mechanisms (Bennett and George 2001; Checkel 2006, 2008). Using a wide variety of sources including reports from governments, international organizations, NGOs and research institutes, as well as survey data, interview material, and analyses from scholarly secondary sources, the causal steps are traced to explore whether and how they link the independent variable of high-intensity intra-state conflict to the dependent variable of gender quota adoption. Since the review of the existing literature provided above indicates causal heterogeneity, qualitative methods are better suited to investigate the interaction of different factors that contribute to or

prevent the adoption of gender quotas. Process tracing is one qualitative approach to explain the outcome based on an in-depth analysis of the sequence of events.

Process-tracing is conducted in two individual case studies: First, the proposed causal path is tested by analyzing a typical case in which both the independent variable and the expected outcome on the dependent variable are present. The causal mechanisms are then further explored by analyzing a deviant case in which the independent variable is present but the expected outcome fails to materialize (Gerring 2007). Thus, the case selection facilitates both the testing of the causal path proposed above and may furthermore uncover additional factors that have not been included so far.

4.2 Case Selection

Through careful case selection, this study aims to control for as many other factors that have been identified as potentially relevant for gender quota adoption as possible to isolate the effect of the proposed causal path. To this end, the two cases are chosen from the same region in an attempt to control for some cultural and historical particularities that may differ by region, this might include cultural attitudes towards women or levels of women's rights, similar to approaches taken in other studies (e.g. Fallon et al. 2012; Swiss and Fallon 2017). This, of course, vastly oversimplifies the great cultural diversity within regions and even within countries. It should not be seen as implying that all countries in one region are the same but only as an attempt to narrow down the wide variety of competing explanations for gender quota adoption.

The region chosen to explore the causal path is Sub-Sahara Africa⁴ because the previously identified correlation between the end of armed conflict and higher rates of gender quota

⁴ As defined by the World Bank (see: <https://data.worldbank.org/region/sub-saharan-africa>, checked on 03/24/2019).

adoption or female representation can be clearly observed in this region. On one hand, Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the regions with the highest number of conflicts coming to an end in the period since 1995 (Tripp 2015, 2016). On the other hand, there has been a remarkable increase in the regional average female political participation in Sub-Saharan Africa, rising from just 9.8 per cent in 1995 to 23.7 per cent in 2019. Its regional average therefore ranks behind those of the Americas and Europe, but before the MENA and Pacific regions and Asia. And with Rwanda, a country located in Sub-Saharan Africa has famously had the highest percentage of women in parliament since 2003, with a current percentage of 61.3 (IPU 2019b). Out of the 20 countries with the highest levels of female representation, six are located in Sub-Saharan Africa (Rwanda, Namibia, South Africa, Senegal, Mozambique, Ethiopia). All but one of these countries (Senegal) have emerged out of a high-intensity conflict in the recent decades and all of them use some form of gender quota (mostly voluntary party quotas) (IPU 2019b; Tripp 2015; Gleditsch et al. 2002; Pettersson and Eck 2018). Both the independent variable of intra-state armed conflict as well as the dependent variable of quota adoption are thus present in many of the Sub-Saharan African countries, especially within the main observation period of post-1995. However, this also means that the population of cases is narrowed down to countries within Sub-Saharan Africa and the validity of this study's findings applied to countries in other regions may be limited.

The cases selected for this study are Burundi and Liberia. The two countries were chosen because they share great similarity regarding the independent variable, having both experienced high-intensity intra-state conflicts that came to an end in the early-2000s, and are furthermore relatively similar regarding most of the characteristics that have been identified as potential alternative explanations (see below), thus controlling for these variables. They do, however, differ in the dependent variable. Burundi, which emerged out of high-intensity

conflict in 2000 has adopted a gender quota in 2005; Liberia, which emerged out of high-intensity conflict in 2003, has not done so. Currently, women in Burundi make up 36.4 per cent in the lower chamber of parliament (28th place in worldwide ranking, IPU 2019a) while women in Liberia only make up 12.3 per cent in the lower chamber of parliament (152nd place in worldwide ranking, IPU 2019a). Burundi thus constitutes the typical case, while Liberia serves as the deviant case.

Before the causal path is traced out in individual case studies, the following section briefly outlines the countries similarities regarding the factors identified as potential alternative explanations by other scholars which have not been incorporated into the causal path.

While developments in the democracy levels of the two countries have not been the same, they have followed a similar pattern, based on data by Freedom House (Freedom House, see Figure 3-5). The data is particularly useful in this context because it distinguishes between developments in political rights and in civil liberties, which have been identified as potential explanatory factors. Freedom House assigns each country a rating from 1-7, in which 1 represents the greatest possible degree of freedom and 7 represents the smallest possible degree of freedom. Based on the average of a country's ratings, Freedom House then assigns the country status of "Free," "Partly Free," and "Not Free" (Freedom House).

While Liberia started out with more civil liberties in the 1970s, the general trajectory in both countries has been similar with small to medium degrees of civil liberties (Figure 3). The pattern regarding political rights started out similar with increases as the conflicts in both countries came to an end in the early-2000s. While Liberia retained these higher degrees in political rights, the degree of political rights in Burundi decreased again after the elections in 2005 (Figure 4). Overall, both countries alternate between the status of "Not Free" and "Partly Free," while neither country has, so far, been able to reach the status of "Free" (Figure 5).

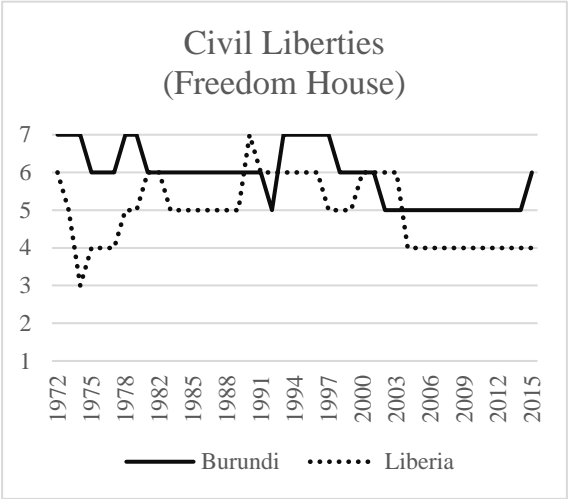


Figure 3: Civil Liberties in Burundi and Liberia (Freedom House)

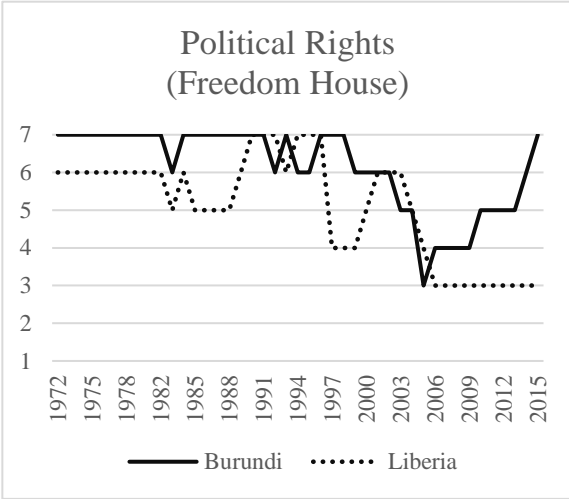


Figure 4: Political Rights in Burundi and Liberia (Freedom House)

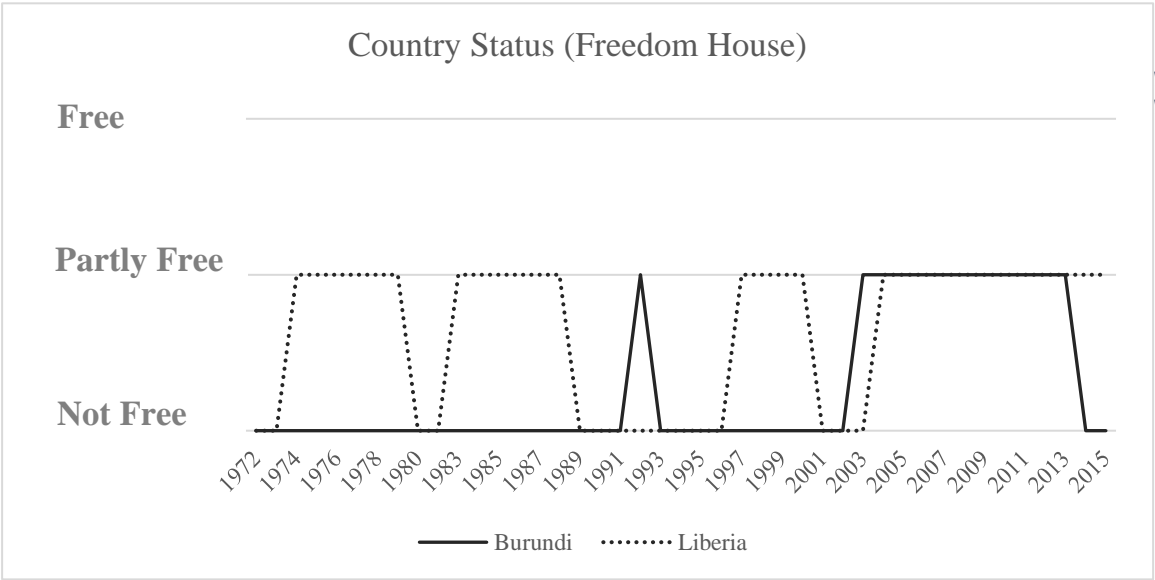


Figure 5: Country Status – Burundi and Liberia (Freedom House)

To control for socioeconomic factors, the Human Development Index (UNDP) serves as the basis to compare the two countries.⁵ Data for Liberia is only available since 1999. For the time period in which a comparison is possible, the development in both countries has followed a similar trajectory (see Figure 6).

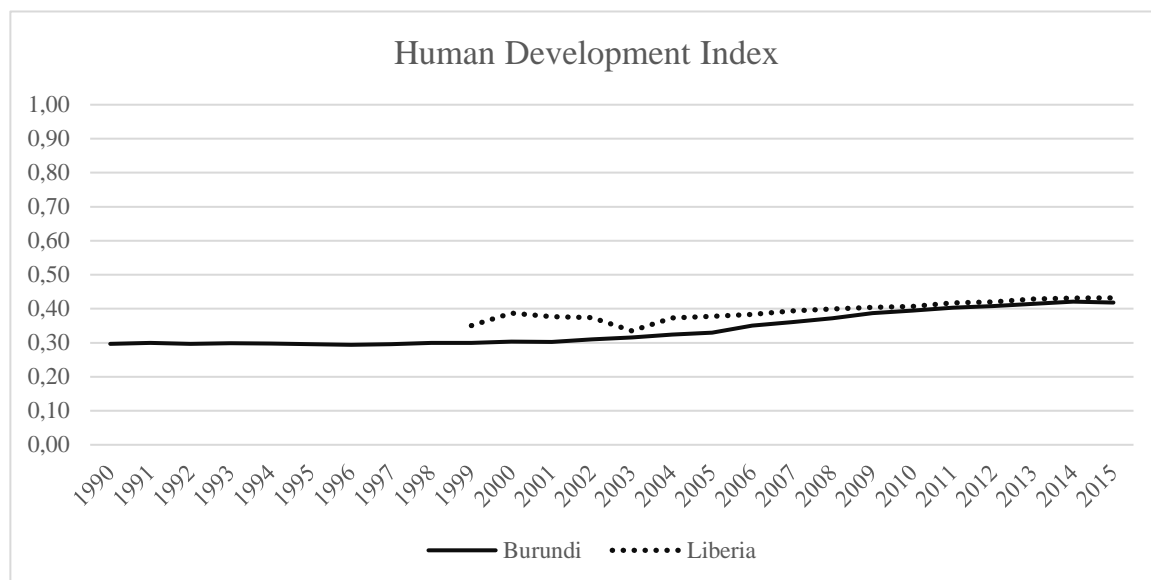


Figure 6: Human Development Index for Burundi and Liberia (UNDP)

The distribution of different religions is also relatively similar in both countries: In Burundi, Christians make up 86 per cent of the population compared to 85.6 per cent in Liberia. 2.5 per cent of the Burundian population are Muslim, and another 11.5 per cent other/unspecified, compared to 12.2 per cent of Muslims and 2.3 per cent traditional/other/none among Liberia's population (CIA 2019a, 2019b).

However, the two cases do differ regarding quota adoption in neighboring countries, affecting potential regional diffusion effects: Two of Burundi's three neighboring countries adopted a gender quota previously or around the time the conflict was ending,⁶ while only one out of

⁵ The Human Development Index aims to measure a country's average achievements along three dimensions of human development. It combines an index for life expectancy, for knowledge, as well as for Gross National Income (for more details, see: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>).

⁶ Rwanda in 2003 (three years after the final Arusha peace agreement was signed but before fighting subsided and before the Burundian gender quota was adopted in 2005), Tanzania in 1975 (IDEA).

Liberia's three neighboring countries did so.⁷ They furthermore differ regarding their electoral system and their colonial history. While Burundi uses a PR electoral system since the end of the conflict, Liberia uses a majoritarian electoral system (IDEA). Burundi furthermore experienced German and Belgium colonial rule, while Liberia was not colonized by a European power (Anderson 2016; Tripp 2015). The implications of these differences are discussed in the comparative analysis following the two individual case studies.

4.3 Typical Case: Burundi

The following section begins with a conflict profile which first provides a brief background of the conflict in Burundi and then positions the historical events within the three stages of the proposed causal path. The causal steps in each stage of the proposed causal path are then analyzed, using process tracing.

Conflict Profile

After German and Belgian colonial rule, Burundi gained its independence in 1962. The Burundian population of approximately 11.8 Million people⁸ consists of multiple ethnic groups, of which the two largest are the Hutu (85%) and the Tutsi (14%) (CIA 2019a).⁹ Colonial rule excluded the Hutu and gave preference to the Tutsi minority which came to dominate the country's government and army after independence, leading to multiple periods of intra-state conflict: Tutsi dominance was enforced through repression that cumulated in massacres against Hutus (e.g. in 1972) and, in turn, triggered violent Hutu insurgencies (e.g. in 1988). This study focuses on the conflict period which erupted in 1993.

⁷ Cote d'Ivoire in 2001 (IDEA).

⁸ As of 2018 (CIA 2019a).

⁹ Whether and how these so-called ethnic groups have been artificially constructed or exacerbated by the colonial rulers has been debated (Anderson 2016, p. 58). While acknowledging this complexity, this study nevertheless refers to Hutu and Tutsi as ethnic groups to simplify terminology.

As is the case with most conflicts, developments in the Burundian conflict were complex and it is difficult to define the distinct conflict stages, according to the model outlined above, since different processes took place simultaneously: The hostilities did not stop when peace negotiations began and they continued for multiple years when a peace agreement was signed. However, for the purpose of this study, the three stages are nevertheless marked by the beginning of the peace negotiations and then the signing of the central peace agreement.

Stage 1: Conflict (1993-1998)

In 1993, the assassination of Burundi's first democratically elected president and ethnic Hutu Melchior Ndadaye of the *Front pour la démocratie au Burundi* (FRODEBU) by members of the Tutsi dominated army in a military coup, triggered a 12-year period of intra-state conflict. In response to the assassination, multiple armed factions were founded or reactivated and civil war ensued, while former president Pierre Buyoya, a Tutsi, reclaimed power in another military coup in 1996 (Anderson 2016).

The conflict was marked by atrocities committed against civilians, wide-spread sexual violence, and the use of child soldiers by all sides of the conflict. It exacerbated poverty among the population which suffered from loss of economic opportunities, food scarcity, destroyed infrastructure, and the breakdown of social institutions. Overall, an estimated 300,000 people died in the period from 1993-2005 and an estimated one million people were displaced internally and externally, most of them women (Burke et al. 2001; Kadende-Kaiser 2012; Myrtilinen 2014).

Stage 2: Peace Negotiations and Peace Agreement (1998-2000)

In response to the coup, multiple countries imposed sanctions and Buyoya agreed to peace talks, which were convened by the former president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, first without success in 1996, and finally again in 1998 in Arusha, Tanzania. After Nyerere's death, former

president of South Africa Nelson Mandela took over the role of facilitator in 1999. In total, five rounds of peace negotiations were held in Arusha: Arusha I (June 1998), Arusha II (July 1998), Arusha III (October/December 1998), Arusha IV (January 1999), and finally Arusha V (June 2000) which ended with the signing of the Arusha Peace Agreement in August 2000.

The Arusha Agreement is regarded as a central part of the peace process, shaping the following transition period. The agreement did entail numerous gender provisions, many of which reflected international norms on gender equality and women's rights. The agreement was gender inclusive in that it mentioned women in most of its areas, stressed the particular vulnerability of women in conflict and post-conflict contexts, emphasized the importance of equality, including gender equality, and referenced multiple international human rights documents including Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (Anderson 2016; Burke et al. 2001). However, the agreement did not entail a concrete gender quota for future decision-making bodies but only a vague stipulation to aim for gender parity (Falch 2010).

Stage 3: Post-Conflict (2000 -)

The fighting did not immediately end with the signing of the agreement. Only after continued pressure and further ceasefire agreements did the hostilities finally subside around 2005, when democratic elections took place and the transitional government handed over power to the newly elected president, Pierre Nkurunziza. The last remaining rebel group finally laid down its arms in 2008 (Burke et al. 2001; Myrtilinen 2014; Anderson 2016). Renewed fighting has since erupted after the elections in 2015 and has continued since (UN News 2015).

Analysis of Proposed Causal Path

The following section traces the individual steps of each stage in the proposed causal path.

Stage 1: Conflict

Generally speaking, traditional gender relations in Burundian families are patriarchal and patrilocal which means that a woman's position in society is defined by her relationship with her father or husband, which subordinates women to them. Traditionally, the domestic sphere is considered a woman's appropriate place. The patrilocal family structures as well as women's lack of inheritance rights hinder their long-term access to property and make women particularly vulnerable in the absence or death of their fathers or husbands. While women in Burundi gained the right to vote along with men with the first democratic elections in 1961, they have traditionally been excluded from the political sphere which is considered to be male dominated (Seckinelgin et al. 2011; Falch 2010).

It is challenging to find data, that allows us to clearly pinpoint when changes in gender roles and relations took place and what exactly caused them. Most inferences can only be made from comparing observational data from the pre-conflict period with observational and survey data from the post-conflict period. Furthermore, it is problematic to make generalizations from mostly unrepresentative survey data, particularly about something as intimate and individual as gender relations and attitudes. The findings are thus interpreted with some reservations.

In recent decades, profound changes have occurred in Burundian society as a whole, due to multiple interconnected processes like the widespread violence and displacement during the conflict, but also demographic developments like urbanization (Myrntinen 2014).

But, according to some observers, these processes have actually entrenched and exacerbated patriarchal gender relations by creating new gendered vulnerabilities. With many men being absent during the conflict and women's social position being tied to their male relatives, many women were particularly disadvantaged and vulnerable to violence and sexual assault, homelessness and poverty (Seckinelgin et al. 2010, 2011).

However, these structural changes did – often simply out of necessity – also open up space for more flexibility of gender roles and questioning of the naturalness of gendered power relations. For example, while many women began to work outside the home out of economic necessity to earn money during and after the conflict (Uvin 2009), many men and boys, on the other hand, participated in domestic activities such as cooking and cleaning during the conflict, according to post-conflict interviews. Furthermore, some women that had voluntarily or forcibly joined armed factions, moved up in the chain of command and thus gained positions in which they gave orders to men (Myrttinen 2014). But while the roles and activities performed by men and women may indeed have become more flexible, ideals of manhood and womanhood and gendered societal expectations remained more or less unchanged (Uvin 2009). Some observers have argued that in light of the profound changes occurring during the conflict, many people seemed to cling even more tightly to traditional attitudes regarding gender ideals, particularly ideas of male predominance, female submissiveness, and traditional family life, framing them as the way things are “supposed to be” (Myrttinen 2014). The changes were seen as temporary by many, with the expectation to return to traditional roles once the circumstances would allow it (Myrttinen 2014) and they were often not viewed positively, especially by men: When asking Burundian refugees in a UNHCR camp in Tanzania about perceived changes in relations between men and women,¹⁰ Turner (1999) found that most commonly men complained that women did “no longer obey or respect their husbands” or that women believed that “UNHCR is a better husband” because the organization provided their family with the necessary resources which the husbands themselves as refugees no longer could, thereby significantly shifting the power relationship within families – a change resented by many men

¹⁰ Questionnaires answered by 464 Burundian refugees (male and female), Question: “Do you see any changes in the relations between men and women, after coming to the camp? (state which changes)” (Turner 1999).

(Turner 1999, p. 3). But in interviews conducted after the conflict had ended,¹¹ Uvin (2009) did find that some sustainable changes in gendered attitudes and expectations had occurred, many of them seemingly driven by poverty and changed economic necessities: For example, some young men seemed to increasingly value “dynamism” and independence in potential spouses, expressing the wish to share the decision-making and the responsibilities in economically challenging times. One young woman stated: “Girls are more dynamic and clear-sighted now, because they can no longer count on their parents and their husbands. This is especially the case for poor girls, because the richer ones are taken care of by their parents” (as quoted in Uvin 2009, 139f.).

Overall, no clear pattern seems to exist: In some ways traditional gender roles and relations have been exacerbated while new roles and attitudes have emerged at the same time. Some Burundians, both men and women from all ages, yearned for the return to old gender norms, while others are trying to hang onto and build upon newfound flexibility and freedom. It is clear, however, that during the conflict women did indeed take on new roles and responsibilities, for example as single heads of households in the absence of men or as active combatants (Falch 2010; Uvin 2009; Turner 1999; Myrtilinen 2014).

Women also began to take on leadership roles in their communities aimed at alleviating the negative effects of the conflict and to demand peace. There had been no strong history of women’s activism before the conflict but women responded to the outbreak of hostilities by mobilizing and organizing across ethnic divides (Kadende-Kaiser 2012; Falch 2010; Anderson 2016; Myrtilinen 2014):

¹¹ 388 in-depth interviews with Burundians, both male and female. For details of sample, see Uvin 2009, p. 31.

“Both Hutu and Tutsi in Bururi were being killed. It was at this point that I decided to organize people to speak with others and urge them not to be induced into killing. Tutsi and Hutu must learn to relay on each other.”

Sabine Sabimbona, participant in the Arusha negotiations and member of the Burundi National Assembly (as quoted in Burke et al. 2001, p. 29)

Apart from individual, ad-hoc activism, women also founded multiple organizations on the grassroots and the national level to organize more effectively. Two umbrella organizations were founded during the conflict: the Collectif des Associations et ONGs Feminines du Burundi (CAFOB) was founded in 1994 and aimed at capacity building, for example by providing trainings for its member organizations as well as Dushirehamwe (= “Let’s reconcile”) founded in 1996 with support from UNIFEM and other international organizations. Both networks helped to establish and sustain links between the grassroots movement and the groups working on the national level that consisted mostly of urban elites (Falch 2010; Anderson 2016).

The women were able to overcome the ethnic divide and potential differences by focusing on their gender-based shared identity and avoiding potentially contentious issues. In doing so, they invoked traditional gender roles and socially acceptable images of women, e.g. of women as mothers wanting to protect their children, to emphasize their shared experiences and identities and to further their cause. Anderson (2016) refers to this approach as “strategic essentialism” as they used their gender to build a positive shared identity linked to peace: “A woman is life giving and must always do what she can to protect life” (Sabine Sabimbona, participant in the Arusha negotiations and member of the Burundi National Assembly, as quoted in Burke et al. 2001, p. 29).

Throughout the conflict, the primary aim of the women’s activism was to resolve the hostilities and bring about peace: Women marched and protested, wrote petitions, organized forums, and

worked on an interpersonal level to cross ethnic divides. The second aim that quickly emerged was to demand access to the peace negotiations and to use those peace negotiations to improve women's participation in decision-making positions in the long-term. This part of the peace movement gained in momentum with the founding of CAFOB (Falch 2010; Anderson 2016).

Stage 2: Peace Negotiations

The Burundian women's activists demanded access to the peace negotiations because they felt that their perspective and concerns needed to be considered in the peace process and the future of the country. They were also aware that the negotiations were not just about ending the hostilities – which was the peace movement's primary goal – but also an opportunity to advance their second goal of women's equal participation in decision making in the long-term. They therefore consistently lobbied for a 30 per cent gender quota in all future decision-making bodies to be included in the peace agreement. They thus reframed the peace process as a platform to address their concerns and grievances and to debate the country's future power structures, power relations, and women's role within them (Burke et al. 2001; Anderson 2016; Falch 2010). Statements by women's activists clearly show that the women were aware of the singular window of opportunity that the peace process presented to them:

“The peace process is evolving quickly and we need to put in place parliamentary, government, and local administrative institutions that will help place women – strong, committed women – in decision making positions. Otherwise we will be left behind.”

Catherine Maboboriy, observer at Arusha peace talks (as quoted in Burke et al. 2001, 20f.)

However, when the failed first negotiations took place in 1996, women were not included. Women's organizations then lobbied tirelessly to gain access to the Arusha peace talks and to participate in the negotiations on equal footing with the conflict parties. However, who should be included in the talks was a contentious issue overall and – contrary to the conceptualization

in the causal path – the political elites and conflict parties were not willing to let the women’s activists join the talks:

“The men who had been negotiating didn’t feel that women had any right to be there. These men felt they had a right to be there because they were fighters, or had been elected to some parliament before the war escalated. But Burundi women who had suffered so much didn’t have any legitimacy in their eyes.”

Winnie Byanyima, Ugandan Member of Parliament, facilitator at the Women’s Conference (as quoted in Rehn and Johnson Sirleaf 2002, p. 80)

The reasons given by the male elites for the exclusion of women are clearly gendered:

“In the first rounds [of negotiations], only men attended. This we felt was not normal since the problem of Burundi affected all of us. So we tried to find a way to join in the negotiations. Even after we got there, we noticed the men were not happy with our presence. ‘We don’t see any reason for you women to be here’, they said. ‘You should return home. These issues on peace are exclusively men’s business!’”

Imelda Nzirorera, observer at the Arusha peace talks (as quoted in Burke et al. 2001, p. 5)

Women as a group continued to be excluded even when other civil society groups gained observer status for Arusha III, with the reasoning that it would be impossible to convene a group of women that could represent the full spectrum of all Burundian women’s interest. Seven women were allowed to stay on as temporary observers during Arusha III, but were not supposed to return for Arusha IV. However, the women’s activists showed up for the next session and after being rejected again, continued to lobby, hold meetings, and pressure negotiation parties from the outside (Burke et al. 2001).

Women used multiple strategies and narratives to justify their claims for inclusion. Their primary tactic was to demand access “as women” and not as female representatives of an ethnic group or conflict party:

“We were united in purpose, despite our ethnic split [...]. The various political parties to which we women belonged tried to split us up, but we resisted them. We said, no! we stand together with our sisters. We are here to represent women, not as members of such-and-such a political party.”

Alice Ntwarante, observer in the Arusha peace talks (as quoted in Burke et al. 2001, p. 14)

They also invoked traditional Burundian views of women’s lack of inherent ethnicity to emphasize this point:

“In Burundi it is said that women have no clan, no ethnic group, no regional identity. This forces us to be sensitive to the miseries of all Burundians, whether Hutu, Tutsi or Twa.”

Statement women’s civil society group (as quoted in Anderson 2016, p. 67)

They also invoked other traditional and essentialist views of women as mothers and as naturally peaceful to justify their stake in the negotiations and therefore their right to participate:

“As mothers, we are mostly concerned about the future – the kind of world our children will inherit.”

Catherine Maboboriy, observer at Arusha peace talks (as quoted in Burke et al. 2001, 20f.)

“Women are not involved in the preparation of war while they still pay very dearly for its consequences.”

Marie Ngendakumana, wife of the speaker of the Burundian Parliament
(as quoted in Anderson 2016, 66f.)

Catherine Mabobori, who eventually became an observer in the peace talks, in a statement even evoked four different narratives at once: For one, she emphasized that women made up the 52 per cent of the Burundian population and, hence, excluding them meant to deny the majority the right to be heard. She also pointed out that women had been on the forefront of the peace

movement, giving them the right to participate. She then invoked the international conventions that Burundi had signed, claiming that women were justified in their request to participate in line with the implementation of these conventions. Finally, she pointed to the extensive networks women had built in their quest for peace which could be used to communicate the message of peace to the population, making the process more transparent and inclusive (Burke et al. 2001, 8f.).

Apart from lobbying the negotiation parties directly, the women's activists also turned to international actors, asking them to lobby for their inclusion on their behalf. They specifically targeted international donors, the facilitation team, and regional leaders. They approached female politicians from other African countries, who would then establish the link to the male political leaders and facilitators (Burke et al. 2001). The main facilitators, Nyerere and later Mandela, were sympathetic to the women's cause and they, along with the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (today: UN Women) and international NGOs like the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation, were instrumental in carrying the women's concerns and request into the negotiations, even when the women were never able to join the talks as equal participants (Anderson 2016; Falch 2010; Burke et al. 2001). UNIFEM also pursued its own ends through the involvement in the Burundian peace process as it was pushing for women, peace and security to be put on the agenda of the UN Security Council (Anderson 2016). UNSCR 1325 was adopted only two months after the Arusha Peace Agreement was signed.

The women eventually gained observer status in early 2000 but not the right to participate in the discussions. Under the joint, targeted pressure from the facilitation team, the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation, UNIFEM, representatives of other international and regional organizations, state leaders, as well as donor agencies, the negotiation parties finally agreed to allow an all-women's negotiation session, the All-Party Burundi's Women's Peace Conference,

to take place in July 2000, a month before the final agreement was signed. Apart from two female delegates from every negotiation party, women's representatives from civil society organizations, international organizations, the Burundian diaspora, and refugees participated in the conference. All participants at the conference agreed on a number of proposals to be included in the peace agreement so it would better take the women's concerns and perspective into account. Mandela then submitted the conference's proposals to the negotiation parties. All proposals, except for the 30 per cent gender quota in all decision-making bodies, were accepted and included in the final agreement (Burke et al. 2001; Anderson 2016; UN Women 2013). However, according to a member of the delegation team, this was not because the male delegates had a change of heart but because "at that stage they did not matter" (as quoted in Daley 2007, 432f.).

When the negotiation parties rejected the proposal for a 30 per cent quota based on the argument that there were not enough qualified women to fill those positions, CAFOMB compiled a list of women with the required education and experience and submitted it to the facilitation team. However, the quota was not included and replaced with a vague reference to "pursue gender balance in public institutions" (Falch 2010, p. 10).

Apart from the international organizations that pressured the negotiation parties on behalf of the women, regional actors, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and female politicians from other African countries also supported the women activists directly, for example by organizing conferences, through capacity building, trainings, and encouragement (Anderson 2016; Falch 2010; Rehn and Johnson Sirleaf 2002).

Some scholars argue that the processes that changed gender relations and the perceptions of women and their capabilities, which were initiated during the conflict, continued on during the peace negotiations. The female observers were convinced that even if their presence as

observers had not been heard, it had been seen and felt, and eventually forced the male delegates to at least talk about gendered issues and women's participation:

“Women's voices were heard to some extent, and our participation in the peace talks produced positive results. Our actions were not in vain. At least now, in principle, men talk about women's participation.”

Female observer at Arusha peace talks (as quoted in Burke et al. 2001, p. 34)

Stage 3: Post-Conflict

Even though the women's activists had pushed the negotiation parties to make important concessions, the male elites did not show any more receptiveness towards women's activists and their demands in the period after the Arusha agreement was signed. In the implementation monitoring committee, two of the six seats were filled with women (Burke et al. 2001) but only 15 per cent of ministerial positions in the transitional government were filled with women, as well as only nine per cent of the seats in the National Assembly and only 18 per cent of seats in the Senate (Falch 2010). Women's activists, interviewed a year after the Arusha agreement was signed, consequently expressed frustration:

“The problem is that men don't listen to us [...], men are not ready to take us seriously.”

Catherine Mabobori, observer at Arusha peace talks (as quoted in Burke et al. 2001, p. 42)

“I believe that over time men will arrive at an understanding of what we want to do in the peace process if we continue to explain our intentions. So far, they are learning to accept in principle that women's participation in the peace process is essential, but the problem arises in trying to put this into practice.”

Euphrasie Bigirimana, FRODEBU delegate in the Arusha peace talks
(as quoted in Burke et al. 2001, p. 23)

The women's groups continued their lobbying and campaigning for a gender quota. Many activists had had the opportunity to attend conferences and attend trainings during the Arusha

peace talks (Kadende-Kaiser 2012) and, with support from international actors, the capacity building continued:

“Women need intensive training in leadership because we need to consolidate what has been done – to build on the solidarity begun and to maintain it.”

Catherine Maboboriy, observer at Arusha peace talks (as quoted in Burke et al. 2001, 20f.)

The women’s movement was determined to build upon the experience they had gained during the peace negotiations and to use the agreement, including the gender provisions that it did entail, as leverage to make further progress get a gender quota adopted after all:

“How can we assert our place in peace building? One way is to exploit the Arusha Accord that has been signed and find ways to utilize this Accord to our advantage through action, not talk. We have to ask: how can we utilize the results of the negotiations to benefit women?”

Imelda Nziroera, observer at the Arusha peace talks (as quoted in Anderson 2016, p. 65)

“Our voices may not have been heard during the negotiations but we made our presence felt. From now on, if gender is not taken into account in any formulation, we have full justification in demanding, ‘ou sont les femmes?’”

Sabine Sabimbona, participant in the Arusha peace talks and member of Burundi National Assembly (as quoted in Burke et al. 2001, p. 30)

Many international actors, like the UN and the World Bank, also stayed involved in the peace and transformation process, for example in the demobilization and reintegration efforts, as well as issues of good governance (Myrntinen 2014). With the support of actors like UNIFEM, the domestic women’s networks continued their work and set up campaigns to encourage women to vote and run for political office (Falch 2010).

Outcome

Following the continued activism, a 30 per cent quota for National Assembly, Senate, and government positions was eventually included in the 2005 Constitution (Art. 129, 164, 180) (Falch 2010; Anderson 2016). Fewer women than required were elected in the 2005 elections

but the quota was respected and in accordance with the quota law, women were co-opted from the party lists to fill the remaining seats. Women thus made up 30.5 per cent of the National Assembly and 34.7 per cent of the Senate, up from just 12 per cent in 1998 (IPU 2019a)

4.4 Deviant Case: Liberia

In the following section, the conflict profile first provides a brief background of the conflict in Liberia and then positions the historical events within the three stages of the proposed causal path. Using process tracing, the causal steps in each stage of the proposed causal path are then analyzed.

Conflict profile

In 1816, Liberia was founded by freed slaves from the US and West Indies with support from the US. Liberia declared its independence in 1847, making it the first republic on the African continent. The settlers, usually referred to as Americo-Liberians, made up a small minority of the total population of approximately 4.8 Million¹² but dominated the country's politics and economy while excluding the indigenous populations thus creating widespread tension (Fuest 2008; Tripp 2015; UCDP; CIA 2019b). While an Americo-Liberian political elite exploited the country's natural resources, the rest of the population lived in relative poverty. Economic difficulties in the 1970s exacerbated the problems and riots and protests against president William Tolbert ensued. Tolbert was killed in a military coup in 1980 and coup leader Samuel Doe, from the indigenous Krahn tribe, became president. The situation for the general population did not improve however and tribal tensions increased. In 1989, Charles Taylor, an Americo-Liberian and his National Patriotic Front of Liberia launched an attack, aiming to overthrow the Doe regime. The military responded and a period of widespread conflict followed which was marked by brutal atrocities committed against civilians, the use of child

¹² As of 2018 (CIA 2019b).

soldiers, and the exploitation of the country's natural resources by all sides in the conflict. Over the course of the conflict, the conflict parties broke up into various splinter groups. In 1990, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) launched a regional peacekeeping operation and peace negotiations began while the fighting continued. 46 rounds of peace talks were held and various peace agreements signed, before the 1996 Abuja II agreement finally halted the fighting. Taylor won the elections held in 1997. Many observers believe that while the elections themselves were not rigged, Taylor won because the population was scared that he would plunge the country back into civil war if he lost. A period of relative calm followed before the fighting broke out again in 1999 (Fuest 2008; Tripp 2015; UCDP). This study focuses primarily on this second period of conflict and peace making.

Stage 1: Conflict (1999 – June 2003)

In many ways, the conflict that erupted in late-1999 was a continuation of the previous one. Some of the rebel groups were newly formed, some regrouped from the previous conflict, and again many splinter groups formed throughout the conflict. This period of conflict was again marked by brutal acts of violence against civilians. In both periods of conflict, all parts of the population were affected and, in trying to escape the fighting, many fled to the capital Monrovia. Overall, it is estimated that up to 250,000 people were killed and that at least half of the population was displaced in the course of both periods of conflict. Still, Taylor initially refused to engage in negotiations and only agreed to join peace talks in 2003 (Fuest 2008; Tripp 2015; UCDP).

Stage 3: Peace Negotiations (June – August 2003)

The peace negotiations took place in Accra, Ghana, and were convened by ECOWAS and the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia. In August 2003, Taylor was forced to step down from the presidency and left for exile in Nigeria. The Vice-President Moses Blah, finally signed a peace

agreement with the two main rebel groups. The peace agreement specified the implementation of a transitional government and subsequent democratic elections, a restructuring of the armed forces and a multinational peacekeeping mission. The 2003 Accra peace agreement thus successfully ended the fighting (Fuest 2008; Tripp 2015; UCDP). The agreement did contain some gender provisions, stipulating the inclusion of women in all transitional institutions and asking that all parties “reflect national and gender balance” in their appointments within the transitional government (Fuest 2008)

Stage 3: Post-Conflict (August 2003 -)

The transitional government was inaugurated in October 2003 and the peacekeeping mission United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) began its work, including the Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Rehabilitation process that took place over the following two years. The UNMIL mandate was extended multiple times but ended its mission in March 2018. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf won the democratic elections that took place in 2005, making her the first elected female head of state on the African continent (Fuest 2008; Tripp 2015; UCDP).

Analysis of Proposed Causal Path

The following section traces the individual steps of each stage in the proposed causal path.

Stage 1: Conflict

Before the conflict, Liberian society was organized along patriarchal lines, women were traditionally subordinated to men, expected to take on domestic roles, and for the most part not part of public discourse. However, as Fuest (2008) points out, in some regions women seem to have had access to considerable power in specific social contexts, for example through traditional women’s secret societies or collective action. The Americo-Liberian elite furthermore adopted some of the most progressive women’s rights in the 19th century and gave women the right to vote in 1946. Through a particular intersection of gender and ethnicity,

some female members of the elite also had access to education and even political positions, since male members of the elite preferred Americo-Liberian women in those positions rather than indigenous men (Fuest 2008). Women in Liberia thus had a longer history of female political role models compared to other African countries: For example, before the conflict, eight women held ministerial positions in the Talbot regime – Johnson Sirleaf served as Deputy Minister of Finance from 1971 to 1974 (Fuest 2008; Tripp 2015).

During the two phases of conflict, many social institutions were disrupted. Communities were destroyed, people were displaced, and many men were killed, joined armed factions voluntarily or forcibly, or were hiding. While women also faced enormous risks and many were killed, abducted, or subjected to sexual violence, they did have “slightly more options than men” (Tripp 2015, p. 87) and while the mobility of many men decreased, the mobility of many women increased. Many women hid their husbands and became the primary breadwinners for their families in their place. Local narratives even tell of “women that physically protected their husbands and family members from combatants” (Fuest 2008, p. 210). Women took on activities and jobs that were traditionally reserved for men. Market women, especially, were credited with keeping the capital Monrovia alive throughout the conflict, organizing food supplies by moving between enemy lines at great personal risk (Fuest 2008; Tripp 2015).

Some women also voluntarily or forcibly became part of the various armed groups, in active or supporting roles: Overall, an estimated 20 per cent of combatants were women. Some of them gained the respect of their peers and became brutal and feared fighters (Tripp 2015; Fuest 2008).

Many men that were not part of the armed factions, were hiding to avoid being forced to join the combatants. In many cases they were unable to protect and provide for their families and had to rely on women which had profound effects on family dynamics and power relationships:

“Before the war, men thought they were all knowledgeable and all powerful. But during the years of conflict, men were in the house, hiding, and could not move freely. Women had to go from one village to the next to search for food. After the war, men had a greater appreciation for women. If women were given the opportunity to excel, the family would do better than if women were kept down. With war, the burden was shared more between the husband and wife.”

Yeahnee King, NGO Foundation for International Dignity (FIND)
(as quoted in Tripp 2015, p. 86; Interview in 2007)

The conflict thus clearly caused a change in gender roles and relations:

“The woman became the man and the man became the woman when there was war. Most men just sat there and women did everything.”

Women’s rights activist (as quoted in Tripp 2015, p. 86; Interview in 2007)

The effect of these changes in gendered power relationships on men’s attitudes towards women and their perceptions of women’s capabilities were mixed. On one hand, observers claim that seeing women successfully take on traditionally male roles, helped them change their mind regarding women’s capabilities:

“Some of our sisters were part of the fighting forces, and that also taught the men that women could do the same as men and they started to rethink things.”

Yeahnee King, NGO Foundation for International Dignity (FIND)
(as quoted in Tripp 2015, p. 86; Interview in 2007)

Jennings (2012), on the other hand, found that men had mixed reactions to these changes in a survey of Liberian men conducted after the conflict. Many found the “sudden shifts in gender relations, rights, and opportunities” unsettling and confusing, felt that they threatened their own authority and thus viewed them negatively. A few men also showed support for these social changes, particularly due to the financial advantages of a second income through women’s economic activity, and tried to adapt accordingly. Other men, however, displayed “strong but quiet resistance ranging from ridiculing other men who are helping their wives or female partners, to becoming passive-aggressive toward women in public leadership. Other men

display erratic violent behaviors toward their wives or other women due to displaced frustration or anger against women” (Jennings 2012, p. 246). Interestingly, the quantitative results also showed that while most male participants agreed with the statement that “Liberian men are not opposed to women in public leadership positions,” female participants appeared less sure that this is indeed the case (Jennings 2012, p. 246). The male participants nevertheless overwhelmingly showed support for women in public leadership positions and for gender equality in general (Jennings 2012). These mixed findings are mirrored in a statement by Yahnee King:

“Some men do cook and take care of the home now, but don’t admit it to others because most men still feel certain things in the house should be done purely by women.”

Yahnee King, NGO Foundation for International Dignity (FIND)
(as quoted in Tripp 2015, p. 86; Interview in 2007)

Most women, on the other hand, were more supportive of the changes in gender relations. Based on interview and survey data collected by other scholars after the conflict, a picture emerges of women that were clearly conscious of the change that had occurred and directly linked it to their experiences during the conflict:

“War opened our eyes to see what was hidden. We asked: ‘Why are these things happening? Why do we do things this way?’ Society had been male dominated and we just followed what the man says. War and crisis had its own advantages on the minds of people. We [women] realized we could rise up and do things for ourselves. We got women to come forward and start talking.”

Liberian woman (as quoted in Tripp 2015, p. 86; Interview in 2007)

“During the war we got to know our value because we were forced to find food for the children; men could not go out. Sometimes the husband was under the bed hiding [from being abducted or killed]. When Ellen [Johnson Sirleaf] took over, things changed for women. [...] In the past, women were in the back and were silent. Now we speak well at meetings. We say what we want.”

Liberian woman (as quoted in Tripp 2015, p. 107; Interview in 2007)

“After war, women continued in these new roles. Women realized they had experienced a major role change. Women began to play more of a role in politics and society is better for it. Women gained more confidence because of their role during war.”

Felicia Coleman, former Supreme Court justice
(as quoted in Tripp 2015, p. 108; Interview in 2007)

Liberian women thus were clearly conscious of the changes, welcomed them, and refused to go back to old gender roles.

Other than the women in Burundi, the women in Liberia did have some history of women’s organizations. However, pre-conflict women’s organizations like the Federation of Liberian women had been consisted of ruling elites, were tied to government patronage networks, and were banned after the military coups. In the first phase of the conflict, women thus began to mobilize only around 1994. Many women participated in religious activities – more so than men – and built on those organizational structures (Fuest 2008; Tripp 2015). However, the different women’s groups explicitly aimed to work together across religious and ethnic lines and across class by focusing on a gender-based identity and the concerns they shared “as women:”

“We had to stand by each other, support each other, regardless of whether we were illiterate, market traders or educated women, and regardless of our religion, tribe or anything else. We were all in the same situation.”

Female peace activist (as quoted in Tripp 2015, p. 85; Interview in 2007)

Many women’s organization initially focused on alleviating the negative consequences of the conflict by caring for their communities and the displaced, distributing food, or providing trauma counseling, and later began to seek participation in the peace negotiations. During the first peace negotiations, the women’s activists demanded that key positions in the transitional government would not be filled by members of the armed factions but by civilians and that elections would only take place after a successful disarmament process had taken place. They

even worked under their own initiative in helping to demobilize and disarm combatants, but the women's demands were not met and the conflict then re-escalated. When the conflict reemerged, the women's groups' activism for peace continued, new organizations such as the Liberian Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) were founded, and the Mass Action for Peace campaign was initiated (Fuest 2008; Tripp 2015).

Overall, observers conclude that "a perhaps unusual level" of organized women's peace activism existed in Liberia, relative to other African countries, recounting evidence of "an extraordinary level of persistent determination and militancy" (Fuest 2008, p. 214).

Stage 2: Peace Negotiations

In Liberia, the women's activists were instrumental in getting all armed factions, including Taylor, to participate in the peace negotiations in the first place. While the women's main demand was the peaceful resolution of the conflict through negotiations, they subsequently also demanded an end to the widespread violence against women and an increased role for women in future decision-making (Boxer et al. 2017; Tripp 2015).

The women used various strategies to convince the conflict parties to come together for peace negotiations and end the fighting. For one, the women used the media to gain the international community's attention, to raise awareness about the conflict and its devastating consequences for the civilian population and to increase the pressure on the conflict parties. For example, Liberian women's activists famously went on a "sex strike" for peace – a move that did indeed garner broad media attention for their activism. The women also hoped that the international attention to their activities would ensure their safety from potential attacks (Boxer et al. 2017; Tripp 2015).

In addition to international media, the women also connected with international organizations, like the UN, and NGOs as well as other women's peace activists throughout the region and the rest of the world. Some of the activists had also participated in the 1995 UN Conference on Women in Beijing. While much of the women's resources were raised domestically, for example through religious communities, they were also supported by international organizations and foundations, like the Global Fund for Women or the African Women's Development Fund. (Tripp 2015; Boxer et al. 2017; Fuest 2008).

But first and foremost, the women aimed to engage and lobby the conflict parties directly: Christian and Muslim communities held weekly prayer meetings, they wrote petitions and organized protests, and held sit-ins at an airfield, all dressed in white t-shirts and colorful headscarves. They approached members of the armed factions at great personal risk, appealed to them to lay down their weapons, and conducted peacemaking workshops with them (Tripp 2015).

“We carried food to the rebels and convinced them to stop fighting. [...] We told them, ‘Put your arms so we can have an election.’”

Esther Page, community leader (as quoted in Tripp 2015, p. 97)

In doing so, they drew on women's traditional role as mediators in Liberia and also directly invoked their authority as mothers:

“We [...] said to the boys, “We bore you, nursed you, and raised you. Put down your arms.”

Female peace activist (as quoted in Tripp 2015, p. 98; Interview in 2007)

Overall, the women's activists frequently invoked traditional feminine roles and used them in to gain the public's support for their cause. They emphasized that women and children were the real victims of the conflict which, in turn, gave them the right and authority to speak and decide in the issue (Tripp 2015; Boxer et al. 2017; Prash 2015).

In April 2003, after the conflict had been going on for two years and the situation was deteriorating, the women targeted important state institutions in Monrovia with their protests to get the political elite to acknowledge them and listen to their demands. Hundreds of women marched to Taylor's executive mansion, to City Hall and parliament to demand an immediate ceasefire and peaceful dialogue of all conflict parties to resolve the hostilities. However, they were repeatedly ignored or rejected by the politicians. As the fighting escalated, the women were finally able to get a meeting with Taylor, to which 2,500 women showed up. When she addressed Taylor, WIPNET founder Leymah Gbowee framed the women's peace activism with traditional images of women as mothers (e.g. "We are now taking this stand, to secure the future of our children", as quoted in Gbowee and Mithers 2013, p. 141). When Taylor agreed to participate in peace negotiations, he also invoked these traditional gender roles in his response, grounding his respect for the women in their maternal role: "No group of people could make me get out of bed but the women of Liberia, who I consider to be my mothers" (as quoted in Gbowee and Mithers 2013, p. 141). The peace talks in Accra began two months later under the auspices of ECOWAS.

Leading up to the peace talks domestic and regional women's organizations, such as the NGO Mano River Women Peace Network (MARWOPNET), held conferences to agree on a strategy. While the women's activists had been instrumental in getting the conflict parties to the negotiation table, there were initially no plans to include them or their concerns in the talks and the conflict parties adamantly refused to include them. However, a WIPNET delegation travelled to Accra anyways and were joined by hundreds of Liberian refugee women living in Accra to put on demonstration and protest at the negotiation site. MARWOPNET's Liberian chapter was ultimately accredited as a formal participant in the talks and one of their four delegates eventually became a signatory to the final agreement. Additionally, other women's

groups like WIPNET were granted observer status. Apart from the women's activists, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf also attended the negotiations as a representative for her party. However, the women's activists were hindered by their lack of knowledge of how to best insert themselves and their concerns into the negotiations. Finally, when the fighting in Liberia escalated and the conflict parties seemed to be in no rush to conclude the negotiations, angry women's activists staged protests outside the negotiation site and even physically blockaded the location's entrances, only letting the delegates leave once they were ready to sign an agreement. Following pressure from international actors like US president George W. Bush, Taylor stepped down as president on August 11, 2003 and went into exile in Nigeria. On August 15, over 45 women's groups met and drafted a charter, which referenced UNSCR 1325, and demanded women to be included equally within all institutions of the transition period (Tripp 2015; UNMIL 2010).

The final agreement was signed three days later. Most of the women's demands were met: The agreement clearly stated the need for women's representation and women were to be included in important transitional institutions like the National Transitional Assembly. Parties were to "reflect national and gender balance" in their elected and non-elected appointments to the transitional government. There were, however, no stipulations for specific percentages or implementation and enforcement mechanisms. Consequently, only three out of 76 seats in the transitional legislature were filled with women. When it came to filling the transitional government positions, another problem became evident: All but three positions were divided up by the male delegates amongst themselves in informal deals to which the women – even as official delegates – had no access (Tripp 2015; Fuest 2008). This, as Tripp (2015) concludes, shows that "there were some important gains for women, but many setbacks as well, which

could be directly attributed to their weak voting capacity and inability to participate in backroom deals” (Tripp 2015, 165f.).

Stage 3: Post-Conflict

After the peace negotiations ended, ECOWAS and US troops secured the situation on the ground, the United Nations Mission to Liberia (UNMIL) was established, and the transitional government took up its work. International donor structures that had emerged during the conflict expanded and many women’s organizations got funding and support from international organizations like the World Bank and various UN institutions (Bekoe and Parajon 2007; Fuest 2008; Tripp 2015; UNMIL 2010).

Women’s groups like WIPNET remained active and shifted their focus on the implementation of the peace agreement. They held workshops and established benchmarks for implementation, informed the public about the process and even proactively participated in the disarmament process, talking to former fighters and convincing them to demobilize (Bekoe and Parajon 2007; Tripp 2015).

The UN and other international actors helped to set up free and peaceful elections in 2005. With the encouragement of women’s groups and international organizations, more than 100 female candidates ran in the elections. Women’s groups organized massive voter registration campaigns and mobilized women to vote, finally electing Johnson Sirleaf, the country’s first female president (Tripp 2015; Bekoe and Parajon 2007; Fuest 2008; Sims 2012).

This drive was apparently partly spurred by women's frustration of being marginalized in the transitional institutions:

“Women were grossly marginalized in the National Transitional Assembly, four women and 19 men. Women saw this as indicative of discrimination. Men were presumed to be the main actors. Women's advocacy was ignored and undervalued. This left women with little option but to seek political equality and that is why they backed Ellen so forcefully.”

Vabah Gayflor, former Gender Minister
(as quoted in Tripp 2015, p. 110; Interview in 2014)

According to observers, participation in the political sphere remains one of the main issue women mobilize around. Women themselves, including Johnson Sirleaf, often link their political ambitions to the women's movement's achievements, thus drawing political legitimacy out of women's activism for peace (Fuest 2008; Tripp 2015).

Outcome

While Johnson Sirleaf has been controversial in many ways, her government implemented crucial policies aimed at improving women's lives that demonstrate a commitment to gender equality. Her government also adopted a National Action Plan in the context of implementing UNSCR 1325, demonstrating a commitment to international gender norms (Sims 2012). Furthermore, since 2005, women have been relatively well represented in ministerial positions, have been elected as mayor to the capital, and have held important posts in judiciary and the police (Tripp 2015). But even after women's participation became a widely discussed issue during and after the conflict, women's representation in the legislature remained low. Despite Johnson Sirleaf's government's commitment to gender equality in other policy areas and despite some lobbying by women's organizations like the Liberian Women's National Political Forum, international NGOs and UN Women, no gender quota has been adopted in Constitution or electoral law. Most recently, the “Affirmative Action for Equitable Participation and Representation Act,” which would have established reserved seats for women, youth, and

people with disabilities, passed the Senate and the House in 2016. However, the two versions passed in the Senate and the House, respectively, stipulated differing numbers of seats and no agreement regarding the number of seats as well as concrete steps for implementation could be reached, preventing the Act from becoming law before the 2017 elections took place. Furthermore, a 2016 amendment to the election law stipulates that all parties should “endeavor to ensure” that their lists of nominated candidates consist of no less than 30 per cent of either gender. But, so far, this amendment has been treated as aspirational rather than binding and was not enforced in the 2017 elections. Consequently, only two out of 23 contesting parties met the 30 per cent threshold (Sims 2012; Tripp 2015; Krook 2014; IDEA; Carter Center 2017, 2018; UN Women 2016). Thus, while gender equality and equal female participation in politics are clearly important issues for women’s activists as well as the government (at least while Johnson Sirleaf was in office) and while gender quota policies have been proposed multiple times, this has not translated into the adoption and implementation of an effective quota policy. Various explanations have been proposed to explain this phenomenon. For one, women’s activists and female politicians seem to be divided over the necessity and desirability of quota policies, while male politicians have rejected proposals for quotas as threats to their authority and power (Sims 2012). Others have pointed to opportunity structures, like high registration fees for candidacies for political office, party structures that largely exclude women from their higher ranks, or the plurality/majoritarian electoral system (Fuest 2008; Sims 2012).

5. Comparative Analysis and Discussion

In the following section, the findings from the two individual case studies are briefly compared. Then, potential explanations for the difference in outcome and additional findings as well as their theoretical implications are discussed. Finally, limitations of the study are briefly outlined and areas for potential future research identified.

When discussing the similarities and differences between the two cases, it is important to keep in mind that the analysis in this study relies on interview and survey data that has been collected and interpreted by other scholars at different times and in different context. Thus, the comparability of data for the two different cases is somewhat limited and the without being able to conduct original fieldwork, only cautious inferences can be drawn from this analysis.

5.1 Comparing Burundi and Liberia

Both Burundi and Liberia experienced a high-intensity conflict that broke out over the control of the government along ethnic lines after long-standing tensions. While the Arusha peace agreement in Burundi was signed in 2000, the overall period of fighting lasted for twelve years from 1993 to 2005, similar to Liberia, where the fighting over the two periods of conflict lasted for about 14 years from 1989 to 2003. In both countries, most of the population was affected in some way. In Burundi, an estimated 300,000 out of the approximately 11.8 Million population (as of 2018) were killed and one million displaced (Burke et al. 2001; CIA 2019a), compared to the estimated 250,000 dead out of a population of approximately 4.8 Million (as of 2018) in Liberia, where half of the total population was furthermore displaced (Tripp 2015; CIA 2019b). Proportionally, the Liberian population was thus hit harder by the conflict than the population in Burundi.

The analysis above has shown that, in the first stage, the respective conflicts did lead to societal disruption that also affected gender roles and relations in both countries. However, the extent to which these changes in gender roles also affected gendered attitudes and the perceptions of women's capabilities among men and women, and whether women were conscious of the changes and viewed them mostly positively, remain unclear in the Burundian context. The available empirical evidence from Liberia, on the other hand, suggests that both men and women were conscious of these changes, but that women viewed them more positively than

men. Women also clearly linked their new roles and outlook to processes that began due to the war.

In both cases, women responded to the respective conflicts with widespread mobilization around a gender-based shared identity that purposefully cut across ethnic and religious lines. While the group of women present at the Burundian peace negotiations seem to have been dominated by an educated, urban elite, the women at the Liberian peace negotiations cut across class lines. The Liberian women's movement was furthermore instrumental in making the negotiations happen in the first place, while the Burundian negotiations were brought about mainly by international and regional pressure.

In the second stage, both women's movements demanded to have their demands and representatives included in the negotiations but were initially rejected by the male elites. Other than suggested in the proposed causal path, the political elites seem to have remained largely unaffected by changes in gender relations and were not receptive to women and their demands. In the Burundian case, women were only granted observer status after extensive support from international actors which lobbied on their behalf and carried their demands into the talks. Liberian women's groups were eventually granted participant as well observer status and one woman became signatory to the final agreement. The influence of international actors in the Liberian case was less pronounced. In both cases, women used conferences, usually organized by international actors, to draft proposals that were then integrated into the final agreement. A proposed gender quota for decision-making positions to be included in the Burundian agreement was rejected however, while the Liberian agreement did include a vague commitment to women's equal inclusion. Both women's movements primary goal was an end to the conflict, but both of them also demanded women's increased inclusion and participation in the political sphere. However, the Burundian women appear to have been more successful

in reframing the negotiation process as a broad platform to debate future power structures and women's roles in the country and to successfully used the window of opportunity that the talks presented to them. The Liberian women seem to have been more focused on finalizing an agreement that would bring tangible results in terms of ending the escalating violence.

After the respective agreements were signed, the women's groups in both countries successfully sustained networks and built upon their gained experience to further put pressure on the conflict parties and elites to implement the agreements. Liberian women, especially, also focused on the hands-on implementation of the peace agreement, including the demobilization process. Both women's movements also emphasized training and support for female political candidates and mobilized women to vote in the subsequent democratic elections, often with the continued support from international actors. But while Burundian women successfully managed to get a 30 per cent gender quota for political institutions passed, no broad-based campaign for a gender quota emerged in Liberia and no gender quota was passed. Female politicians in Liberia furthermore used their association with peace and the women's movement to gain legitimacy in the political sphere. While women in Burundi had used similar arguments to gain access to the peace talks, it remains unclear to which extent these associations helped them gain political legitimacy in the post-conflict period. Male political elites remained unwelcoming to women's activities in the political sphere in both cases. But in Liberia the election of women into executive positions – including the presidency – shows that Liberian society as a whole did not categorically reject female politicians.

The analysis thus shows that most of the proposed causal steps linking conflict to the adoption of gender quotas and increased female representation do exist. However, while the presence of the causal path mainly leads to the expected outcome in the typical case of Burundi, it fails to

do so in Liberia, despite the many observed similarities between the two cases along the causal path.

5.2 Theoretical Implications of Findings

The following section discusses the theoretical implications of the findings outlined above. It first addresses potential explanations for the difference in outcome and then briefly discusses some additional findings. An analysis of these variations and findings helps to identify areas for potential future research to ultimately refine and adjust the proposed causal path.

Explaining the Difference in Outcome

However, some variations between the two cases exist within the individual steps that may, in part, explain the difference in outcome.

Conflict Intensity

For one, based on the proportional numbers of population and battle-related deaths, the conflict in Liberia was more intense than the one in Burundi. As theorized previously (e.g. Hughes and Tripp 2015; Tripp 2015), this higher conflict intensity seems to have sparked more extensive changes in gender roles and relations. But contrary to the predictions, in the case of Liberia, this did not translate into the adoption of a gender quota or higher levels of female representation in the legislature. One possible explanation is that due to the intensity of the conflict and the escalating violence, the women's movement's main goal was to end the fighting as quickly as possible. The Liberian women – more so than the women in Burundi – thus focused on quickly signing and implementing a peace agreement that would bring tangible and sustainable results in ending the conflict. Using the window of opportunity presented by the peace negotiations to press for long-term concerns like women's political representation appears to have been less of a priority. This finding implies that higher conflict intensity and

consequently more societal disruptions, do not necessarily increase the likelihood of gender quota adoption and higher female representation.

Types of Women's Activists

Another explanation for this difference in priorities may lie in the women that were represented at the peace talks themselves. While the women's movements in both countries were broad-based, the women at the Burundian peace negotiations mostly belonged to an educated urban elite, while the women at the Liberian peace negotiations seem to have represented a broader class spectrum. Women from the elite may prioritize provisions for women's political representation more than, for example, rural or refugee women focused on surviving and returning home, since they may benefit more from those provisions. This suggests that – rather than seeing “women” as a monolithic actor group – the diversity within this category needs to be taken into account and the relationship between different groups of women with different priorities and agendas be investigated in more detail.

Unexplored Factors

There are, of course, many other factors, that could potentially explain this deviation for the case of Liberia. As briefly mentioned in the case study, some observers have suggested that party structures or the lack of support for gender quotas among female politicians may hinder the adoption of a quota policy, despite repeated efforts (Sims 2012).

Another potential explanation for the difference in outcome is the difference in electoral system, that the case selection could not control for: While Burundi uses a PR electoral system, which have been found to be the most “women-friendly,” Liberia uses a majoritarian “first-past-the-post” system, which are theorized to be detrimental to quota adoption and female representation (IDEA; Hughes et al. 2015; Tripp and Kang 2008). The difference in electoral system could therefore play a role in Liberia's failure to adopt or implement a gender quota.

However, other cases in Sub-Saharan Africa demonstrate, that the electoral system along cannot explain such differences. The cases of Rwanda and Tanzania, for example, both use majoritarian electoral systems as well but have nevertheless adopted gender quotas.

The case of Rwanda furthermore illustrates that the proposed causal path linking conflict to gender quota adoption via the window of opportunity provided by peace negotiations, is not the only possible causal pathway. While Rwanda also experienced a high-intensity intra-state conflict and genocide, the conflict ended in 1994 when the armed wing of the current ruling party declared military victory. Hence, no peace negotiations took place. Nevertheless, the 2003 constitution included 30 per cent gender quota for all decision-making bodies. The current parliament exceeds this quota substantially: At 61.3 per cent, Rwanda is the country with the highest percentage of female legislative representation in the world (IPU 2019a; Bauer and Burnet 2013).

The case of Tanzania, on the other hand, clearly shows that no conflict context at all is necessary for the adoption of gender quotas in the Sub-Sahara African context. Tanzania did not experience a period of high-intensity conflict since it became an independent republic in 1964 and nevertheless adopted its first gender quota of 8 per cent in 1975. This percentage was increased to 30 per cent in 2005. With a percentage of 36.9 women in its parliament, it comes in 27th place in the worldwide ranking, one place above Burundi (IPU 2019a). Observers have attributed this development to factors like the egalitarian outlook of its first president Nyere and his ideology of African socialism, a women's movement that was particularly galvanized by the 1995 UN Conference on Women, and later to colonial ties and regional diffusion effects, when Tanzania updated its quota in 2005 to fulfill commitments to the Commonwealth and the Southern African Development Community (Tripp 2017; Rwambali 2014).

Conclusion

The case study of the typical case of Burundi clearly shows that the proposed causal path linking the independent variable of high-intensity conflict to the dependent variable of gender quota adoption and subsequent increase in women's female representation exists and holds explanatory value.

The case study of the deviant case of Liberia and its lack of a quota policy demonstrates, however, that the presence of these proposed causal steps is not sufficient to achieve the predicted outcome. Some other contextual factors are at work in this case, which to investigate in detail lies beyond the scope of this study. The case of Rwanda, which adopted a gender quota post-conflict even though it did not hold peace negotiations, demonstrates that a window of opportunity provided by a peace process is not a necessary condition for the adoption of gender quotas, while the case of Tanzania, which adopted a gender quota early on without experiencing a high-intensity conflict, demonstrates that the occurrence of a conflict itself is not a necessary condition either.

Taken together, these cases show that, on the one hand, there are in fact mechanisms that may causally link high-intensity conflict to the adoption of gender quotas, demonstrating that the proposed causal path does indeed hold explanatory power, while also illustrating the causal heterogeneity as well as the equifinality that exists in the research area of gender quota adoption. The mechanisms outlined in the proposed causal path, thus, do not constitute necessary or sufficient conditions but rather contributing factors which may make the outcome of gender quota adoption more likely.

Additional Findings

Apart from the findings regarding the difference in outcome, additional findings from the detailed process tracing of the two cases have valuable theoretical implications and help to identify areas of interest for future research.

The Missing Link: Changes in Gender Relations Affecting Political Elites

The one causal mechanism that did not appear as predicted by the causal path in either case, was the effect of disruptions of gender relations on attitudes of political elites (as proposed for example by Anderson 2016). Both cases show that the social disruptions affected women more than men, and were viewed more positively by them. While no overt or extensive backlash against women was observed in either case, the ideas expressed by proponents of the social disruption theories may be too optimistic. Speaking within a supply-and-demand framework, the disruptions of gender relations during the conflict thus appear to have increased the supply of motivated, experienced women in the political sphere, but have failed to alter the demand for them among the political elites and society as a whole.

The Role of International Norms and Actors

Women's movements also used of existing international gender norms and normative frameworks, by referencing international conventions and USNCR 1325 to justify their demands for inclusion. The involvement of the international actors differed however: In the Burundian context, it was necessary for international actors to interfere and pressure the negotiation parties to include the women and their demands. It is unlikely that the women would have gained observer status on their own. In the Liberian context, international pressure was not necessary to the same extent. The relevance of the third actor group of international actors therefore varies based on other contextual factors, which should be further investigated.

Implications of Using Traditional Feminine Roles and Gender Essentialism

What both cases have in common, are the strategies the women's activists used to gain access to the negotiations and support for their demands. To advance their cause and justify their claims, the women invoked narratives and images of traditional feminine roles, e.g. women as mothers and natural peacemakers. This could either be a strategic move by the women, aimed to prevent backlash: By framing their activism in traditional feminine terms, women may appear less threatening and their activism more socially acceptable (e.g. Anderson 2016). It may also be due to the fact that in many societies women draw much of their social capital from traditional gender roles, with motherhood in particular being a source of authority and respect (e.g. Prasch 2015; Sims 2012).

The continued use of traditional female narratives could, on the other hand, also mean that it is, in fact, not necessary for the conflict to cause widespread societal disruptions and changes in gender roles for women to mobilize against violence when their peace activism takes place within women's traditional roles. If it is indeed possible that women mobilize for peace when no significant and widespread changes in gender roles have previously taken place, an alternative causal path could potentially exist. In this alternative path, conflict and adoption of gender quotas are linked through a widespread women's movement advocating for peace within the traditional gender roles if another group of actors, e.g. progressive women's rights activists, is able to use the traditional women's movement's momentum along with the window of opportunity provided by peace negotiations to insert their demands for increased female representation into the peace process. Hence, the link between potential societal disruptions affecting the population as a whole and women's peace activism should be investigated in more detail along with the gender attitudes among grassroots peace activists compared to those of women's elites and leaders that directly influence women's proposals and lobbying at peace

talks (thus echoing the sentiment about diversity of attitudes and agendas within the category “women” expressed above).

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

While the case studies have produced some valuable findings, there are also several limitations to the study that could be amended by future research. For one, on a conceptual level, the proposed causal path does not differentiate between different quota types. For a higher degree of outcome sensibility, future studies should take different quota types into account and investigate if the underlying causal mechanisms vary significantly.

Furthermore, the proposed causal path and the analysis focus on the adoption of gender quotas and the subsequent levels of female representation but do not specifically address and investigate long-term effects of disrupted gender relations or long-range developments in female representation after post-conflict adoption of gender quotas. The proposed causal path also focuses on gender quotas and female representation in the legislature. Specifically examining and comparing how the causal mechanisms post-conflict affect women running for or holding executive positions could yield valuable additional knowledge. The case of Liberia, with relatively high numbers of women in executive positions but low proportions of women in the legislature, as well as women in executive positions that reference their involvement in the peace process as a claim to political legitimacy could constitute an interesting case for future research. It could also be valuable to put this research on post-conflict gender quota adoption into conversation with research on women’s descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation and to investigate these specifically in in post-conflict contexts.

Finally, due to its research design and case selection, the findings of this study are limited to a small population of cases. Replicating these case studies in other regions could be valuable to investigate how regional, historical, and cultural factors may play into this model.

6. Conclusion

To investigate how the occurrence of high-intensity conflict may affect the adoption of gender quotas, this study builds on different strands of research on conflict, peace processes, gender quota adoption, and female representation and has proposed a causal path which links high-intensity conflict to post-conflict gender quota adoption through distinct causal steps, working through three relevant actor groups consisting of women, society and political elites, as well as international actors.

The two case studies of typical case Burundi and deviant case Liberia show that these causal mechanisms are mostly present and hold some explanatory value, particularly for the relevance of mechanisms involving women and women's groups. The presence or discernible effects of mechanisms involving society and political elites cannot be established clearly, implying that predictions by proponents of social disruption theory may be too optimistic. The relevance of international actors, on the other hand, seems to vary based on contextual factors which warrants further investigation. Most importantly, the difference in outcome and a reference to two additional cases from the population demonstrate that the mechanisms in the proposed causal path are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions. Instead, they should be conceptualized as contributing factors making the outcome of gender quota adoption more likely, while equifinality and causal heterogeneity in this research area should be emphasized.

As with all qualitative, small-n research, the overall generalizability of this study's findings is limited. However, some findings hold implications for existing research approaches and furthermore point to potential areas for valuable additional research. For one, this study suggests that, beyond a certain threshold, higher levels of conflict intensity do not further increase the likelihood of quota adoption. The findings furthermore suggest that the treatment of women as a monolithic category is problematic as it may conceal important differences in

women's social positions as well as their corresponding priorities and agendas which may, in turn, be relevant for whether a gender quota is adopted. Additional research in these areas and the application of the proposed causal path to cases in other regions could thus yield valuable findings to further expand our understanding of the links between conflict and gender quota adoption.

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