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# The use of child soldiers in African armed conflicts: a comparative study of Angola and Mozambique

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# The Use of Child Soldiers in African Armed Conflicts: A Comparative Study of Angola and Mozambique.

**By**

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**Research Report Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (MA) in International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.**

**February, 2014**

## Declaration

I declare that this research report is my original and unaided work except where otherwise acknowledged. It is being submitted for the award of the degree of Master of Arts (MA) in International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. To the best of my knowledge, it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

**Candidate:**

Date:

Signature:

**Supervisor:**

Date:

Signature:

**Acknowledgements**

This dissertation would not have been possible without the assistance of my supervisor, Dr Jacqui Ala. Her exceptional experience in this field, constructive comments, her patience and great diligence in the process of developing this thesis through to its submission propelled my interest to succeed.

To my wife Vitowe Kakhuta-Banda and the children, thanks for inspiring me and for being there for me. You have been a true family. Forgive me for the lack of attention I showed you during my mental black out and confusion in this academic journey. Your patience gave me the courage to keep on.

I would like also to thank the government of Malawi for awarding me the scholarship to pursue Post Graduate studies and the Malawi Defence Force Commander, General Henry Odillo osc, ndc (K) for allowing and providing me with financial assistance.

My fellow students and friends at the University of the Witwatersrand and many more; thank you very much for sharing your great minds and enabling me to do great work. You are important contributors to this work in your own special ways and deserve a large share of the credit for what is of value and worth in this research. However, the short comings are, of course, all mine.

Above all, I would like to thank God for the gift of life, giving me health, strength and protection throughout this journey. God, you are always on my side and that is why I don't fail.

## Dedication

***To my dear wife Vitowe Kakhuta-Banda, my children***

***and***

***To (late) Francisco Lyson Thomas Kakhuta-Banda (father), for investing a lot in me and from whom I owe who I am today.***

## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| CIA | Central Intelligence Agency |
| CRC | Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisations |
| CSUCS | Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers |
| DDR | Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of Congo |
| DSL | Defence Systems Limited |
| EO | Executive Outcomes |
| ICC | International Criminal Court |
| ICRC | International Committee of the Red Cross |
| IDP | Internally Displaced Persons |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| FNLA | National Front for the Liberation of Angola |
| FRELIMO | Mozambique Liberation Front |
| MANU | Mozambique African National Union |
| MPLA | Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| PLRF | Programme for Family Localisation and Reunification |
| QUNO | Quaker United Nations Office |
| RENAMO | Mozambique National Resistance |
| UDENAMO | National Democratic Union of Mozambique |

| | |
|---|---|
| UNAMI | National Union for Mozambican Independence |
| UNICEF | United Nations International Children's Fund |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNITA | National Union for the Total Independence of Angola |
| SAIIA | South Africa Institute of International Affairs |
| SCF | Save the Children Foundation |
| WFP | World Food Programme |

**Abstract**

A plethora of the existing scholarship on child soldiering in Africa shows that armed conflicts are associated with human suffering borne by the civilian population who are targeted by the warring parties and pay the heaviest costs. Big variations exist with regard to the extent civilians suffer at the hands of the warring factions over time, across conflicts, and across countries experiencing civil wars. This research explores conditions for the use of child soldiers in Africa which is an issue of high importance and remains an under-researched field. A juxtaposition of Angola and Mozambique civil wars show that more child soldiers were used in the Mozambican war than in the Angolan civil war. Pulling the various strands together, as well as theoretical insights, I find an alternative understanding in regard to the variance in the use of child soldiers in the two civil wars. The variance was due to the nature of contemporary conflicts, lack of institutional structures on part of the rebels and means of control to account for their forces, unpopular policy of villagization in Mozambique, high levels of economic marginalisation and exclusion, recruitment policy of government and rebel forces, influence of traditional leaders and churches as well as the use of foreign actors and private companies in Angola.

## Table of Contents


Declaration ..... ii
Acknowledgements ..... iii
Dedication ..... iv
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms ..... v
Abstract ..... vii
Table of Contents ..... viii
**Chapter One ..... 1**
Introduction ..... 1
Aim ..... 2
Rationale ..... 2
Literature Review ..... 4
Theoretical Foundation ..... 8
Research Question ..... 9
Hypotheses ..... 9
Methodology ..... 10
Operationalization of Independent Variables and Dependent Variable ..... 11
Limitation of the Research ..... 12
Chapterisation of the Study ..... 12
**Chapter Two ..... 14**
Historical Overview ..... 14
Introduction ..... 14
Why children have been used in Armed Conflicts in Africa ..... 16
Poverty Levels ..... 16
Orphan Rates ..... 17
Availability of Small Arms ..... 18
Access to Refugee and IDP Camps ..... 18
Demand and Supply ..... 19
Voluntary Recruitment ..... 20
How child Soldiers have been Utilised ..... 21
The Absence of Child Soldiers in Conflicts or Variations ..... 22
Implications ..... 25
The Top-Down Implication. ..... 25
The Bottom-Up implication. ..... 26
Extent of the Problem of Child soldiers in Africa ..... 26
**Chapter Three ..... 28**
Angola, Mozambique and Child Soldiers: An Analysis ..... 28
Introduction ..... 28
Angolan Civil War: 1975-1994 ..... 29
Mozambican Civil War: 1976-1992 ..... 31

Factors that led to the Use of Child Soldiers in Angola and Mozambique Civil Wars ..... 32
Angola ..... 32
Why children were used in Angola ..... 33
How Children were recruited in Angola ..... 34
Mozambique ..... 35
Why children were used in Mozambique ..... 36
How Children were Recruited in Mozambique ..... 36
Rebel agendas during the Civil Wars and Child Recruitment ..... 37
Roles of Female Combatants ..... 40
Control and Assimilation of Children into Soldiers ..... 42
**Chapter Four ..... 44**
Variance, Social Impact and Reintegration ..... 45
Introduction ..... 45
Why Variance between Angola and Mozambique? ..... 45
Social Impact ..... 49
Reintegration of Child Soldiers ..... 50
Angola ..... 50
Mozambique ..... 53
Summary of the variables present in both cases ..... 57
Summary of variables but did not seem to contribute significantly to the use of Child Soldiers ..... 57
**Chapter Five ..... 57**
The Legal Environment Child Soldiers Operated and the Role Played by Civil Society and International Organisations ..... 58
Introduction ..... 58
The Legal Environment ..... 58
Human Right Abuses ..... 61
Why Child Soldiers have not been Protected? ..... 63
Roles played by Civil Society and International Organisations ..... 65
**Chapter Six ..... 69**
Conclusion ..... 69
Motives and Patterns for the Recruitment of Child Soldiers in Angolan Civil War ..... 70
Motives and Patterns for the Recruitment of Child Soldiers in Mozambique Civil War ..... 71
Case comparisons ..... 72
Way Forward ..... 74
Recommendations ..... 75
**References ..... 75**

# Chapter One

## Background Information

### Introduction

Armed conflicts are associated by human suffering which is mainly borne by the civilian population as they are targeted by the warring parties. Civilians pay the heaviest costs regardless of the earlier image by Mao Tse-tung of the rebels operating to win the hearts and minds of the populace.[1] Since 1945, civil wars have caused more than 16.2 million deaths in 75 out of 127 conflicts.[2] More to this are the indirect costs of internal conflict which are estimated to be much greater such as disease, famine and economic disruption due to the war.[3] However, big variations exist in regards to the extent civilians suffer at the hands of the warring factions over time, across conflicts, and in countries experiencing civil wars. For example, the violence in Colombia resulted in less than 20,000 deaths in about 40 years, while about 100,000 deaths were registered in eastern Congo in six years.[4]

Different armed groups exhibit different patterns of behaviour in dealing with civilian populations.[5] This can take the form of launching campaigns of ethnic cleansing, displacement, extermination[6] and abduction of children to fill the ranks of government or rebel forces[7] as seen in Rwanda, Colombia and Northern Uganda. Some armed groups have shown restraint in their relationship with civilians and perpetrated low levels of violence.[8] Other armies like in Sri Lanka and Colombia put in place structures of command, control and accountability to check abuses committed against non-combatants.[9] Of great concern in Africa is that children and youth have become stakeholders and have been used in political campaigns, liberation struggles and insurgencies as they form a

[1] Nicholai Lidow. (2010). Rebel Governance and Civilian Abuse: Comparing Liberia's Rebels Using Satellite Data. Available: www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/wgape/papers/19_Lidow.pdf. Accessed: 06-06-2913.
[2] James Fearon & David Laitin. ((2003). Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War. *American Political Science Review.* 97: 75-90.
[3] Hazem Ghobarah, Paul Huth & Bruce Russett. (2003). Civil Wars Kill and Maim People- Long after the Shooting Stops. *American Political Science Review*. 97: 189-202.
[4] Bethany Lacina & Nils Petter Gleditsch. (2005). Monitoring Trends in Global Combat: a New Data Set of Battle Deaths. *European Journal of Population*. 21:145-66.
[5] Simon Chesterman. (2001). *Civilians in War*. Lynne Rienner. Boulder.
[6] Gerrad Prunier. (1997). The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide. Colombia University Press. New York.
[7] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (CSUCH). (2005). *Child Soldiers Global Report, 2004*. London.
[8] Jeremy Weinstein. (2005). Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 49: 598-624.
[9] Marcartan Humphreys & Jeremy Weinstein. (2006). Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil war. *American Political Science Review*. 100(3): 429-447.

significant majority of the population of most African countries.[10] Therefore, examining the usage of child soldiers and variations in conflicts thus involves an examination of a plethora of factors and an analysis of the strategies and tactics used by armed groups in their interaction with civilians.

**Aim**

The aim of this research is to investigate or explore why child soldiers have been used in some conflicts in Africa but relative absence in others. In this research I will consider the factors that led to the use of child soldiers in the Angolan civil war (1975-1994) and the Mozambican civil war (1976-1992). Reports show that in the Mozambican civil war 25,498 child soldiers out of 92,881 combatants were used representing a total of 28% while in the Angolan civil war 8,000 child soldiers out of 194,000 combatants were used representing only 4% of combatants.[11] This research will enable me to understand the factors that led to the use of child soldiers, how and why the phenomenon of child soldiers takes place in different contexts in order to develop an integrated comparative analysis between different conflict situations. The research will further help in bringing more awareness on the plight of children in conflicts; suggest improvements and intervention for children affected by armed conflicts in developing countries. Moreover, the study will complement the efforts of actors who are providing assistance to child soldiers affected by armed conflicts like national governments, civil societies, international and local Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and United Nations (UN) agencies.

**Rationale**

Africa has been faced with a number of armed conflicts over a long time. In many of these armed conflicts the phenomenon of the use of child soldiers has been a major cause of concern. Further evidence on the issue suggests that the use of child soldiers have increased significantly over the years, and that the problem will continue if not addressed.[12] According to the International Action Network on Small Arms, Safer World and Oxfam International, between 1990 and 2005, 23 African nations have been involved in armed conflicts where child soldiers have been used. Some of the countries involved include

[10] Angela McIntyre. (2005). *Invisible Stakeholders in Africa: Children and War in Africa*. Insitute for Security Studies. Pretoria. South Africa.

[11] Simon F. Reich & Vera Achvarina. (2005). *Why Do Children Fight? Explaining Child Soldier Ratios in African Intra-State Conflicts.* Ford Institute for Human Security.

[12] UNICEF. (1996). Children in War: UNICEF Report Finds Number of Child Soldiers Growing. Available: http://www.unicef.org/sowc96/2csoldrs.htm. Accessed: 30-05-2013.

Sierra Leone, Burundi, Liberia, Rwanda, Angola, Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), just to mention a few. Interestingly, Africa has provided the largest number of conflicts in the world as well as child soldier participation.[13] Furthermore, it is estimated that about 120,000 children were active in Africa at the beginning of this century making Africa the largest single continent in terms of child soldier usage and the fastest growing region in terms of child soldiers in recent years followed by East Asia and the Pacific.[14]

However, the root causes of conflicts in Africa have been the subject of much debate while the nature of violence has been poorly understood by many. In contrast to the stereotypes of "ethnic" conflict in Africa, some evidence appears to show that Africa's great ethnic diversity actually reduces, rather than increases, the chances of conflict occurring. In some cases though, it seems that where one ethnic group is numerically dominant this may increase the chances of conflict[15] (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Elbadawi and Sambanis, 2000; and Arvind and Vines, 2004). In these cases it therefore seems that power and elite's manipulation of ethnic identity becomes a major driving force. Furthermore, my observation is that the sources of conflict in Africa reflect the diversity and complexity of Africa's past and present as I explain below.

While some sources of conflict are purely internal, some reflect the dynamics of a particular sub-region, and some have important international dimensions. According to the 2003 Commission on Human Security, the sources of conflict in Africa are linked by a number of common themes and experiences, and may be caused by: competition over land and resources, sudden and deep political or economic transitions, growing inequity among people and communities; increasing crime, corruption and illegal activities, weak and unstable political regimes and institutions; and identity politics and historical legacies, such as colonialism. However, in most cases, economic motivation has become the main cause.

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[13] Laura Barnitz. (1999). *Child Soldiers: Youth Who Participate in Armed Conflict*. 2nd. Youth Advocate Program International Washington. pp. 2-3.

[14] The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. (2000). The Use of Children as Soldiers in Africa: A Country Analysis of Child Recruitment and Participation in Armed Conflict. Available: http://www.reliefweb.int/library/documents/chilsold.htm. Accessed: 30-05-2013; Afua Twum-Danso. (2003). Africa's Young Soldiers: The Co-option of Childhood. *Monograph 82*. Institute for Security Studies. http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Monographs/No82/Content.html, p.8.

[15] Cutler J. Cleveland. (2007). Armed Conflict in Africa: A Threat to Regional Cooperation. United Nations Environment Programme. Available: http://www.eoearth.org/article/Armed_conflict_in_Africa:_a_threat_to_regional_cooperation. Accessed: 01-04-2013.

These wars affect the political and governance systems, investment and economic growth of a country, and places stress on the environment as well as contributing to the overexploitation of natural resources. In the same vein, natural resources have been acknowledged as a factor in influencing or prolonging some of these conflicts in Africa. Furthermore, almost $300 billion has been squandered on these armed conflicts by governments and rebel forces to sustain the war.[16] This money could have been used to lift the continent out of the many problems being faced like extreme poverty, prevention of disease epidemics, or provide education and build roads which could affect millions of people positively.

What is more worrying is that, these civil wars have taken the lives of millions of people since the end of the Cold War, including more than two million children while many more have been left physically and mentally damaged.[17] While the rebel factions deny recruiting and training children in many of these conflicts, some children boast to their friends that they are acquainted with the use of arms as they have received training from certain factions. Although children are used as soldiers in various Asian countries, parts of Latin America, Europe and Middle East, the problem is most serious in Africa where children as young as nine have been involved in armed conflicts[18] as pointed out above.

**Literature Review**

According to Ball, the proliferation of violent conflicts has been one of the distinguishing features in the modern world as over 150 conflicts have been registered worldwide since the end of the Cold War including 39 major ones in the last decade of the twentieth century.[19] In armed conflicts, different actors are motivated by different reasons and this is reflected in how wars are fought and motives of the groups involved in the fighting. In some conflicts external players have been recruited and used like children, diasporas, mercenaries, international organisations and other various actors bearing significant implications on the dynamics of the conflict. In this regard, new conflicts are very different

[16] Safeworld. (2008). Conflict-sensitive Development. Available: http://www.saferworld.org.uk/downloads/pubdocs/Conflict-sensitive%20dev%20May%2008.pdf.Accessed: 01-04-2013.

[17] Graca Machel. (1996). *Impact of Armed Conflict on Children. United Nations*. New York.

[18] Joe Becker & Tony Tate. (2003). Stolen Children: Abduction and Recruitment in Northern Uganda. Human Rights Watch. Available: http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/uganda0303/uganda0403.pdf. Accessed: 30-2013.

[19] N. Ball. (1996). The challenge of Rebuilding war Torn Societies, in CA Crocker, F.O. Hampson and P. Aall (eds), *Managing Global Chaos: sources of and Responces to International Conflict*. United States institute of Peace. Washington, DC.

from the traditional wars of the last century as they are much more fragmented and take place against the backdrop of a weakened or collapsing formal economy and infrastructure.[20] External funding, appropriation of humanitarian assistance and illicit activities of combatants have often become the main source of funding to support the war effort. This therefore accounts for the high incidence of civilian victims and participation as incidences of torture, murder and displacement of civilians figure highly.

According to Chesterman, rebel groups demonstrate totally different patterns of behaviour in their interaction with civilians.[21] While some rebel factions have engaged in ethnic cleansing campaigns, some have abducted children to fill their ranks and file, others have perpetrated low levels of violence and exhibited restraint in their relationship with civilians. Some have gone further to set formal structures of command, control and accountability to check abuses committed by combatants against civilians as well as engaging military targets only.[22] Wood observed that for the armed group to enforce which choice to take depends on the strength of the group's hierarchy or chain of command, whether superiors punish subordinates for infractions and also on the group's norms concerning violence against civilians.[23]

Furthermore, Moss notes that, "conflict has multiple costs, not least the terrible human toll".[24] While in Africa the exact number of deaths caused by wars is not known, it is believed to be in the millions, with extremely high economic costs. At the individual level, armed conflict impacts differently depending on the extent to which politicians and military commanders gain financially from it. This often becomes an incentive for fighting as the combatants may profit through looting, pay and other benefits, however many fighters are involuntarily recruited and get involved as a means of survival. It also needs to be noted that due to the violence, rape, use of children as soldiers and human trafficking, social cohesion is broken which ultimately means more conflict.

[20] Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic. (2002). The World Bank, NGOs, and the Private Sector in post War Reconstruction. *International Peacekeeping*. 9(2): 81-89.
[21] Simon Chesterman. (2001). *Civilians in Wa*r. Lynne Reinner. Boulder.
[22] Macartan Humphreys & Jeremy M. Weinstein. (2006). Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil war. *American Political Science Review*. 100(3): 429-447.
[23] Elisabeth Jean Wood. (2009). Armed Groups and Sexual Violence: When is Wartime Rape Rare? *Politics & Society*. 37(1): 131-162.
[24] Todd J. Moss. (2011). *African Development: Making Sense of the Issues and Actors*. 2nd Ed. Lynne Rienner Publishers. London.

According to Human Rights Watch,[25] increasing numbers of children have become participants in war around the world, being denied their freedom and subjected to violence, with more than 300,000 serving in armed conflicts.[26] These conflicts result in high levels of civilian casualties regardless of being under the protection of the International Law (Geneva Protocols, 1977) due to the fact that especially rebel factions, not being states are not signatories to the treaties regulating the conduct of hostilities so consequentially such principles are not universally adhered to. Many governments also turn a blind eye to these norms. According to Davison, two million children died and six million were wounded as a result of conflicts globally between 1994 and 2004.[27] Majekodunmi observes that in some conflicts children are deliberately targeted because of their iconic value, representing both innocence, and society's future which renders them potent in pressurising populations as they represent potential. In some cases children are employed as human shields or killed by terrorists. Though this tactic is uncommon, it is seen as a convenient way to get attention. Today, as many as 90 per cent of war victims are civilians and about half of them are children.[28]

DiCicco and Human Rights Watch observed that children are likely to be involved in armed conflict or become child soldiers if they are poor, separated from their families, displaced from their homes, or living in a combat zone or have limited access to education. Children may also be lured into becoming child soldiers by social causes, religious freedoms and ideas of national liberation. However, not all children join willingly as some are abducted from homes, schools, hospitals and marketplaces; and are later forced to attack men, women and other children in order to desensitize them to violence. Child soldiers who do not attack on command are executed or beaten; therefore, most children commit unspeakable acts when ordered by their commanders.[29]

It is also worth noting that according to Ansell, children are involved in conflict as both victims and soldiers. Over the past years the age of many recruits has aroused international

[25] Human Rights Watch. (2003). The Landmine Monitor. Available: www.hrw.org. Accessed: 01-04-2013.
[26] S. Chesterman. (2001). *Civilians in War*. Lynne Rienner. USA. p.43.
[27] A. Davison. (2004). Child soldiers: No longer a minor incident. *12 Willamette Journal of International Law and Dispute Resolution 124 at 144.*
[28] Majekodunmi, B. (1999). *Protection in Practice: the Protection of children's Rights in Situations of Armed Conflict: UNICEF Experience in Burundi*. Florence, UNICEF Innocent Research Centre.
[29] Lucia DiCicco. (2009). Former Child Soldiers face Psychological Battle. Available: http://www.thestar.com/printArticle/627688. Accessed: 01-04-2013.

alarm.[30] Between 1994 and 1998, 35 armed conflicts had soldiers under the age of 15[31] which is against International Law. The international community has defined child soldiers as victims rather than perpetrators, hence absolving them of responsibility for their actions. In developing countries children are recruited by both government and rebel groups as they are plentiful; the easy availability of small arms including semi-automatic rifles such as AK47s which are easy to carry and operate, coupled with the fact that children are energetic and undemanding. Ansell further states that, not all children are recruited by force like kidnapping. Some volunteer due to intimidation and fear, poverty, unemployment, quest for adventure inspired by films and books or by political reasons.[32] McKay and Mazurana found evidence that females were being press-ganged or abducted although agencies such as the War Child and others that campaign on behalf of child soldiers tell mainly about their abduction.[33]

Wilson, in regards to the recruitment of children by Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), has emphasized the adaptability and malleability of young abductees and stressed the significance not only of abduction but also of traumatic initiation as a way of breaking links with a social past and creating a loyal cadre totally dependent on the movement.[34] These young men and women may lack proper understanding of the conflict to have informed opinions and may end up being victims of radicalisation.

All this happen contrary to a number of human rights instruments which seek to enshrine rights and freedoms for all people such as the Universal Declaration for Human Rights, the 1949 Geneva Convention (Art IV) which protects children from taking part in hostilities, the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Art 15) and the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which bans compulsory recruitment under the age of 18. Nevertheless these instruments have done little to curb the use of child soldiers in many conflicts some being as young as eight years old.[35]

[30] Nicola Ansell. (2005). *Children, Youth and Development*. Routledge. London and New York.
[31] Hoiskar, AH. (2001). Underage and Underfire: An Enquiry into the use of Child Soldiers 1994-8. *Childhood*. 8: 340-360.
[32] Nicola Ansell. (2005). Loc Cit.
[33] Susan McKay & Dyan Mazurana. (2002). Girls in Militaries, Paramilitaries, and Armed Opposition Groups: a Preliminary Review for 1990-2000. Available : www.waraffectedchildren.gc.ca/girls-e.asp.
[34] Wilson, K. (1992). Cults of Violence and Counter-Violence in Mozambique. *Journal of Southern African Studies.* 18: 527-582.
[35] www.un.org/rights/concerns.htm; www.hrw.org/topic/childrens-rights/child-soldiers.

This research therefore will try to explore the variance in the use of child soldiers in African armed conflict. Specifically it will look at why more child soldiers were used in the Mozambican civil war than in the Angolan war. The two cases are similar in that they were Portuguese colonies, experienced armed struggle for liberation soon after independence in 1975 by opposition parties RENAMO and National Union for the Total independence of Angola (UNITA) respectively, both adopted a Marxist orientation and social model of development.

**Theoretical Foundation**

The world has been hit with violent confrontations since human evolution, the history of man being punctuated by a multitude of battles and humiliating defeats leaving behind wholesale massacres. Conflicts are increasingly occurring within and not between states which mean that there are a lot of civilians including women and children involved in the conflict. This result in millions being killed, displaced, as refugees and children being used as soldiers. A number of theories explain why conflicts occur and this study posits two complementary theories to explain the involvement of children in armed conflict. Below, I explain the Economic Roots Theory and the Relative Deprivation Theory which will help in explaining and understanding why child soldiers have been employed in conflicts in Africa.

The Economic Roots Theory (ERT)[36] locates the root causes of conflict in a failed economy, a weak state and a poor country with an unequal distribution of incomes among the people run by a dictatorial regime. War lords and violence entrepreneurs organize unemployed youths into armed groups and are motivated by political goals. Over time they engage in criminal activities in order to finance the struggle and later become entrenched in armed conflict as a way of life. Combatants benefit from appropriating revenues from natural resources such as diamonds, petroleum, timber and other export commodities, which finance the civil war and stimulate demands for secessionism. Once started, armed fighting has a tremendous momentum based on positive feedback referred to as the "conflict trap". Accordingly, in order for conflict resolution to occur, violence has to be contained, anarchy prevented, and security of life and property provided before peace and

[36] Collier, Paul et al. (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap. Civil War and Development Policy*. World Bank. Washington D.C.

reconstruction can take root. According to this theory, the key root cause of conflict is the failure of economic development.[37]

The Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT) explains the feeling of being denied something and refers to the discrepancy between value expectation and value achievement.[38] Schaefer defines it as "the conscious experience of a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectations and present actualities".[39] In Social Science it is more about feelings or measures of political, social or economic deprivation that are relative rather than absolute. It also has important significances for both behaviour and attitudes, including feelings of stress, political attitudes, and participation in collective action. Therefore, these theories can help explain why child soldiers were used in Mozambique and Angola civil wars as they point us to a direct correlation between war, poverty and economic deprivation. Put differently, it is the environment of war that is the root cause of the problems.

**Research Question**

This research will explore the following question: why are child soldiers used in some conflicts in Africa and not in others? To answer this question Mozambique and Angola will be used as comparative case studies.

**Hypotheses**

This study will be guided by the following hypotheses:

**H1** If there is high levels of poverty then child soldiers are more likely to be used during conflict.

**H2** If there is high levels of unemployment then child soldiers are more likely to be used during conflict.

**H3** If there is high levels of ethnic fractionalization then child soldiers are more likely to be used in armed conflict.

**H4** If there are insufficient numbers of military personnel then child soldiers are going to be recruited into the armed groups.

**H5** If the group's hierarchy fails to punish subordinates for infractions or lacks group norms concerning violence against civilians then more child soldiers will be used.

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[37] A. Oberschall. (1978). Conflict Theory. Available: http://www.unc.edu/~tonob/conflicttheory.pdf. Accessed: 03-04- 2013.

[38] Iain Walker & Heather J. Smith (2001). *Relative Deprivation: Specification, Development, and Integration, Cambridge University Press.*

[39] Richard T. Schaefer. (2008). *Racial and Ethnic Groups*. 11th Ed., Pearson Education. p.69

**Methodology**

The methodology of this research is qualitative and inductive in nature. According to McRoy, qualitative research is all about exploring issues, understanding social phenomena, answering questions, and is more concerned with nonstatistical methods of inquiry;[40] and an inductive method is about moving from specific observations to broader generalizations and theories; and it is therefore called a "bottom- up" approach. The research will rely mainly on secondary data obtained from memoirs, expert surveys, books, electronic journals, scholarly articles, and other written materials. The UN and other credible websites will also be used as primary data. The University of the Witwatersrand Library will be used extensively and the South Africa Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), reputed to have the richest library on African politics.

Multiple case study analysis is used of Angola and Mozambique. These cases have been chosen because they are both in Africa and were Portuguese colonies. The wars happened almost the same time soon after independence and lasted for long period, 16 years for Mozambique and more than 20 for Angola. The cases will also provide variance and bias will be avoided. Furthermore, according to George and Bennet, a case study method provides opportunities for inductively identifying complex interaction effects.[41] Therefore, these cases provide the necessary condition for exploring the use of child soldiers in Africa.

Due to the nature of the study, process tracing is used to investigate and explore the variance in the use of child soldiers in the selected case studies. George and Bennet noted that, process tracing method identifies a causal chain and casual mechanism that link independent and dependent variables. Methodologically, it helps us to know mechanism based accounts of social change and to trace the process in a very specific and theoretical way.[42] Process tracing further allows the researcher to take equifinality into account and consider alternative paths through which the outcome could have occurred.

[40] Ruth G. McRoy. (2005). Qualitative Research. Available: http://www.uncp.edu/home/marson/qualitative_research.html. Accessed: 23-04-2013.
[41] Alexander L. George & Andrew Bennett. (2005). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. MIT Press. Cambridge. p. 212.
[42] Alexander L. George & Bennett (2005). Op; Cit. pp 204-232.

**Operationalization of Independent Variables and Dependent Variable**

In this study the independent variables are the high levels of poverty, high levels of unemployment, high levels of ethnic fractionalization and failure to punish subordinates for infractions or lack of group norms concerning violence against civilians by the hierarchy. The dependent variable is the use of child soldiers in armed conflict. However, some concepts in this study may be repeatedly used and therefore needs to define them.

**Armed conflict**: is defined by the Uppsala Conflict Data Project as a contested incompatibility that concerns government or territory or both where the use of armed force between two parties results in at least 25 battle-related deaths. Of these two parties, at least one is the government of a state.[43]

**Children**: any person under the age of eighteen. This is consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 1), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Article 2) and International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (Article 2).[44]

**Child Soldier**: the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC 1989) defines a child soldier as any combatant under the age of 18 who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group.

**Combatant**: is defined using International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and UN definitions, as any persons who are reported as being part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force in any capacity, including but not limited to participation in combat, laying mines or explosives, serving as a cook or domestic labourer, decoy, courier, guide, guard, porter, or spy, trained or drilled as a combatant, or serving as a sexual servant or slave.[45]

**Economic deprivation**: situation in which a person lacks the monetary resource to live at the same level of those around him or her.[46]

**Poverty**: According to United Nations, poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity, lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society, not having enough to feed and cloth oneself and/or family, no access to school, clinics, land or

[43] Nils Peter Gleditsch, Peter Wallensteen & Margareta Mikael Eriksson. (2002). Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Dataset. *Journal of Peace Research*. 39(5):615-637.

[44] The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child 1999. (2000). Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.

[45] Customary IHL Chapter 1. Available: http://www.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_cha_chapter1_rule3.

[46] Stiles, B. L., Liu, X., & Kaplan, H. B. (2000). Relative Deprivation and Deviant Adaptations: The Mediating effects of Negative Self-feelings. *Journal of Research In Crime and Delinquency*, 37(1): 64-90.

employment. It means insecurity, powerlessness, susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation.[47]

**Recruitment**: Refers to the means by which people become (formally or informally) members of armed forces or armed groups.

**War:** at least 1,000 battle-related deaths per year[48].

**Limitation of the Research**

The research is desk top based and as such only primary and secondary data will be used. The study findings cannot be generalised as it will be done in the context of Angola and Mozambique. Limited time, space and financial constraints will not allow the researcher to cover a wide area. Brocklehurst has observed that researching child soldiers is fraught with difficult as they may not be in a safe position to give out information about the roles played during the armed conflict. Moreover, post war research may further bring challenges of secondary trauma and imagined risk of recrimination as well as shame which may prevent them from revealing their roles in the conflict.[49] Nevertheless, limiting the research to the two case studies will allow me to look at the issue in depth.

**Chapterisation of the Study**

This chapter (Chapter 1) provides the background information to the research.

Chapter 2 continues with the historical overview. This part looks at why child soldiers have been used in armed conflicts in Africa, how they have been used and the absence of child soldiers in conflicts or why there are variations in their usage. It also reflects at the top-down and bottom-up implications of using child soldiers in armed conflict.

Chapter 3 lays out the empirical similarities of Angola and Mozambique. This part gives the background of the two civil wars. It then moves on to look at the factors that led to the use of child soldiers in Angola and Mozambique civil wars, how children were recruited and why. But it also reflects on the rebel agendas during civil war and child recruitment,

[47] United Nations. (2009). Available: http://filipspagnoli.wordpress.com/2009/01/08/human-rights-facts-94-what-is-poverty-different-definitions-of-poverty-and-an-attempt-to-make-some-order.

[48] David J. Singer &Melvin Small. (1994). Correlates of War project: International and civil war data, 1816-1992 [Computer file, Study #9905]. Ann Arbor, MI: Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research.

[49] Helen Brocklehurst. (2007). Child soldiers; In Allan Collins. (2007). *Contemporary Security Studies*. 2nd Ed. Oxford University Press. New York.

roles of female combatants, control and assimilation of children into soldiers and why there was variance in the use of children in that more child soldiers were used in Mozambique than in Angola over almost the same period. The social impact and reintegration of child soldiers is also examined. Chapter 4 discusses and provides an answer to the relative variance in the use of child soldiers in Mozambican and Angolan war. This part also looks at the social impact of using children as soldiers and their reintegration into society. The programs initiated and the problems encountered during the DDR are identified and highlighted in both cases. This is meant to show if the child soldiers were successfully disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated into society.

Chapter 5 looks at the legal environment child soldiers operated in, the human rights abuses experienced and the role played by the civil society as well as the international organisations in the conflicts. Chapter 6 sums up and reflects on the use of child soldiers and their relative absence in others, way forward and gives recommendations.

## Chapter Two
## Historical Overview

### Introduction

The use of child soldiers in armed conflict is as old as humanity. The history of child soldiers dates back many centuries although it has been portrayed as a current phenomenon. The term "infantry" alludes to the use of young people to fight in combat, and were viewed through romantic notions of heroism. During the age of sail, young boys served on ships of war as "powder monkeys" tasked with running gunpowder and shot from the magazines to gun crews during naval engagements.[50] Children have proved to be useful in war as far back as the 17th century though they were not considered as true combatants in those days. Child soldiers were used to arm and maintain the knights of medieval Europe as well as carrying ammunition to cannon crews. At that time, they were not considered as true combatants or legitimate targets though they were part and parcel of armies. However, the most known and early use of "child soldiers" occurred during the 1212 Children's Crusade. This was a march of thousands of unarmed boys from Northern France and Western Germany who thought they might take back the Holy Land by the sheer power of their faith although many never left Europe.[51] It needs to be noted that the majority of those who marched perished from disease and hunger, while some were sold as slaves by unscrupulous ship captains.

Since then children under the age of 15 have been present in war. In the American civil war which was referred as "a boys' war", it is believed that about 250,000-420,000 boys in their teens served in the Union and confederate armies and celebrated doing so.[52] In the past century, children have been used in the two world wars and more recently in the Cold War. They have also been used in the Israel-Palestine conflict as suicide bombers.[53] In Afghanistan, they have fought against Russian soldiers in 1980s as part of insurgent force. In more recent times the Taliban in Afghanistan has recruited about 8,000 children into its ranks.[54] In the last 10 years or so it is believed that children have served as soldiers on

[50] Michael Smith, End of an Era for Little Drummer Boys and the Powder Monkeys. *Daily Telegraph*, Mar. 29, 2002. Available: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1389146/End-of-an-era-for-little-drummer-boys-and-the-powder-monkeys.html. Accessed: 11-06-2013.
[51] Singer, PW. (2007). Children at War. *Military History*. 24(6): 50-55. 6p.
[52] Helen Brocklehurst. (2007). Loc Cit. p 449.
[53] Human Rights Watch. (2002). Erased in a Moment: Suicide Bombing Attacks against Israeli Civilians. Available: http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/isrl-pa/ISRAELPA1002.p. Accesssed: 10-06-2013.
[54] Wessells, M & Kostelny, K. (2002). *After the Taliban: A Child Focussed Assessment in the Northern Afghan Provinces of Kunduz, Takhar, and Badakshan*. CCF International. Richmond, VA.

every continent apart from the Antarctica, with the largest numbers of them in Africa and Asia. Moreover, an additional half-million children serve in armed forces that are not now at war. Singer observed that the average age of child soldiers in two recent studies conducted in Southeast Asia and in Central Africa was just under 13 while the youngest recorded child soldier was an armed 5-year old in Uganda.[55]

Added to this increased issue is the growth in volume of the usage of child soldiers as it is believed that between 1988 and 2002 the number of child soldiers grew from 200,000 to 300,000 in about twenty countries.[56] However, this approximation seems currently outdated and underestimated in regards to the gravity of the issue as some evidence since 2002 suggest an extreme use of child soldiers in new wars.[57] As is seen, the plethora of protocols and agreements to protect the use of child soldiers has been ignored since the end of Cold War. It is tempting therefore, to assume that this increase in the use of child soldiers is as a result of failure of state control, and that only rebel forces recruit and use child soldiers and not states. However, the 2012 Global Report "Louder than words: An agenda for action to end state use of child soldiers" shows that child soldiers have been used in armed conflicts by 20 states since 2010, and that children are at risk of military use in many more states.[58] Some of the states that have used child soldiers are Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Central African Republic, Eritrea, and Rwanda. Moreover, a study by the Ford Institute for Human Security at the University of Pittsburgh concludes that in most cases government and rebel forces recruited the same ratio of child soldiers, except in Uganda mid 1990s where rebel forces with the support from the government of Sudan recruited disproportionately more children and in Mozambique where the opposite was the case.[59] The evidence is more ambiguous in African cases. For example, in the Liberian conflict more child soldiers were

[55] Singer, PW. (2007). Loc Cit.
[56] UNICEF. (1996). Children in War: The State of the World's Children. Available: http://www.unicef.org/sowc96/2csoldrs.htm. Accessed: 10-06-2013.
[57] Vera Achvarina & Simon F. Reich. (2006). No Place to Hide: Refugees, Displaced Persons, and the Recruitment of Child Soldiers. *International Security*. 31(1): 127-164.
[58] Child Soldiers International. (2012). Louder than Words: An Agenda for Action to End state Use of Child soldiers. Report published to mark the tenth anniversary year of entry into force of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict. Available: http://www.child-soldiers.org/global_report_reader.php?id=562. Accessed: 26-09-2013.
[59] Dana Landau. (2002). Child Soldiers: The Use of Child Soldiers. International Relations and Security Networks Special Reports. Available: www.isn.ethz.ch/content/download/8067/80345/. Accessed: 26-09-2013.

used by the rebels as compared to the state as well as in the Sudanese civil war of 1993-2002.

**Why children have been used in Armed Conflicts in Africa**

Since 1975, the problem of child soldiering has become an epidemic in Africa providing both the largest concentration of conflicts and child soldiers. Children do not start war neither do they understand their complex causes. Yet many children in the world today are growing up in families and communities in armed conflict. The changing nature of conflicts from interstate to civil wars dictates that the community, the spaces where childhood is lived and experienced, becomes the battleground.[60] Further, Africa has experienced the fastest growth in the use of child soldiers in recent years[61] with even the average age declining further from teens to as low as nine or ten.[62] Singer has provided a number of possible explanations for the increase of child soldiers. The arguments point to the structural features that contribute to the global growth and include high levels of poverty, rising orphan rates and the proliferation of small arms which are lighter to carry and easy to operate among others.[63] However, these do not help in explaining the significant variation in the use of child soldiers in different countries.

**Poverty Levels**

According to research by intergovernmental organisations, activists and academics, poverty has been identified as the main factor in trying to explain the participation of child soldiers in conflicts in Africa (studies conducted by the Ford Institute for Human Security at the University of Pittsburgh, UNICEF, Human Rights Watch, the Swedish Save the Children Organization and the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers). For example, rich countries generally do not use child soldiers in armed conflict as compared to poor countries. Moreover, many former child soldiers have given poverty as the reason for joining conflict when interviewed.[64] The correlation lies in the fact that armed conflicts lead to food shortage and in some extreme cases may lead to famine. Most people suffer and poverty rates increase although a minority may benefit financially because of the war. The lack of food and destruction of the means of production and infrastructure of a country

[60] Margaret Angucia. (2009). Children and War in Africa: the Crisis Continues in Northen Uganda. *International Journal on World Peace*. VOL. XXVI NO. 3.
[61] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. (2004). *Child Soldier Use, 2004: A Brief for the 4th UN Security Council, open Debate on Children and armed Conflict 2003.* Available: http://www.hrw.org/reports/2004/childsoldiers0104/index.htm. Accessed: 10-06-2013.
[62] Becker, J & Tate, T. Loc Cit.
[63] Singer, PW. (2007). Loc Cit
[64] Vera Achvarina & Simon F. Reich. (2006). Loc Cit.

may also force families to volunteer their children to join the conflict either on the side of the government or the rebels. As both parties participate in the looting of the locals, the children may benefit themselves and consequently support their families. In this case, the children become the breadwinners of their families. Collier and Hoeffler claim that it is easier to maintain a rebellion in poor countries than in richer countries.[65] Moreover, because of greed of the armed forces they may end up looting unarmed civilians and may avoid engaging each other.[66]

Singer and the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) disagree with Collier and Hoeffler's argument based on the fact that when today's rich countries were poor, did not extensively use child soldiers. Moreover, many more poor children in war zone do not become child soldiers. Therefore, poverty they agree is not the main cause of children joining armed conflict. What is true evident is that those who are from well to do families and not living in poverty, rarely become child soldiers[67] According to De Silva, Hobbs and Hanks, the poor have no voice and are not exposed in the same way to the arguments about the pros and cons of fighting in the armed forces. The children from more privileged backgrounds are less vulnerable to propaganda and live in a more protected environment. Many would have been removed from the conflict, perhaps to study outside of the country.[68] In a study of 19 former child soldiers by de Silva, Hobbs and Hanks (2001),[69] this was corroborated.

**Orphan Rates**

Children who are from disrupted family backgrounds, who have lost parents and family, and those from weakened bonds with family members become very vulnerable to recruitment.[70] According to Human Right Watch, orphans and refugees are identified as more vulnerable to recruitment than the other disadvantaged groups.[71] Children without parents lack parental guidance or care, and are easily attracted to the war incentives or

[65] Collier, Paul & Anke Hoeffler. (2004). Greed and Grievance in Civil War. *Oxford Economic Papers*. 56(4): 563–95.

[66] Stephen Ellis. (1999). *The Mask of Anarchy: the Destruction of Liberia and Religious Dimension of an African War*. Hurst. London.

[67] Quaker United Nations office. (2004). Child Soldiers: why Adolescent Volunteer. *Oral statement by Friends world Committee for the Consultation (the Quaker) to the Sixth Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights.* Available: http://www.geneva.quno.info/pdf/CHR60ChildSoldiersoral.pdf. Accessed: 10-06-2013.

[68] Harendra de Silva, Chris Hobbs & Helga Hanks. (2001). Conscription of Children in Armed Conflict—A Form of Child Abuse. A Study of 19 Former Child Soldiers. *Child Abuse Review*. 10(2): 125-134.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Rachel Brett & Margaret McCallin. (1996). *Children: the Invisible Soldiers*. Radda Barnen. Sweden.

[71] Human Rights Watch. Stop the use of Child soldiers: US congress Condemns the use of Childs Soldiers. Available: http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/crp/congress.htm. Accessed: 10-06-2013.

being threatened to join. They may be lured by the promise of food, protection or glory, or coerced by the threat of punishment or death. If they are guaranteed that this is the only way to have regular meals, clothing or medical attention, they may end up joining any group that promises them that.[72] Apart from being abducted, some orphans have joined armed groups in search of protection and a sense of belonging. The high problem of high orphan rates in Africa is further exacerbated by the issue of HIV/Aids which have caused the death of many people leaving more children as orphans.

**Availability of Small Arms**

The proliferation of small arms has necessitated the increase of more children joining armed conflicts mainly after the end of the Cold War. The technological improvements that have also made the firearms lighter and easier to use have attracted more children to join armed conflict. The link between adulthood and the ability to bear arms no longer exists. Small arms like AK47 and its ammunition are not very expensive and can be operated easily by a 10 year old. Modern weapons for the infantry are easy to use and operate even in poor conditions. This ease of arming children, coupled with the drugs, alcohol, and magical potions given to children by military leaders, convert these children into ruthless combatants.[73]

**Access to Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Camps**

Children constitute about 57 per cent of the inhabitants of refugee camps in Africa according to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) report.[74] Access to refugee and IDP camps by both government and rebel groups may provide an explanation for children recruitment. If children are faced with poverty in the camps or are orphaned, they may easily be lured by the belligerents' parties to join the conflict. Children amassed in large groups become easy target for armed groups looking for recruits if they are not properly manned and protected. Armed groups can easily raid the camp to abduct the children. Furthermore, they can join through forced conscription or on voluntary basis. The camps need to be protected under the International Law and must be off limits to the belligerents. According to UNHCR, armed factions infiltrate camps to recruit occupants mainly children through the use of coercion or propaganda referred as "refugee

[72] Singer PW. Loc Cit.

[73] Luz E. Nagle. (2011). Child soldiers and the Duty of Nations to Protect Children Participation in Armed Conflict. *Cardozo Journal of International & Comparative Law*.19(1): 1-58. 58p.

[74] UNHCR. (2001). Refugee Children in Africa: Trends and Patterns in the Refugee Population in Africa Below the Age of 18 Years, 2000. Available: http: www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/statistics/opendoc.pdf?tbe=STATISTICStid=3b9378e42d. Accessed: 10-06-2013.

manipulation and militarization" whereby about 15 per cent of refugees end up in refugee militarization.[75] Therefore, due to lack of physical protection, rebel groups and government militias can conduct camp militarization which may result in high number of child soldiers. More, children will be recruited more to become soldiers of belligerent forces if camps are vulnerable to raids.

**Demand and Supply**

Children can be recruited simply to add strength due to lack of man power. Brocklehurst observes that children may be needed simply in the absence of available adult combatants or because they offer another valuable capacity.[76] As soldiers, children can be cheap and efficient compared to adults. Moreover, children are less demanding and more obedient. Young soldiers are more likely to obey orders and fear their superiors which make them easier to control. On the other hand, children may be relied upon as they are skilful and full of energy which may enable them to carry out more challenging tasks. Conversely, the roles of children may be based on qualities of weakness or their presumed innocence. They may be easily used due to their lack of mental development as well as being easily manipulated through fear or drugs and forced to commit atrocities that adults cannot do. Moreover, it needs to be noted that the demand for child soldiers has also been necessitated by the availability of light weapons as discussed above. These weapons increase the ability of the armed group to substitute adult labour with child labour.[77]

The ease with which children may be recruited by force constitutes the supply side. This is also possible due to the high unemployment rates or lack of educational opportunities of children in many conflict zones in Africa. Excess demand in conflict may be addressed through forced recruitment. Recruitment patterns will be dictated when supply and demand reach equilibrium. This may happen due to the nature of the war being fought. If there is direct competition among armed groups, adults will be favoured over children.[78]

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[75] UNHCR. Op Cit.

[76] Helen Brocklehurst. (2007). Loc Cit. p452.

[77] Jens Christopher Andving & Scott Gates. (2009). Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict; in Scott Gates and Simon Reich. (2009). *Child Soldiers in the Age of Fractured States*. University of Pittsburgh Press. Pittsburgh. Available: http://books.google.co.za/books?hl=en&lr=&id=dtZD6gDvJHcC&oi=fnd&pg=PA77&dq=recruiting+children+for+armed+conflict&ots=20MpVNmGNs&sig=9KqO9y2qphomPZD4IIEIr9KJuFM#v=onepage&q=recruiting%20children%20for%20armed%20conflict&f=false. Accessed:11-06-2013.

[78] Ibid.

**Voluntary Recruitment**

In some cases children join armed groups without being forced to do so and may actually look for military groups themselves to offer their services. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) study, 64% of DRC, Burundi, Rwanda and Congo children joined different armed groups voluntarily.[79] However, this requires some level of motivation. The level of motivation can be affected by poverty, grievance in term of social and economic injustice, and a vision of affecting change in the long run plus greed and survival.[80] Thus, it can be disputed as to when it is driven by these factors enlistment is truly voluntary.

The concept of 'grievance' is usually based on the logic of relative poverty and inequality. According to Gurr, most traditional works on inequality and conflict relate to the theory of relative deprivation.[81] This premise suggests that while absolute poverty may lead to apathy and inactivity, comparisons with others in the same society who do better can lead to frustration and antagonism which again may result in violence to redress inequality. The end result can be grievance-induced discontent due to a group's marginalization as a determinant of mobilization for violent political struggle.

Conflict fought between groups based on cultural inequalities may facilitate recruitment and mobilization for armed conflict. However, grievance as motivation for joining a rebellion works in the same manner for both children and adults.[82] Children tend to equate violence with power and the reasons given for enlistment include not only peer pressure and an opportunity to engage in looting, but also political commitment and ethnic loyalties.[83] For example, if a child belongs to a region or group which is relatively economically deprived, this may lead to frustration and a sense of unfairness which could influence the child to join an armed group of his choice to fight the injustice and try to change the status quo. In the same way, ideological propaganda and social pressure can

[79] International Labour Organization (ILO). (2003). *Wounded Childhood: the Use of Children in Armed Conflict in Central Africa.* Geneva, Switzerland.
[80] Goodwin-Gill, Guy & Ilene Cohn. (1994). *Child Soldiers: The Role of Children in Armed Conflict.* Clarendon. New York.
[81] Ted Robert Gurr. (1970). *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton University Press. Princeton, NJ.
[82] Jens Christopher Andvig. (2006). Child Soldiers: Reasons for Variation in their Rate of Recruitment and Standards of Welfare. *NUPI paper 704.*
[83] Frances Stewart & Jo Boyden. (2001). Policy to Protect Children From and During War; in Harnessing Globalisation for Children: A Report to UNICEF. Available: http://www.uniceficdc.org/research/ESP/globalization/index.html. Accessed: 11-06-2013.

also persuade children to enroll with armed groups.[84] Then, children's decision to join armed conflict may also be influenced by issues of ideology, nationalism and identity.[85]

According to UNICEF; power, glamour, and excitement also figure in children's decisions to join armed groups. For those growing up in abject poverty, the gun and the military uniform confer a measure of power and prestige that they could not have obtained through other means.[86] The excitement of possessing a gun and participating in military activities offer opportunities and makes them feel big. Children also join after being failed by the political, social, and economic system. What needs to be realised therefore, is that youth are not passive pawns in armed conflict but are actors who find meaning and identity in what they see as the struggle for justice. Finding meaning in life is a powerful incentive for everyone, but it is a particularly strong motive for teenagers, who are at a stage in their lives when they are trying out different identities and deciding on their role and place in society.[87]

**How Child Soldiers have been utilised**

According to Nagle, some children have been coerced into armed conflict after being brainwashed or drugged by the belligerents while some are forced at gunpoint or through extreme violence to take up arms.[88] In other circumstances they are kidnapped, trafficked, sold to armed groups and forced to fight. Some of the children are the offspring of fighters, born into conflict and the only thing they know is war**.** Some children are used as battle shields or force to walk into mine fields to clear paths for the older combatants to pass. Other children are unknowingly used as suicide bombers while others like female child soldiers are forced into the ranks to be "comfort women" attending to the personal needs and sexual proclivities of commanders and male combatants. These children participate in the worst acts, and many commit unspeakable atrocities and fail to understand the gravity of their actions because they are young.[89] Moreover, as part of the indoctrination and control process of the child soldiers, they have been forced to inflict untold suffering, and

[84] ILO. (2003). Loc Cit. p25.
[85] Michael G.Wessels. (1998). Review: Children, Armed Conflict and Peace. *Journal of Peace Research* 35(5): 635–46.
[86] UNICEF. (2003). *Adult Wars, child soldiers: Voices of children involved in armed conflict in the East Asia and Pacific Region*. Bangkok, Thailand.
[87] Michael Wessells. (2005). Child Soldiers, Peace Education, and Post conflict Reconstruction for Peace Theory into Practice. *Peace Education*. 44(4): 363-369.
[88] Luz E. Nagle.(2011). Child soldiers and the Duty of Nations to protect Children Participation in Armed Conflict. *Cardozo Journal of International & Comparative Law*. 19(1): 1-58. 58p.
[89] Op Cit.

to kill their own fellow recruits as well as family members. This conditioning process prevents the children from escaping or to return home. On the other hand, it creates strong emotional, dependent relationships between them and their commanders.[90]

**The Absence of Child Soldiers in Conflicts or Variations**

Armed groups exhibit different patterns in their interactions with civilian populations. These patterns range from ethnic cleansing, abduction of children, amputation, rape and many others. Conversely, some armed groups have perpetrated very low levels of violence and shown restraint in their relationship with non-combatants. For example, armies in Sri Lanka and Colombia put in place measures to check civilian abuse committed by their soldiers.[91] This is against the back ground that civilian population forms the bedrock of the rebel group as they depend on them for support and in terms of labour and resources. They may undermine the very base of support to operate effectively if coercive tactics are used on the civilian population. This coercive behaviour may include forced extraction of food, labour and killing of civilians.

Fighting units and their combatants are faced with the issue of how to deal with combatant-civilians relations as they seek to extract resources from the civilians. In this case, the likelihood of abuse will depend on whether sufficient resources are available for the armed faction to exercise restraint in anticipation of future rewards. However, this may further depend on whether the territory has weak control or poor internal cohesion. These may prevent armed groups from acting on these incentives. If armed groups are fighting for control of the territory, they may refrain from acts of abuse. However, the abusive manner of fighting units can further be predicted by their characteristic. If it is comprised of members with different agendas, is ethnically heterogeneous and lacks discipline, it may end up treating civilians with abuse and coercion. In contrast, if the unit shares common goals, have disciplinary measures in place and it is homogenous, it will likely be less abusive to civilians and their relationship will be cordial.[92] These characteristics of armed groups are very important in determining how civilians are going to be treated. If an optimal level of interaction is to be obtained from the civilian population; Bates, Greif and

[90] The International Criminal Court. (2006). The Redress Trust, Victims, Perpetrators or heroes? Child Soldiers before the International Criminal Court 7. Available: http://www.redress.org/downloads/publications/childsoldiers.pdf. Accesssed: 11-06-2013.
[91] Marcartan Humphreys & Jeremy Weinstein. (2006). Loc Cit.
[92] Op cit.

Singh notes that the armed group should avoid extracting too much or risk killing the goose that lays the golden egg.[93] This is because too much violence might force the civilians to flee and the group's ability may be undermined and may fail to obtain support. On the other hand, Azam argues that warlords have particular incentives to wreak havoc in their own communities. By making it costly for civilians to produce, it becomes more attractive for them to join the warlord's armed group as combatants.[94] In this case, the abuse of one's own community depresses the wages that have to be paid to the fighters.

Armed groups may also need to act positively in dealing with the civilians by providing for the needs of the community. They may further exercise restraint in the use of violence against civilians in order to have support from the population. Arriving at this cooperative arrangement with civilians can be very difficult for them to reach the point of providing support for the belligerents and the combatants not abusing the civilians.[95] Armed groups avoid recruiting soldiers in contested areas due to fear that the recruits may end up defecting to the other side. It further needs to be noted that low levels of violence are often observed in contested areas in order to win the hearts and minds of the populace. This is because any group does not want to be seen as the one causing violence as may lose support of the people.

The frequency of using child soldiers and using other forms of violence varies across conflicts, armed groups within conflict and units within armed groups. A particular group may have in its repertoire of violence such things as kidnapping, assassination, torture, sexual violence and recruiting children. It is important to note that the absence of child soldiers by a particular armed group in a conflict might reflect our ignorance of its actual occurrence rather than a true absence. There may be a number of reasons that using child soldiers and other forms of violence are underreported in wartime.[96] The conditions that may promote the reporting on the use of child soldiers depends on resource availability to groups monitoring the use of children in conflict like UNICEF, Save the Children Fund, the Coalition to Stop the Use of Children in Conflict and many others.

[93] Robert H. Bates, Avner Greif & Smita Singh. (2002). Organizing Violence. *Journal of conflict Resolution.* 46: 599-629.
[94] Jean Paul Azam. (2006). On Thugs and Heroes: Why Warlords Victimize their Own Civilians. *Economics and Governance.* 7: 53-73.
[95] Mark Lichbach. (1995). The Rebel's Dilemmas. University of Michigan Press. Ann Arbor, MI.
[96] Elisabeth Jean wood. (2009). Loc Cit.

The non-use of child soldiers in armed conflict can depend on leadership and the norms followed by the group. Group leaders or commanders may judge that using child soldiers would be counterproductive or it is against the norms of the group. The ability to enforce this choice depends on how strong the command element is, whether information regarding the malpractice is known by the command and if the group's hierarchy is able to punish subordinates for the infraction. Moreover, the observed repertoire of violence by the combatants may depend on their own norms concerning violence against civilians. This may be those the recruits enter the group with, those produced in the course of the socialization of initial induction into the group, those produced by powerful wartime small-group processes, or those selectively reinforced by the hierarchy.[97] However, this may change over time due to the interaction with civilians or other armed group. For example, a group may add a particular form of violence in response to another group's action. This can be a strategic decision by the command or individual units to march the observed. If civilians resist the group's rule, an armed group may turn more punitive on command due to frustration.

According to Huntington, in regards to leadership strategy, military leaders need to control violence on civilians by the men under their command, as well as its targeting. Commanders should not fear that the soldiers may turn against them.[98] Commanders should not only be concerned about issues of military tactics and strategy but also on issues of recruits, intelligence, and other necessary "inputs" to the war effort, and if the war effort is legitimate in the eyes of domestic and international observers.[99] Military leaders play an important role in the prohibition and promotion of different types of violence against civilians. As armed groups are hierarchical, control of violence and decisions need to be enforced through the chain of command although this will depend on the strength of the military hierarchy. The ability of the hierarchy to enforce decisions concerning patterns of violence thus depends on the flow of information concerning those patterns up the chain of command and the willingness of superiors to hold those below them accountable through punishment.[100] If military commanders are seen as legitimate authorities, then obedience will be greatly enhanced. In regards to individual combatants, it will depend on their

[97] Op Cit.
[98] Samuel P. Huntington. (1957). The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-military Relations. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Boston.
[99] Mark Osiel. (1999). Obeying Orders: Atrocity, Military Discipline, and the Law of War. Transaction Publishers. New Brunswick, NJ.
[100] Elisabeth Jean Wood. (2009). Loc Cit.

cultural norms and beliefs in regards to violence. Some armed groups may recruit from criminal populations. This will reflect the group's resource base. Whether recruits enter an armed group with relatively homogeneous norms and beliefs depend on the recruiting practices of the group.

According to Weinstein, armed groups with economic benefits attract opportunistic recruits who will be more likely to wield violence indiscriminately for their private interest while those with social endowments draw activist recruits willing to make commitments to group goals over long time horizons.[101] Such groups insist on extensive indoctrination, training and socialization practices in melding child recruits into group members. Therefore, patterns of violence reflect group strategy concerning training, discipline, and incentives and group ideology rather than distinct pools of recruits.[102] If the armed group relies on child recruits, training and socialization likely play a more important role than time horizons.

**Implications**

The above analysis is applicable to all forms of violence including using child soldiers in armed conflicts. This can be applied top-down or bottom-up as I explain below.

**The Top-Down Implication**

If commanders of an armed group are strong and consider using child soldiers to be counterproductive to their mission and interests, very few child soldiers will be used in armed conflict. The men under their command will be restrained in recruiting and using child soldiers. Commanders will prohibit use of child soldiers for fear of the consequences of using them as it is illegal by international law. If an armed group is strongly dependent on civilians for logistical support and intelligence, it may be restrained to victimise the same people it depends on. They might, however, recruit from other area and avoid terrorising their future constituency it plans to govern**.** In conflicts where one party engages in massive violence against civilians, the other party may practice restraint as a way to demonstrate moral superiority. As said above, it can be prohibited out of deference

[101] Jeremy Weinstein. (2006). Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, UK.

[102] Francisco Gutiérrez Sanín. (1998). Telling the Difference: Guerrillas and Paramilitaries in the Colombian War. *Politics and Society*. 36: 3–34.

to international law for various reasons, perhaps because they aspire to some sort of international recognition or because they fear financial backers may disapprove.[103]

**The Bottom-Up implication**

Wood observed that if commanders prohibit recruiting and using child soldiers (or if they promote it but the hierarchy is too weak to enforce that policy) and if individual combatants and their units endorse norms against using child soldiers, few children will be recruited and used. Such norms may take the form of internalized cultural norms or group codes of conduct whereby non-combatants are viewed as beyond the circle of legitimate violence.[104] This can be due to the fact that the armed group positions itself among its members as a liberating rather than an occupying or punishing force. This norm may originate with the leadership. However, the issue is whether these have been internalized as norms by individual combatants and the wartime processes of brutalization, desensitization, and dehumanization must not have eroded such normative constraints. The norm must be endorsed by all combatants, and enforced against the few who attempt to transgress it. If the command is weak, individuals and independent units will indulge in abusing civilians and using child soldiers. Therefore, the ability of the hierarchy to enforce decisions taken by the leadership is central in compliance of the norm in regards to using child soldiers.

**Extent of the Problem of Child soldiers in Africa**

It is undisputed fact that children have been used in African armed conflicts and as such have made contribution to the political end state in a number of wars. Even today children are being used in the Democratic Republic of Congo as well as in Northern Uganda. The problem of child soldiering is wide spread and the numbers are hard to find. The turmoil and destruction caused by war makes it difficult to keep accurate records of children involved in the conflict. This is a huge problem in Africa due to poor records keeping and the absence of birth records. Moreover, many armed groups including governments do not keep records or document the ages of the children they recruit. Many children avoid revealing their age for fear of rejection by their communities and retribution by their former commanders as well from those they once attacked. However, in the mid-1990s it was estimated that about quarter of a million child soldiers were demobilized.[105] Further,

[103] Elizabeth Jean Wood. (2009). Loc Cit.
[104] Op Cit.
[105] Rachel Brett & Margaret McCallin. (1996). *Children: The Invisible Soldiers*. Swedish Save the Children. Vaxjo, Sweden.

the Machel Study showed that in some countries, children constitute a significant percentage of the combatants.[106]

[106] Ibid.

## Chapter Three

## Angola, Mozambique and Child Soldiers: An Analysis

### Introduction

Angola and Mozambique have been chosen as the case studies for this study. By placing the Angolan and Mozambican civil wars in focus, I seek to explore why child soldiers were used and why there were variations. Taking into account global and regional trends as well as the developments in Angola and Mozambique, the period between 1975 and 1994 represent a distinguishable phase in both countries.

Politically, Angola and Mozambique have a common colonial history that determined the violent nature of their independence and further similarities is found in their post independence period. Apart from both being Portuguese colonies, they became independent in 1975. Mozambique became independent in June and Angola in November. Both countries declared themselves officially socialist, and a Marxist-Leninist model of development was embarked on as early as 1977.[107] Angola and Mozambique experienced civil wars at almost the same time 1975-1994 and 1976-1992 soon after independence respectively which was characterised by external interference and significantly influenced by Cold War politics.

According to Minter, "Angola and Mozambique feature a complex interplay of internal, regional and global factors that refuse to fit simple models of wars between states or of purely internal civil wars."[108] As indicated earlier, the wars followed the wars of independence and the movements coming to power considered their history the same as that of creating a nation and their opponents as foreign enemies or traitors though these images were based on myth and propaganda. However, large numbers of politically conscious Angolans and Mozambicans believed them. The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) in Angola aimed consciously and successfully at national support while Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) in Mozambique was the undisputed leader of the independence struggle. On the other hand, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) claimed to represent predominantly the people of southern and central Angola. The Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) was an

[107] Michel Cohen. (1993). Check on Socialism in Mozambique: What Check? What Socialism?: The Politics of Reconstruction: South Africa, Mozambique & the Horn. *Review of African Political Economy*. 57: 46-59.
[108] William Minter. (1994). *Apartheid's Contras: An Inquiry into the Roots of War in Angola and Mozambique.* Witwatersrand University Press. Johannesburg.

externally organized and ethnically based group based in the North and Central of Mozambique.[109] Both UNITA and RENAMO claimed to be exclusively representing black people, more deeply rooted in rural African culture, and consequently more genuine African nationalists.[110]

In both cases, state and non-state actors both played active roles. The wars lasted more than 15 years in both cases; 16 for Mozambique and 20 for Angola. Moreover, both countries were campaigning to get rid of white minority rule in Africa. Further, in Angola 8000 child soldiers were used out of 194,000 combatants representing 4% while in Mozambique 24,498 child soldiers were used out of 92,489 combatants representing 28%.[111] Furthermore, both countries are in Southern Africa and the rebel movements were both supported by South Africa.

**Angolan Civil War: 1975-1994**

The origins of the Angola civil war dates back to the colonial era especially in 1961. More than 100,000 people were killed as a result of the war. This included the decolonisation conflict and the Angolan War of independence from 1961 to 1974. The civil war lasted 27 years, from independence from Portugal in 1975 to the death of National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) leader Jonas Savimbi in 2002.[112] A number of actors were involved in the war which served as a surrogate battle ground for the Cold War. A Marxist (communist) government born of a liberation movement, Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), led by Agostinho Neto (a poet) was supported by the Soviet Union and Cuba. The other two movements, the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and UNITA (anti communist), were being supported by their colonial masters Portugal, apartheid South Africa, the United States and Zaire under Mobutu Sese Seko.

[109] Otto Roesch. (1992). Renamo and the Peasantry in Southern Mozambique: A View from Gaza Province *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines*. 26(3): 462-484

[110] William Minter. (1994). p59

[111] Simon F. Reich & Vera Achvarina (2005). Op; Cit.

[112] Alex Vines. (2004). Angola: Forty Years of War; in Peter Batchelor and Kees Kingma. (2004). *Demilitarisation and Peace-Building in Southern Africa*: National and Regional Experiences. Vol II. Available: http://books.google.co.za/books?hl=en&lr=&id=bS2TZI-N8UC&oi=fnd&pg=PA74&dq=angolan+civil+war+1975-1994&ots=wm7FYKn_y4&sig=NtXb93rdqthJJ1zk4pV4I9TJ568#v=onepage&q=angolan%20civil%20war%201975-1994&f=false. Accessed: 14-06-2013.

It needs to be noted that when Angola got independence, a civil war was already being fought involving the three movements mentioned above. Apart from signing the Alvor Accords in January 1975, which called for a transition government and elections leading to independence in November of the same year, power sharing models were not discussed to guide the movements after independence. More effort was put on positioning their military wings for possible takeover of Luanda rather than on implementing the provisions of the Alvor Accords. The general perception among the parties was that the one who would control Luanda the capital city on 11th November, 1975 would control Angola. Apart from UNITA, the MPLA and FNLA were mainly attracted by a military solution to the conflict rather than a peaceful and political one. On Independence Day, Luanda was controlled by the MPLA while being under attack by the FNLA and UNITA. This battle for Luanda led to the defeat of the FNLA and as such only UNITA remained as main opponent to MPLA.[113]

The MPLA emerged as the ruling party of independent Angola by March 1976 while the FNLA faded in importance. UNITA under the leadership of Jonas Savimbi was then being supported by South Africa and other countries. Angola on the other hand supported guerrillas who were fighting for independence in South West Africa (Namibia) from apartheid South Africa, while soldiers from South Africa who were based in Namibia joined UNITA. Later, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) openly joined South Africa in supporting UNITA in the 1980s.[114] After the withdrawal of the Cuban and South African troops after the 1988 agreements on the independence of Namibia, UNITA and Angolan government signed a ceasefire agreement in May 1991 which led to MPLA winning elections the following year deemed free and fair by the international observers. However, Savimbi rejected the results and ordered his troops to return to war, reigniting full scale conflict supported by South Africa and Zaire.

Both parties in Angola civil war came to understand the significance of young people in the conflict and in the maintenance of power. This realization paved the way for the forced

[113] Anna Leao. (2005). *Different Opportunities, Different Outcomes-Civil War and Rebel Groups in Angola and Mozambique.* German Development Institute.
[114] William Minter. (1994). Loc Cit. p.4.

recruitment of young people and children to increase their fighting strength and ensure that a section of the Angolan society supported them with loyalty.[115]

**Mozambican Civil War: 1976-1992**

Mozambique became independent on 25th June 1975 after ten years of military struggle against Portuguese colonial domination.[116] Three political movements were involved in the struggle for independence. The National Democratic Union of Mozambique (UDENAMO) founded by Mozambique migrants in Rhodesia in 1960, the Mozambique African National Union (MANU) formed in Kenya in 1961 and the National Union for Mozambican Independence (UNAMI) formed in Blantyre, Malawi. After Mozambican independence, the three movements relocated to Tanzania and formed one united front under the influence of President Julius Nyerere in 1962. The new organisation became to be known as the Mozambican Liberation Front (FRELIMO) and was under the leadership of Dr Eduardo Mondlane. The organisation was dismantled later in 1962 due to different political orientation for the front, race issues, ethnic and personal conflict with Dr Mondlane. These reasons led to the formation of other groups and ended up opposing FRELIMO in the post conflict era.

Following a coup d'état in Portugal in April 1974, the leader of the post-coup General Antonio de Spinola wanted to hand over power to the colonies through a democratic process. However, FRELIMO leadership opposed the move of handing over power through democratic process, arguing that as a party it represented the will of the people and therefore Portugal should hand over power to them. FRELIMO insisted that as the "sole legitimate representative of the Mozambican people,"[117] it should take over directly without any elections. Portugal gave up its instance on elections and handed over power to FRELIMO after General Spinola was outmanoeuvred by Major Melo Antunes and after conducting secret talks with them.[118] Following this development, leaders of other political parties were jailed and some sent to concentration camps known as re-education camps. RENAMO was then born after two commanders Andre Matadi Matsangaise and Alfonso

[115] Margaret Angucia. (2009). Op Cit.
[116] Luís Benjamim Serapião. (2004). The Catholic Church and Conflict Resolution in Mozambique's Post-Colonial Conflict, 1977-1992. *Journal of Church & State*. 46(2): 365-387.
[117] Cameron Hume. (1994). *Ending Mozambique War: The Role of Mediation and Good Offices*. United States Institute of Peace Press. Washington DC. p. 8.
[118] Op Cit. p366.

Marceto Dhlakama escaped from the re-education camps to Rhodesia where they got military support from the Rhodesia army to fight FRELIMO.

After independence Mozambique experienced civil war, between the government FRELIMO and the armed opposition group RENAMO. The war lasted 16 years. The civil war costed the country US$15 billion and as many as one million people were killed.[119] Because of the duration of the conflict, millions of children and youth grew up knowing only the horrors of war. According to Leão, a big number of youth and children of both sexes joined either the government forces or the opposition armed group and became active willing participants of the conflict while others were pressed to join, by ideological brainwashing or by economic conditions.[120] Many more children were abducted, forced to kill and torture both friends and family in order to ensure a total disconnection from the community.

**Factors that led to the use of Child Soldiers in Angola and Mozambique Civil Wars**

According to conventional wisdom, guerrilla warfare requires popular support. The guerrilla force must rely on political support and political commitment unlike the state that depends on the army, police and the resources under its disposal to sustain the war effort. However, this was not the case in Mozambique and Angola as the states were weaker compared to the insurgents due to the external support rendered to RENAMO and UNITA respectively.

**Angola**

There is no official figure of how many child soldiers were used by UNITA and the Angolan government during the civil war. However, as children made up more than half of the population, they provided a fertile resource to the armies and, with few opportunities available to them in terms of formal education and jobs, they were easily mobilised and incorporated into the dynamics of the war.[121] According to the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, it is estimated that about 7,000 children served with UNITA and

[119] Meredeth Turshen. (2001). The Political Economy of Rape: An Analysis of Systematic Rape and Sexual Abuse of Women During Armed Conflict in Africa. In C. Moser and F. Clarke (2001). Victors, Perpetrators or Actors: *Gender, Armed Conflict and Political Violence*. London: Zed Books. London. pp. 55-68. Available: http://www.meredethturshen.com/www/pdf/WorldBankRapechapter.pdf. Accessed: 10-10-2013.

[120] Leão, A. (2005). *Invisible Stakeholders: Children and War in Africa*. Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria.

[121] Imogen Parsons. (2005). Youth, Conflict and Identity: Political Mobilisation and Subjection in Angola; in Angela McIntyre. (2005). *Invisible Stakeholders: Children and War* in Africa. Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria.

government forces.[122] Child protection workers in Angola put the figure at about 11,000 from the two sides that lived and worked in combat zones. Different roles were given to the children depending on their size. Children who were physically developed were active in the fighting while those who were smaller acted as porters, cooks, spies and food gatherers. Children were even tasked with the dangerous duty of running messages to and from the front. It is important to note that UNITA had a strict command structure. Both boys and girls were punished for infraction of rules. Children were whipped by the soldiers for not following orders and some were forced to carry heavy loads. Others were sent to collect firewood and food in government held areas.

Child soldiers were also used by the government of Angola during the war despite national legislation that prohibited their conscription although they were fewer in number in comparison to UNITA.[123] Many of these children were rounded up and forced to join the government side during recruitment drives in areas they held. During the roundups, many children could not prove their true age because of lack of proper identification like birth certificates. This usually happened in poor areas and mainly targeted the unemployed youth. Some boys received arms training and fought in the front lines. Others worked as radio operators and mechanical repairmen. Although the smaller ones were released by the soldiers and others bribed their way out, usually those who looked strong were recruited.

**Why children were used in Angola**

Many of the children taken to become soldiers in Angola were victims of conscription practices. The reluctance of the majority of Angolan people to fight in the war pushed the government to take anyone they could find including children to fight. Some of the children were press ganged or kidnapped, while others were forced to join to defend their families and country.

The move by UNITA in 1977 to expand its military from a guerrilla army to one with semi regular and regular forces led to the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Savimbi termed this "the theory of large numbers".[124] This was a strategy whereby local commanders received orders from above to abduct from government controlled territories when they

[122] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Global Report on Child Soldiers 2001, June 12, 2001.
[123] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. 1999). The Use of Children as Soldiers in Africa: A Country Analysis.
[124] William Minter. (1994). Loc Cit. p178

failed to meet their quotas for recruits. Those captured were taken on foot to bases in the bush and those of military age were then sent to Jamba for training. This shows that sometimes UNITA observed the minimum age limit of recruitment. It needs to be noted that UNITA previously avoided forced recruitment of children. Children were only drafted when of a certain age or maturity. UNITA's approach to civilians before 1972 was based on political persuasion and social pressure. It made systematic contacts with the local leadership and with young educated Umbundu as well as conservative whites using nationalistic and ethno-regional appeals. However, this changed over the 1990s as it became increasingly divorced from the populace who supported it and therefore resorted to the use of coercion and intimidation. UNITA officially denied having abducted children claiming that they were taken either when they wanted to join, were separated from parents or when the parents had died.[125]

On the part of the children, though forcibly recruited, the rewards of military life provided some positive incentive. By joining the armed groups they would have prospects of independence from family. Moreover, by being in possession of a gun they would have access to food, loot and women. This applied to Mozambique as well. Other opportunities for advancement in the army also existed like overseas training in Morocco and other countries as well as civilian scholarships in Portugal. As such, military service was an opportunity as well as a political obligation although these rewards were limited within RENAMO in Mozambique. However, those deployed on the borders of South Africa or Malawi profited from sale of looted goods across the borders while those who were being trained in South Africa got monthly salaries.[126]

**How Children were recruited in Angola**

There were mixed pattern of recruitment in Angola although it was less prominent than in Mozambique. According to Minter, those who joined in 1974-1976 did so voluntarily because they considered UNITA as the natural movement for their Umbundu region and for ethnically diverse Moxico province. The rest who followed were mostly recruited by force or were being abducted from areas which were under the control of government.[127] It is said that they "joined UNITA because of ...an emotional attachment to kinship, tribe and

[125] Imogen Parsons.op cit. p. 53.
[126] Ibid. p. 185.
[127] William Minter. (1994). Loc Cit. p177

the Angolan south, and an almost mystical allegiance to UNITA's charismatic guerrilla leader".[128] Some youth also joined the MPLA during this period.

Evidence of forced recruitment also appeared and it was wide spread in 1980s. Child soldiers describing their abduction by soldiers used words as *ataque* (attack) or *raptado* (kidnap). Others claim they were taken (*levados*) from school or their villages. Some evidence also point to the fact that some of those recruited were of military age meaning that they were above 18 years. The trend therefore seems to be that of predominantly voluntary recruitment at the start of the war changing to forced recruitment as the war progressed. This could be due to war fatigue and the need to increase bayonet strength for conventional warfare on both sides.

Not all enlistment was due to forced conscription, some said they joined UNITA to fight for political reasons after being frustrated with the situation they found themselves in. This could be due to political motivation under UNITA education and propaganda. It may also be linked to feelings of grievances against the government for lack of opportunities like education and jobs as well as the culture of violence and displacement. Many of the children had never experienced peace since they were born. Some had witnessed relatives being killed by government troops or police, UNITA or by the Cubans.[129]

**Mozambique**

In regards to the Mozambican war, documentation has shown that RENAMO recruited young boys into its rank as well as girls as personal servants and later would become wives providing sexual services. On the other hand, the government of Mozambique forcefully recruited unemployed urban youth between the ages of 14 to 16 years into its rank.[130] International agencies have concluded that the use of children in combat and transportation of goods was done more by RENAMO than the government of FRELIMO. Though RENAMO leadership initially refused to recruit and use child soldiers, it later reversed this policy. Therefore, this section will focus more on the factors that led to the use of child soldiers by RENAMO than FRELIMO.

[128] Ibid.
[129] Imogen Parsons. Op cit. p. 55.
[130] Carol B. Thompson. (1999). Beyond Civil Society: Child Soldiers as Citizens in Mozambique. *Review of African Political Economy*. 26(80): 191-206.

**Why children were used in Mozambique**

Children were used in the Mozambican civil war by both the government and RENAMO. The government's use can be attributed to FRELIMO's policy on education. Under Marxist-Leninism, FRELIMO nationalized children under the age of six. Further, under President Samora Machel, FRELIMO sent children of about twelve years to Cuba and East Europe for social-political indoctrination and training. It is therefore believed that by 1980s there were more than 2,300 Mozambican children students in Cuba.

RENAMO believed that adults were not good fighters as compared to children and hence the consistent and systematic forced recruitment of children in its ranks. It preferred children because they were strong and had stamina, did not complain, could survive better in the bush and easily followed orders. They could easily be turned into fierce fighters through brutal indoctrination.[131] To achieve this, RENAMO used to take the boy soldier back to his village to kill someone known to him. This was meant to close the door for the child to ever return to the village. These types of children ended up developing a dependent relationship with their captors and the group. The cumulative involvement of children in violence desensitizes them to suffering and makes them more likely to commit violent acts. This therefore shows that RENAMO preferred children to adult combatants.

**How Children were recruited in Mozambique**

The recruitment pattern in Mozambique was far more consistent than in Angola with forced recruitment more dominant. Those abducted or kidnapped were taken on foot to the Rhodesian border first and then by truck to Odzi which was a RENAMO training base in eastern Rhodesia.[132] Some were taken to training bases inside Mozambique. After being captured they were forced to carry goods for the soldiers and some were used as guides in their home areas. Some were being abducted in their fields, at home or on their way to visit relatives while others got captured after attack on their town, villages or schools.

Voluntary recruitment was present though not much. This was mainly at the beginning of the war when several chiefs voluntarily chose to support RENAMO. This resulted in the youth loyal and under their leadership joining the group. Some joined after being disillusioned by the government while others after being offered substantial payments by

[131] The Defence Monitor. (1997). The Invisible Soldiers: Child Combatants. Available: www.thirdworldtraveler.com/life_Death_ThirdWorld/Child_sSoldiers.html. Accessed: 20-06-2013.
[132] William Minter. (1994). Loc Cit. p. 175.

South African intelligence agents. It was also seen that marginalised youth showed some voluntary adherence to RENAMO. This was as a result of economic marginalization due to the escalation of the war and the structural adjustment programmes which began in 1987. Later, recruits were mobilized in areas controlled by RENAMO. Nevertheless, capture or kidnapping was the norm even in central Mozambique where RENAMO had the greatest influence and control. Child captives were also used as soldiers in southern Mozambique.[133]

Forced recruitment of children was widespread and the most common entry into RENAMO military ranks. The ages ranged from 12 up to 30 or 40. Those who were deemed too old or too young for combat were used as porterage, messengers or servants for officers. The use of children in combat differed significantly by region. More child soldiers were used in Maputo and Gaza provinces. Apart from forced recruitment or volunteering, other children were taken while looking for employment in Malawi by the whites to RENAMO. Other unemployed youths were recruited in Mozambique on the pretence of going to be offered employment or becoming illegal migrants in South Africa.

FRELIMO conducted forced recruitment of young people perceived to be strong enough to fight. Students who were offered scholarships to study abroad ended up in military academies in the host countries while others were lured into special national programmes which turned out to conduct military training.[134] If not recruited by FRELIMO, children were supposed to join the militia or other groups of civilians who possessed guns and underwent training conducted by the army. These youth were supposed to defend and secure their communities and villages against attack. The militias were part and parcel of the community and did not move to other areas to fight. They had to provide protection to the villages. Communities and villages became military targets as the line between civilians and soldiers was blurred because of this arrangement.

**Rebel agendas during the Civil Wars and Child Recruitment**

According to Thaler, the Marxist-Leninist ideology of FRELIMO and the MPLA led to their practice of restraint in violence against civilians, and that the loss of ideological

[133] Otto Roesch. 1992. Renamo and the Peasantry in Southern Mozambique: A view from Gaza. *Canadian Journal of African Studies.* 26(3).

[134] Ana Leao. (2005). A Luta Continua: Children and Youth in Mozambique's Struggles; in Angela McIntyre. (2005). *Invisible Stakeholders: Children and War in Africa*. Institute for Security Studies. Pretoria. South Africa. pp. 40-41.

commitment over time led to a corresponding diminishment of restraint though they remained significantly less violent than their insurgent opponents when they suffered a breakdown of discipline.[135] It is against this background therefore, that this section will focus on UNITA and RENAMO's use of violence as a strategy of war and how it was determined as a group ideology.

UNITA maintained tight control of the people in the area under its control. The civil population failed to enjoy greater freedoms and experienced threats, forced conscription, sexual services and arbitrary killings. Children were the frequent targets of brutal, indiscriminate acts of violence as they were beaten, raped, enslaved for sexual purposes, forced to work, murdered and some forced to become soldiers while women and girls became primary targets of sexual slavery, rape and other forms of sexual violence.[136] Private property was frequently pillaged and homes burnt. Indiscriminate shelling, killing of government officials and traditional chiefs became the *modus operandi* of UNITA operations. This was done as a vicious expression of power over the individual, but also as a means of expressing dominance over the community at large.

The strategy and tactics used by UNITA in Angola were mainly meant to raise the costs of foreign "occupation" through maximum disruption and dislocation, while minimizing its own casualties.[137] UNITA infiltrated and contested new areas in order to wrestle power and control from the MPLA government. However, they rarely held or seized towns except in areas in the South which were near their base. Rather, economic strategic and military targets were sabotaged while government troops were frequently ambushed. Further, access was also obstructed by extensive use of mines along likely approaches to settlements, along lines of communication and on infrastructure sites. UNITA indiscriminately attacked and took hostage hundreds of expatriate technicians and advisers working in the country; and Savimbi repeatedly threatened multinational companies with retaliation for their support of the government. It is believed that this move was done to

[135] Kai M. Thaler. (2010). Violence, Ideology and Restraint in Civil War: Theory and Evidence from Mozambique and Angola. Prepared for IPRI/LSE IDEAS Working Seminar 2010, _Legacies of Conflict, Decolonisation and the Cold War, 28-29 May 2010, Lisbon, Portugal. Available: http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/programmes/africaProgramme/events/conferences/africaCWMay2829/papers_pdfs/thaler.pdf. Accessed: 27-06-2013.

[136] Human Rights Watch. (1999). Abuses Committed by UNITA. Available: http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/angola/Angl998-06.htm. Accessed: 27-06-2013.

[137] http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/unita.htm

strengthen UNITA's bargaining position in demanding direct negotiations with Luanda for the establishment of a government of national unity after Savimbi realised that it was difficult to win the war.

In the Mozambican civil war a lot of civilians were targeted and more affected. It is believed that between 600,000 and one million people died as a result of the war.[138] More evidence points to RENAMO for the use of the indiscriminate violence against civilians. This cannot be accounted fully by the dominant theories of civil war as it went beyond purely rational military logic.

If violence is used selectively during a conflict, it can help in enforcing behavioural support for the group. However, the violence by RENAMO would appear to have filled the purpose of coercing the civilian population into compliance in some areas while in other areas, the violence was more indiscriminate. It can also be argued that the violence was meant to destabilise the country and the FRELIMO government. According to Hultman, "RENAMO had an overall objective of destabilisation: it wanted to weaken the government to force concessions from it and a change in the political system in Mozambique".[139] Hultman acknowledges that this was a South African strategy aimed at dominating the region by avoiding combat with government military forces and giving more attention to destroying the economy, infrastructure and controlling the population.[140] Most attacks on civilians were on areas dominated by government supporters than under RENAMO control. In using strategic violence, it was able to establish and win support in the whole country while at the same time forcing the government to the negotiation table by the damage caused. Therefore, this was meant to hurt the government.

This was in contrast to conventional wisdom as rebels in contested areas where they want to establish control and mobilise support, need to use selective violence or non-lethal forms of coercion on the civilians to secure compliance as compared to government-controlled areas and strongholds where indiscriminate violence may be used. When rebels are unable to defeat government forces through fighting, violence against civilians is used as an

[138] Africa Watch. (1992). *Conspicuous Destruction: War, Famine and the Reform Process in Mozambique*. Human Rights Watch. New York.
[139] Lisa Hultman. (2009). The Power to Hurt in Civil War: The Strategic Aim of RENAMO Violence. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 35(4): 821-834.
[140] Lisa Hultman. Op cit. p. 826.

alternative strategy to impose political and military costs on the government.[141] Violence against civilians creates fear and chaos.[142] This shows that the state is unable to hold power and protect its citizens it is supposed to protect. Therefore, instead of seeking the support of the people in the area it operated, RENAMO terrorised the population and thereby undermining government control in the process.

**Roles of Female Combatants**

The use of children in armed conflict is global in scope and defies gender boundaries. However, the issue has been portrayed much in scholarly and policy literature as a uniquely male phenomenon. It has failed to include gender perspectives on armed conflict. This has been largely informed by traditional perceptions of armed conflict as a phenomenon occurring between males—perceptions reinforced by popular media images of boys armed with AK47s—girls have frequently been deemed peripheral and rendered invisible within fighting forces. [143] However, girls are forced into military activities around the globe in many armed conflicts. For example, girls comprised about 25 percent of opposition forces in Angola and Mozambique civil wars.[144] The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers estimates that the different fighting forces in Angola abducted 30 000 girls during the conflict, and that 16 000 under-18s were in the forces of the government and UNITA by 2002.[145] However, government estimates vary but are lower than 16 000.

According to Human Rights Watch, they were abducted or rounded up during sweeps through their villages and ended up serving with UNITA as domestics, assistants, and "wives" to soldiers. Women and girls were also forcibly given as "comfort women" to visiting guests in UNITA-held areas during the war.[146] After being abducted, they were trained in a number of activities to support the armed groups and included pillaging techniques following an attack, loading and dismounting arms, defence techniques, accompanying male soldiers, sabotage, midwifery, welcoming, rousing, singing and

[141] Lisa Hultman, (2007). Battle Losses and Rebel Violence: Raising the Costs for Fighting. *Terrorism and Political Violence.* 19(2): 205–22.
[142] A. Vinci. (2005). The Strategic Use of Fear by the Lord's Resistance Army. *Small Wars and Insurgencies.* 16(3): 360–81.
[143] Myriam Denov. (2008) Girl Soldiers and Human Rights: Lessons from Angola, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Northern Uganda. *The International Journal of Human Rights*. 12(5): 813-836.
[144] Mike Wessells. (1997). Child Soldiers. *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.* 53(6): 32. 8p.
[145] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 'Angola', in Child Soldiers Global Report, London: Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 2004.
[146] Human Rights Watch. (2003). Forgotten Fighters: Child soldiers in Angola. *Human Rights Watch*. 15(10) (A)

dancing during special events.[147] Apart from sexual relations, some have been used in transporting military goods during withdraw when under attack. When UNITA troops were victorious after attack, the girls would dance with loud voice proclaiming victory. Sexual dances were also performed by girls to maintain male soldiers' morale, and to ensure they remained awake and alert during critical times when enemy attack was imminent. It is believed that it was following such celebration that girls would be sexually abused and given out to commanders as rewards for their bravery. On the other hand, girls attached to commanders were tasked to carry things to the front to assist them.

In the context of Mozambique war, girls joined the government forces of FRELIMO because of the appealing rhetoric and propaganda that promised new and emancipatory roles of women and young girls as well as for protection.[148] Some joined RENAMO to run away from the harsh conditions of having to live without food and money, and the belief of a better future. In other cases, fighting forces and groups press ganged and abducted girls from discotheques and market places or enroute to school and market places. According to Devon, girls inevitably experienced feelings of insecurity and victimisation prior to their abduction.[149] Females never advanced in authority and they remained subordinate to the males they were attached. Apart from being trained how to use a gun; women were used for cooking, cleaning and growing crops for the men. This was due to the fact that RENAMO encouraged gender division of labour.[150] RENAMO exploited women as reward to combatants. They were raped and used as slave wives by the soldiers who had special rights to women and girls. On the other hand, RENAMO promised scholarships to study abroad to attract girls into its forces; while few if any scholarships were ever given.[151] Further, girls in the front lines in Angola and Mozambique conscripted, abducted and gang press other girls into the armed groups.[152]

[147] V. Stavrou. (2004). Breaking the Silence: Girls Abducted During Armed Conflict in Angola, Report for the Canadian International Development Agency.
[148] S. McKay & D. Mazurana. (2004). *Where Are the Girls? Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique: Their Lives During and After War*. International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development. Montreal.
[149] Myriam Denov. (2008). Girl Soldiers and Human Rights: Lessons from Angola, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Northern Uganda. *The International Journal of Human Rights*.12(5): 813-836.
[150] Carol B. Thompson. (1999). Loc Cit.
[151] Dyan E. Mazurana, susan A. McKay, Kristopher C. Carlson & Janel C. Kasper. (2002). Girls in Fighting Forces, and Groups: their Recruitment, Participation, Demobilisation, and Reintegration. *Journal of Peace Psychology*. 8(2): 97-123.
[152] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. (2001). Op Cit.

The girls in both Angola and Mozambique experienced extreme forms of violence due to the formal and informal setup of the armed groups. The command structure (formal) of the armed groups carried their mission and tasks using threats, fear, violence and brutality. This was the same even at informal level as daily routines; informal values and inter-actions were propagated and sustained through violence. The culture of violence became part and parcel therefore of every girl soldiers' life and "ranged from along a continuum from verbal abuse to acts of cruelty and reflected the patriarchal power relations and gendered oppression inherent in the group".[153] Girls were subservient to male authority and suffered severely at the hands of those who commanded them. They lacked access to adequate food and health care as they lived in dire poverty. In addition to being combatants, their daily victimisation included sexual violence, forced marriages, threats, physical and psychological abuse, and child bearing and rearing among others.

**Control and Assimilation of Children into Soldiers**

When children are recruited by force they need to be moulded into soldiers by the guerrilla group or the conventional army. It needs to be note that when children are recruited, they undergo the same treatment as adults. This often includes brutal induction ceremonies. The use of physical and emotional abuse is meant to instil discipline and induce fear of superiors. This results in low self-esteem, guilt feelings, and violent solutions to problems by the recruits.

In Angola the ideology of the paternal relationship of father to son and of the family was practised by both UNITA and MPLA where authority is traditionally derived from age and elders accorded a special status and respect in society. This had an influence on the way children were mobilized to join the war. UNITA was more successful at this as Savimbi exacted an unquestioning loyalty, styled himself as founder and father. All UNITA children called him 'father'. This had an effect of dissociating the children from their families; instead they were made to rely on UNITA as 'family'.[154] Both UNITA and MPLA created youth movements for the politicisation of the youth to support the different movements and provide patriotic education for children.

[153] Myriam Denov. (2008). Op. Cit
[154] Imogen Parsons. Op cit. p.50.

The process was the same and was used in both Angola as well as in Mozambique. Threat of prison for evaders and deserters was used as well as claims of legitimacy to keep the recruits. Military training is designed to impart technical skills and incorporate the recruits into a new social order (the army). Moreover, it is meant to instill a sense of inevitability and pride in their new status. However, conscription by government forces is acknowledged as legitimate despite abuses as it is enacted into law contrary to insurgent recruitment which is devoid of such justification although it may be legitimized by the customary authority. To mould the children into soldiers, "UNITA and RENAMO used the threat of execution, transfer of recruits away from their home areas, fear of punishment by government forces, training and assimilation into the soldiers' way of life."[155]

Under UNITA and RENAMO recruits faced severe punishment and threat of execution if they tried to desert. Executions for demonstration purposes were done to abducted recruits to prevent them from resisting and running away. Even those who failed to walk the long distances on the first day would be killed. Recruits were also transferred away from their homes to make it difficult for them to escape while others were posted in other districts or provinces and operated with people they did not know. UNITA made it more difficult by making the recruits walk for weeks or even months to Jamba area. Once in UNITA camps loyalty was enforced through a mixture of violence and indoctrination as the children would be incarcerated in a deep hole for several days in order to destroy resistance and the will to escape. The other reason they could not desert was that they were told that they would be killed by the government forces. During training and initiation, they were forced to commit acts of violence although this was not a general rule in Mozambique.

In RENAMO, political mobilization was minimal as well as political meetings where the soldiers listened to the speeches of their President Dhlakama who mostly stressed themes such as, "we are against communism, socialism, we are for capitalism, we are against communal villages".[156] Therefore, the loyalty from the RENAMO recruits developed mainly from the social dynamics of the group than the political arguments. Moreover, ethnicity was not a major barrier to assimilation into the armed group as most commanders were Shona speaking and the soldiers came from all parts of Mozambique. This was not the case with UNITA where most officers and soldiers were volunteers and the social

[155] William Minter. (1994). Loc Cit. p. 179.
[156] Ibid. p184.

context of forced recruitment was highly politicized with the majority soldiers from Umbundu speaking region.[157]

[157] Ibid.

## Chapter Four

## Case Variance and how variance in numbers impacted on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) and post Conflict Society

### Introduction

It can be tempting to assume that the use of child soldiers in conflict can be due to the breakdown of state control, and that only rebel groups and not states recruit and use child soldiers in war. However, data from many African conflicts is ambiguous and demonstrate a rather contrary trend towards the use of child soldiers by the state. For example, in the Sudanese civil war of 1993-2002, 64 per cent of the rebel forces were child soldiers compared to 36 per cent with the government. Later, this was reversed to 24 per cent (rebel) and 76 per cent (government) by 2004.[158]

In this part I compare the explanations regarding the possible causes of the varied ratios between Angola and Mozambique civil wars in an effort to understand why apparently similar cases over almost the same time period had markedly different child soldier participation rates. Possible explanations for the use of child soldiers in these cases centre around forced recruitment, abduction, voluntary enlistment, poverty levels and orphan rates and points more to the structural features that contributed to the use and growth of child soldiers. Nevertheless their focus does not help in explaining why there was significant variation in the use of child soldiers in Angola and Mozambique.

To have the alternative explanation therefore, there is a need to critically examine a number of issues in respect of the two countries. It needs to be noted that "previous research and existing explanations for child soldiering plus UN efforts have focused much attention on identifying the root causes of child soldiers"[159] participation in armed conflict, little attention has focused on the variance in the use of child soldiers.

### Why Variance between Angola and Mozambique?

To begin with, the huge disparity in the number of child combatants involved in the two cases under study can be due to the very nature of contemporary armed conflicts. The forces involved especially the rebel groups may have flat, non-hierarchical structures of

[158] Radda Barnen. (2004). Child War Database. Available: http://www.globalmarch.org/resourcecenter/world/Sudan.pdf; CSUCS. Child Soldier Global Report.
[159] Vera Achvarrina & Simon F. Reich. (2006). No Place to Hide: Refugees, Displaced persons, and the Recruitment of Child Soldiers. *International Security*. 31(1): 127-164.

authority. Rebel groups often lack the institutional structures and means of control to account for their forces — especially children. Such rebel groups may rely too much on the information provided by the tactical level commanders without verification. Therefore, the commanders on the ground may provide inaccurate information in regards to strength especially in respect to child soldiers. This may be worse if the tactical commanders know that the higher command is against the use of child soldiers.

In the case of Mozambique, FRELIMO policies gave few people new opportunities for power and advancement. Those with education benefitted more while the majority remained highly dependent on state favours which later dwindled drastically. The policy of villagization became unpopular. It disrupted a lot of peasants across the board who were forced into the communal villages for reasons of necessity. Therefore, many young people joined RENAMO because they wanted to live as they wanted rather than being forced to stay in the communal villages. This cause made many join the war and accept death for the sake of freedom. Moreover, many people felt excluded and marginalized by the FRELIMO project and RENAMO capitalised on this discontent to persuade people politically of the need to overthrow FRELIMO.[160] As RENAMO was a party predominantly located in the peripheral rural areas where people felt excluded from the state, political sympathy might have contributed to the use of child soldiers instead of them choosing to join government forces.

RENAMO had a regular pattern of recruitment as compared to FRELIMO. Soldiers were sent out on recruitment campaigns, with orders to round up specific number of men and women of a certain age, usually between thirteen and seventeen.[161] The recruits and their parents were told that the children were being taken to do a 'job' and would later return home after the completion of the task. This became a very important tactic as most young people were unemployed and eager to work. Therefore, it was used as an incentive to make them go more willingly. Moreover, the payment of salaries to guerrillas by the Rhodesians in the early phase of the war attracted both young men and their parents to accept the war as 'work'. Further, RENAMO used a range of motivating tactics, some of which were more coercive than others. On the contrary, a significant number of children were taken by

[160] Jessica Schafer. (2001). Guerrillas and Violence in the War in Mozambique: De-Socialization or Re-Socialization? *African Affairs*. 100(399): 215. 23p.
[161] Ibid. p. 224.

RENAMO when they came across them by chance while working in the fields, feeding animals or fetching food for the family. Children were being conscripted most in the South of the country by RENAMO. This was because most men had left and migrated to work in South Africa which meant a shortage of adult men to fill the ranks. "Some children were taken from their homes often with the cooperation of the pro-rebel *mambos* (chiefs)."[162] This practice was common in the central and Northern provinces where local chiefs had great authority.

RENAMO's policy of courting support from religious communities in an attempt to gather into its fold all those marginalized by FRELIMO offers another explanation.[163] It interacted very well with independent churches like the Catholic and the Zionist Churches as well as the protestant churches although it persecuted those which it perceived to be a threat to its power base and survival, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses. Some soldiers integrated their religious beliefs into the war time work and some went to church before the war. This might have acted as a motivation factor for more children to join the war in Mozambique.

The recruitment of students who dropped out of school by RENAMO may have led to high numbers of child soldiers within its rank. These young students were promised scholarships and jobs within the movement. Many women and children also joined to provide self-defence to their communities under the influence of the local leaders who proclaimed they could immunize them from bullets. On the other hand, many more children joined RENAMO rather than the government side because it was better equipped. The Mozambique government lacked financial resources to provide its army with expensive equipment like air and ground transport, or even basic supplies such as ammunition, food, combat boots and uniforms which led to low morale among the troops as well as the prospective child soldiers.[164] This may have attracted more children to join the war in Mozambique especially on the RENAMO side.

In Angola, the recruitment and use of child soldiers was mitigated by the involvement of Cuban soldiers and advisers. It is believed that about 50,000 troops participated in the war

[162] Human Rights Watch. (1992). *Conspicuous Destruction: War, Famine and the Reform Process in Mozambique.* An African Watch Report. USA. p.86.
[163] Jessica Schafer. (2001). Op. cit. p. 235.
[164] William Minter. (1994). Loc Cit. p. 241.

mainly in support of the MPLA from 1975 to 1988.[165] The involvement of the US military mainly the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and South African troops who cooperated in support of UNITA against the MPLA offers another explanation as to why few child soldiers were used. These two actors were also involved in the recruitment of mercenaries and propaganda campaigns against the MPLA government. Private military forces and mercenary Special Forces units were also used. Some of the private companies who operated in Angola were: Executive Outcomes (EO), Defence Systems Limited (DSL), Gray Security Limited, Alpha *5 Lda* and *Tele Service*.[166] While these security companies conducted training for the warring parties, they were also involved in combat support roles as well as in actual combat especially Executive Outcomes which provided combat services to the Angolan government in its military campaign against UNITA. On the other hand, the Angolan army was not exclusively black as it was combined of guerrilla veterans and former colonial troops.[167] Hence the fewer child soldiers were recruited as a lot of international actors were involved.

The desertion of many soldiers during the quartering and demobilisation is also a case in point. This weakened the government army and reduced its strength especially during 1991-1992 period in Angola while UNITA troops remained disciplined and in military camps.[168] A number of child soldiers may have deserted during the quartering and demobilisation as well. Moreover, Angola had a bigger number of officers with secondary education than in Mozambique which meant that they were in a better position to understand that it was against international law to recruit and use children in war.[169]

Based on the accounts above, it can be justified that more children were used in the Mozambican war than in Angolan war. In Mozambique, mainly RENAMO recruited children under the age of eighteen into its armed group contrary to International Law. Evidence shows that since the late 1980s, RENAMO recruited much larger numbers of

[165] Ibid. p.240.
[166] Sean Cleary. (2011). Angola – A Case Study of Private Military Involvement. Available: www.issafrica.org/uploads/PEACECHAP8.PDF. Accessed: 05-07-2013.
[167] David Birmingham. (1992). *Frontline Nationalism in Angola and Mozambique*. African World Press. London. p.79.
[168] Angela McIntyre. (2005). Op cit. p. 52.
[169] William Minter. (1994). Loc Cit. p. 242.

even younger children, ten years old or younger.[170] RENAMO preferred children to adult combatants because they believed them to be better fighters.

**Social Impact**

Wood notes that the consequences of military socialization for combatants though not well documented, include the effects of recruitment and training processes as well as the effects of witnessing and wielding violence.[171] On the other hand Wessels argues that, "child soldiering is grounded in the wider exploitation of children in situations of armed conflict and it should be viewed as part of a wider system of violence."[172] This is regardless of whether the child soldiers were recruited by force or volunteered. The process of using child soldiers caused massive damage to them, violates human rights and plant seeds of future violence and armed conflict. The child soldiers who survived the ordeal of the wars in both Angola and Mozambique were faced with emotional scars and severe trauma which hinder the child's stability and ability to go on with his or her normal life.

The images and memories of the war's worst moments experienced still linger in the children's life. According to Wessels for example, "many Angolan children report nightmares and flashbacks, display heightened aggressiveness, and suffer from hopelessness."[173] This made them believe that no one could understand their situation and therefore ended up living in a combination of pain and guilt, sadness, depression and social isolation.[174] These traumatized children do not have a vision for the future and fail to move forward. On the other hand, as they were taught during the war not to rely on anyone, they fail to trust fellow children as well as adults after the conflict. Further, they will tend to use violent methods to get what they want, beat other children, steal and oppress others just as was done to them in the bush. Moreover, they viewed violence as normal and part of life as they were socialized into violence during the war. The fear for their own security also lingers for long periods, so the child often will carry homemade weapons for protection or hides at night under the covers.[175]

[170] Human Rights Watch. (1992). Op. Cit. p 95.
[171] Elisabeth Jean Wood. (2008). Social Processes of Civil War: The Wartime Transformation of Social Networks. .*Annual Review of Political Science*. 11: 539-561.
[172] Michael Wessells. (2000). How we can Prevent Child Soldiering. *Peace Review*. 12(3): 407-413.
[173] Michael Wessells. (1997). Child Soldiers. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. 53(6): 34.
[174] Filipa Neto Marques. (2001). Rehabilitation and Reintegration of the Former Child Soldiers in Mozambique. Available: http://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story_id/filipa%27s%20paper.pdf. Accessed: 04-07-2013.
[175] Ibid.

There was also a sense of social promotion provided by the gun. Power relations were reversed as young people became masters over civilian elders. In the case of RENAMO, they subscribed to its political platform to return power to local chiefs, and declared themselves as believing in local traditional rules, social structures and hierarchies.[176] This was due to instructions from the RENAMO leadership to 'respect the elders' and avoid robbing civilians. On the contrary, some disobeyed this. Authority figures outside the base were purely ignored or even challenged, and the parents and social workers had a very hard time understanding them, and felt threatened.[177] However, most obeyed the chiefs' rules for fear of the consequences of spiritual retribution. Another aspect of the social promotion afforded to the child soldiers in the guerrilla army was control over women. Liaisons with women in RENAMO areas were forbidden by the military leadership rather than promoted. They were forced to form their relationships with local women clandestinely and even more cautiously with female guerrillas.[178] It was the women in the enemy area who were captured and sexually abused while those in own area of control were to be treated with caution and approached according to normal social rules.

Military life for the children meant being separated and away from ones family. The child soldiers lacked normal growth and development process as they were far from their community and its structures. These children who were used as soldiers grew up faster because of what they saw, did and experienced. Moreover, Brett and McCallin observed that, "by being child soldiers and being separated from their families' children loose access to the social, moral and cultural values of their community, which can create an irreversible gap at an older age."[179]

**Reintegration of Child Soldiers**

**Angola**

The reintegration of fighters in Angola at the end of the civil war occurred against the backdrop of increased concern for children as a special group of ex-combatants.[180]

[176] Jessica Schafer. (2001). Op. Cit. p. 232.
[177] Neil Boothby, Abubacar Sultan & Peter Upton. (1991). *Children of Mozambique: The Cost of Survival*. U.S. Committee for Refugees. Washington D.C.
[178] Jessica Schafer. (2001). Op. Cit. p. 233.
[179] Rachel Brett & McCallin Margaret. (1998). *Children: the Invisible Soldiers*. Växjo, Rädda Barner.
[180] Jaremey McMullin. (2011). Reintegrating Young Combatants: do Child-centred Approaches leave children—and Adults—Behind? *Third World Quarterly*. 32(4): 743–764.

However, the Angolan experience demonstrates that children were excluded from the reintegration programme by the very regime which used them in the war. Both parties did not want to admit the existence of child soldiers within their ranks. On the part of the Angolan government, it was more difficult to admit because it had ratified the earlier Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990 forbidding the recruitment of children under 15 as soldiers before it was amended to 18 years.[181] In this case, the government opted to treat the child soldiers as dependents of the older soldiers as it was afraid of being seen to include children in the national army and this resulted in them not receiving the benefits of the reintegration. Moreover, the national DDR process only served those who were twenty years of age or older and was designed mainly as part of a security sector reform effort.[182]

The failure to target the child soldiers was linked to the broader discourse that underpins reintegration of child soldiers specifically. The emphasis has been on a flawed construction of children as vulnerable and in need of assistance after war. This has resulted in child soldiers being marginalised during the post conflict transition. Further, the protection regime (organisations that look after the special protection of children in armed conflict) has emphasised the need to protect children by separating them from adults and that underage fighters should not be given money. This is meant to prevent future recruitment of children or their re-recruitment as money may act as a motivating factor in that case. On the contrary, it may be argued that child reintegration programmes are meant to reintegrate children back into the very same conditions that made them to join the conflict like poverty, and political marginalization among others. This part therefore will assess whether the approach taken by the Angolan government was effective according to success criteria of child protection regimes.

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Optional Protocol, the use of soldiers under the age of 18 was not allowed. The government of Angola decided not to process UNITA child soldiers for demobilisation. Those underage were then treated as dependants of older combatants and not as soldiers themselves as explained above. Another explanatory factor can be that because few children were used as soldiers, it made it easier to ignore or hide. This then meant that child soldiers were excluded from

[181] Mark Malan. (2000). Op. Cit. p.11.
[182] Michael G. Wessells. (2007). The Recruitment and Use of Girls in Armed Forces and Groups in Angola: Implications for Ethical Research and Reintegration. Available: http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/5320.pdf. Accessed: 11-07-2013.

the formal DDR programme. Moreover, all the discussions before the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) did not address the issue of child soldiers. This meant that the parties failed to anticipate the problems and provide remedies for child soldiers who were within their ranks.[183] The child soldiers did not benefit from the reintegration allowance of about $100 and a reinsertion kit of tools and household items regardless of playing a significant role during the armed conflict.

The issue of child involvement and reintegration became complicated in how to define 'child soldier' during that long period of civil war. This was due to the fact that some children joined the conflict when they were under 18 and were adults by the time of demobilisation. In this case therefore, the distinction between adults and children lost its salience in the context of the duration of the fighting. It is against this background that still under aged child soldiers were not absorbed into the national army; but ones who were now adults were and thus their reintegration process was different from that of adults.[184] Further, male child soldiers were separated from adults. This was meant to protect them from exploitation by the adults and to guard them from being recruited again. They were sent to reception areas where they received specific interventions. This included temporary shelter and food, family tracing and reunification, family mediation services, psychosocial counselling, education support and vocational training.[185]

In this case, child exclusion in Angola was due to the pressure of the CRC. The CRC wanted the children to receive the "child rights package", which comprised birth registration and civil identification documents, access to family tracing and reunification services, education and skills training, and psychosocial support.[186] This influenced the government into not taking on board UNITA child soldiers and hence denying them political and material rights they could have claimed which could change their well-being such as land ownership. It is difficult therefore, to assess child reintegration in Angola in the context of their exclusion from the formal DDR programme regardless of the UN Security Council Resolution 1379 which called on armed parties to consider the views of

[183] Human Rights Watch. (2003). Forgotten Fighters: Child Soldiers in Angola. 15(10): 16.
[184] *IRIN News.* Angola: UNITA "WIVES" fear Exclusion from government Aid. 10 March 2003. Available:http://www.irinnewws.org. Accessed: 09-07-2013.
[185] J. Gomes Porto & I Parsons, Sustaining Peace in Angola: an overview of Current demobilization, disarmament and Reintegration, *ISS Monograph Series No83*, April 2003, p 70.
[186] *IRIN*, Angola: Rehabilitation of child soldiers Critical, UNICEF. 10 March 2003. Available: http://www.irinnews.org. Accessed: 27-09-2013.

children in designing child focussed DDR programmes as well as financial institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) who should have provided for child demobilisation and reintegration.[187] The Angolan government as well as the World Bank felt short of this requirement as it was not inclusive of all war affected children.

The Angolan case therefore presents a strange paradox with respect to child soldier reintegration. While the Angolan government and World Bank asserted the special needs and rights of child soldiers, they were excluded from the formal programmes and were not adequately targeted. Child soldiers were rendered invisible in Angola as the programmes which were put in place did not reintegrate them. To promote the best interest of child soldiers, there was a need to consider that the voices of the child soldiers were taken on board in shaping the contours, duration and nature of the DDR programmes. Child soldiers should not to be looked at as passive victims of war, but as vital social capital of ideas and solutions after armed conflict. McMullin sums it very well, "Children and youth were not consulted before or during the design and implementation of DDR. They became invisible—not political agents whose participation was key to the peace process, or economic labourers whose skills, ideas and aspirations were necessary for post-conflict reconstruction, but traumatised victims to be sent back to an imagined and idealised pre-conflict life of family and school."[188] Consequently in the post war period these children may end up becoming criminals like thieves or armed robbers to meet their ends.

**Mozambique**

After the war in Mozambique most child soldiers were taken to demobilization centres while others were reunited with their relatives or put in foster care through the help of Red Cross, local and international organisations such as Save the Children Fund.[189] However, the number of the underage soldiers were few during the time of demobilisation, 27.67% (25 700) were younger than 18 at the time of recruitment.[190] The first group of child soldiers came from RENAMO and was placed in a recuperation centre where a group of

[187] UNSC 1379. (2001). Paras 8, 12.
[188] Jaremey McMullin. (2011). p 757.
[189] Alcinda Honwana. (1999). Negotiating Postwar Identities: Child Soldiers in Mozambique and Angola. Codesria Bulletin. Available: http://sicher.medico.de/download/report26/ps_honwana_en.pdf. Accessed: 10-07-2013.
[190] Mark Malan. (2000). Disarming and Demobilising Child Soldiers: The Underlying Challenges. *African Security Review*. 9(5/6). Available: http://www.cihc.org/members/resource_library_pdfs/4_Beneficiaries/4_4_Child_Soldiers/DDR%20for%20Child%20Soldiers.pdf. Accessed: 11-07-2013.

child psychologists worked with them. This was not successful because the child soldiers were removed from their community and cultural environment, and were asked to talk about their painful memories as a way of healing. This failed because Western psychological approaches of diagnosis and healing distress and trauma were applied to a society that possessed very different ontologies, social and cultural patterns. This Western approach neglected completely the role that the ancestral spirits and other spiritual forces play in the processes of causation and healing of mental health problem.

In Mozambique as well as Angola, people believed that war-related psychological trauma was directly linked with the anger of the spirits of the dead killed during the war and that the spirits had capacity to harm those that killed them or mistreated them in life and had to be appeased to have peace. Those who were involved in the war, killed or saw people being killed were considered polluted and therefore seen as vehicles through which the spirits of those who died during the war might enter and afflict the community. The child soldiers as well as refugees were believed to be potential contaminators of the social body upon their return home. Therefore, the cleansing process was seen as a fundamental condition for collective protection against social pollution and for the social reintegration of war affected people into society. As such, rituals were performed for former child soldiers to cleanse them of war atrocities and as a break from the past.[191]

The rituals involved the washing of the body in the river, the burning of the clothes brought from the war, slaughtering of chicken and the use of herbal remedies to cleanse the body. The rituals were aimed at: asking for forgiveness, appeasing the souls of the dead, and preventing any future afflictions (retaliations) from the spirits of the dead, in this way serving the links with that "bad" past.[192] Therefore, the child soldiers in Mozambique had to acknowledge the negative identities and appease those who died during the war to avoid being haunted by them. It was therefore through this unmasking and acknowledgment of the past that child soldiers created new identities based on the rejection of all the links past memories could reveal.

On the other hand, family tracing and reunification programme, community sensitization campaigns and apprenticeships programmes were set up to assist the reintegration of the

[191] Ibid
[192] Ibid.

child soldiers into their communities.[193] Family tracing and reunification involved the identification, documentation, searching and reuniting the child soldiers with their families. In certain cases the reunification was followed by cleansing ceremonies which were meant to clean the souls of those who have been altered from war and allow them to start new lives. Sensitization campaigns to support the reintegration of former child soldiers were also initiated. These were meant for the population to take collective responsibility for the fate of the returnees. Local military, police, teachers and community leaders were targeted and encouraged to take part in the initiative and this had a positive impact on community acceptance of former child soldiers. Apprenticeships training in carpentry, mason and other skilled labourers were established. This was meant to teach basic employment and business skills. In other cases, some families got education stipend for fees, book and clothes to support the demobilised child soldiers go to school.

The relative success of the reintegration of child soldiers in Mozambique offers a beacon of hope for humanity. This was due to the fact that both the soldiers and victims understood that savage use of violence was to destroy both personal integrity and family relations.[194] The combination of modern techniques and the traditional ones proved to be more effective as psychological approaches were combined with traditional ways of healing as discussed above. Further, Mozambican policy from the 1980s centred on the community and this was achieved by first giving material assistance to vulnerable families so they could sustain their children who were involved in the civil war and then assisting to reunite children with families as quickly as possible. Christians, Muslims and traditional religious leaders were all involved in the purification rituals for cleansing and reintegrating the child soldiers. Moreover, responsibility for injustice in Mozambique was not an individual concern but rather a societal issue. In this regards, that is why families of the perpetrators of violence performed ceremonies to placate the spirits, and often a community paid compensation even during the war such as goats, cows and seed to an embattled village.

Two programmes devised in Mozambique - one for healing traumatised children and one for tracing children separated from family members - built on Mozambican traditions and

[193] N. Boothby, J. Crawford, & J. Halperin. (2006). Mozambique Child Soldier life Outcome Study: Lessons learned in Rehabilitation and Reintegration Efforts. *Global Public Health*. 1(1): 87 /107.
[194] Carol B. Thompson. (1999). Beyond Civil Society: Child Soldiers as Citizens in Mozambique. *Review of African Political Economy*. 26(80): 191-206.

cultures.[195] The negative legacy of war was de-emphasised. For example, traumatised children were not viewed as pathological, but as family members who needed nurturing. Apart from relying highly technical 'expertise' or equipment, indigenous knowledge of the issue was also used by the community. On the other hand, healing through play (*Brincar curando*) was also used from 1993 and was promoted in six provinces by the Mozambican Red Cross.[196] In this, children were encouraged to concentrate and participate in group games, story-telling, theatre, and songs which were meant to reinforce Mozambican cultures and increase social interaction among all children involved in the civil war. In the process, those who needed additional attention were distinguished if they exhibit contrary behaviour, such as not joining in the play, inability to focus, or hostility. This helped everyone deal with their own war experiences as the community helped and was part in the process. Gradually, this helped in rebuilding trust and as a result more child soldiers were able to go to school and to learn productive skills. However, a sombre refrain to the Mozambican success story is that neither demobilisation nor tracing seems to have occurred for the girls, who were forced sexual partners. They were not reintegrated.

Therefore, while the different approaches to the DDR process between Angola and Mozambique could be attributed to Mozambique having more child soldiers and something had to be done to address the situation, it needs to be noted that DDR programmes are country specific and depends on a number of factors. It can be due to policy design, objectives of and variety of needs of different combatants as well as the inclusiveness of the peace process. Further, in Mozambique, it was seen as a security strategy to consolidate peace and neutralize potential spoilers. The international community saw reintegration in Mozambique from this perspective as well and the need to achieve negative peace (the absence of violence).[197] The successful reintegration therefore justifies the low occurance of domestic violence in post conflict Mozambique as compared to Angola which went back to war after 1992.

[195] Ibid. p 200.
[196] Frieda Draisma. (1995). *Psycho-Social Support for Children Healing Through Play*. Mozambique Red Cross. Maputo.
[197] Emma Gordon. (2011). Why has it often proved more difficult to reintegrate than to demobilise soldiers following civil wars? E-International Relations. Available: http://www.e-ir.info/2011/07/26/why-has-it-often-proved-more-difficult-to-reintegrate-than-to-demobilise-soldiers-following-civil-wars/. Accessed: 27-09-2013.

**Summary of the variables present in both cases**

- High levels of poverty
- High levels of unemployment/economic marginalization
- High levels of ethnic fractionalization
- Insufficient numbers of military personnel
- Desire to take control of events/ protection offered by using the gun
- Forced recruitment
- Political motivation

**Summary of variables that did not seem to contribute significantly to the use of child soldiers**

- Revenge
- Availability of small arms

## Chapter 5

## The Legal Environment Child Soldiers Operated and the Role Played by Civil Society and International Organisations

### Introduction

The use of child soldiers and the terrible impact they suffer in conflicts has not gone unnoticed. The impact of armed conflict on children has moved to the forefront of academic, political, and humanitarian agendas worldover. Many organizations have launched programmes to address the issue of child soldiers and other children affected by armed conflicts as well as to promote protection and support. Moreover, the issue has become a topic of interest in academic circles and the participation of children in war has even become a theme for novels and films such as *Child soldiers of Africa, Stolen Children, the Will of a Child Soldier and Soldier Child*[198] just to mention a few. It needs to be noted that children's involvement in war defies established and generally accepted norms and values with regard to the fundamental categories of childhood and adulthood, as well as the international conventions of modern warfare.[199] Children are associated with innocence, weakness, and dependence upon adult guidance and nurturance in the society. On the contrary, soldiers are associated with strength, aggression, and the responsible maturity of adulthood. In this context, children need to be protected and defended all the time while a soldier's duty stereotypically is to protect and defend the nation and the weak like children. In this regard, the international community has taken several significant steps to address the problem and stop the phenomenon of child soldiers. Therefore, this chapter will focus on the international legal standards which define the international regime for child protection in respect of the use and plight of children in armed conflict.

### The Legal Environment

The plight of children in conflict has led to the adoption of international instruments to protect children, and in particular child soldiers.[200] The international community has tried to address the issue of children being involved in war like any other human rights violations that need greater attention. The use of children in armed conflicts is a breach of international humanitarian law. The process to establish an international legal protection of

[198] www.youtube.com.
[199] Alcinda Honwana. (2005). *Child Soldiers in Africa*. University of Pennsylvania Press. USA.
[200] David J. Francis. (2007). Paper Protection Mechanisms: Child Soldiers and the International Protection of Children in Africa's Conflict Zones. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. 45(2): 217.

children in armed conflicts dates back to the end of the First World War by the League of Nations. This resulted in the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of the Child in 1924 which provided that in times of distress children be the first to receive relief. Article 38 of the 1989 International Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates that state parties shall take responsibilities to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of 15 shall not take part in armed conflicts.[201] The 1999 African Charter on Human Rights and the Rights of the Child (Art 22) affirms that no person under the age of 18 should be drafted to take part in armed conflicts. However, developed countries USA, Soviet Union, Britain and Canada argued for 15 years to be the minimum age when the issue was being discussed. Their argument was based on Humanitarian Law and their national legal systems.[202] Interestingly, when the age of 15 was initially chosen, several states objected preferring the minimum age to be 18.[203] This therefore forced the developed countries to undertake an obligation not to allow children under the age of 18 take part in armed conflict. Further, the 1948 Universal Declaration for Human Rights, the 1949 Geneva Convention (Art IV) protects children from taking part in hostilities. The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child bans compulsory recruitment under the age of 18. This is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history by almost all countries except United States.[204]

Article 19 of the African Charter on Human and Welfare of the Child, states that unless upon his will, every child shall be entitled to the enjoyment of parental care and protection while Article 18 of the same, the family is seen as the natural unit and basis of society.[205] In practice this was not the case. In Angola and Mozambique, many children were abducted from their families, schools, on the streets and homes, and forced to follow soldiers into military camps and join war activities despite these treaties and protocols being in place.[206]

In Africa, a conference was held in Maputo, Mozambique in 1999 which focused on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Representatives of governments,

[201] The International Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 38.
[202] Antonio Gumende. (1999). Rescuing African Child Soldiers. Southern African News Features. Available: http://www.twnside.org.sg/title/1928-cn.htm. Accessed: 01-10-2013.
[203] Rachel Brett. (1996). Child Soldiers: Law, Politics and Practice. *4 International Journal of Children's Rights.* 117.
[204] 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of a Child. Article 1.
[205] The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Articles 18 and 19.
[206] Alcinda Honwana & Filip De Boeck. (2005). *Makers and Breakers: Children and Youth in Postcolonial Africa*. James Currey. Oxford, UK. p. 39.

international and non-governmental organisations met to discuss the issue in an African context and at the end the conference adopted the Maputo Declaration on the use of Children as soldiers.[207] The declaration was later to be presented to the Organisation of African Union (OAU) to be adopted as a formal resolution. The conference set 18 years as the minimum age without exception and prohibits the recruitment and use of child soldiers in armed conflict.

United Nations agencies have also addressed the issue. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted a Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 1999.[208] Article 3(a) specifically prohibits the 'forced and compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict'. Some states sought an absolute ban on child soldiers and this was expected to be a useful tool for campaign against the use of child soldiers. The legal status of child soldiers is also covered in the statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) especially Article 2 which states that it is a war crime to recruit children to participate in hostilities.[209]

**How the Treaties or Protocols have addressed the Variables**

International treaties and protocols have tried to address the issues of poverty, education, unemployment and many more. The 1959 Declaration on the Rights of the Child (Principle 7) states clearly that a child is entitled to receive education which shall be free and compulsory.[210] Moreover, the African Charter on the Rights of the Child 1999 (Art. 11) provides that "every child shall have the right to education".[211] Article 26 of the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "everyone has the right to education"[212] and this is further supported by the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) no 2 which calls upon states to achieve universal primary education.[213] On the other hand the issue of poverty is addressed by MDG no1 which is committed to eradicate extreme

[207] Alison Dundes Renteln. The Challenges of Enforcing International Standards. *Whittier Law Review*. 21: 198.
[208] The Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. (1999). Available: http://www.ilo.org/public/englishl10ilc/ilc87/com-chil.htm. Accessed: 01-10-2013.
[209] United Nations. (1998). Rome Statute of International Criminal Court. UN DOC.A/Conf.183/9, I.L.M. 999.
[210] The 1959 Declaration on the Rights of the Child.Principle 7.
[211] The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Article 11.
[212] 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
[213] Millennium Development Goal (MDG) no 2.

poverty and hunger.[214] Further, under the African Charter on the Rights and welfare of the Child (Art.22) state parties are urged to respect and ensure respect for rules of International Humanitarian Law applicable in armed conflict which affect the child and that no child should take direct part in hostilities and should refrain from recruiting any child, while article 29 strictly prohibits abduction of children.[215]

However, it is seen that the international legal standards, treaties and protocols are not sufficient to protect the children as enforcement has often been ignored by a number of states and armed groups. There is need for more practical and pragmatic actions to respond to the use of children in conflict who suffer from human rights abuses.

**Human Right Abuses**

The wars in Angola and Mozambique were protracted and marked by extreme violence and brutality against civilians especially women and children regardless of the above international instruments to protect children in conflict. These included mutilations and disfigurement, psychological torture, physical and sexual violence. Many people either became refugees or internally displaced persons. Both boys and girls were affected by the economic, political, social, psychological and physical effects of the war.

The civil war between FRELIMO and RENAMO (1976–1992) in Mozambique captured public attention more than the other periods and types of violence, due to the magnitude of destruction and appalling human suffering.[216] The mutilation of civilians in Mozambique involved the cutting of breasts, ears, noses, lips and sexual organs. Corpses were also mutilated and it became one of the most characteristic abuses of the Mozambican war. Civilians accounted for more than 95 percent of the casualties.[217] These were the central parts of the RENAMO strategy of advertising its presence and strength as well as a form of terrorizing the civilians and government soldiers. Most women were raped and became concubines to RENAMO as well as government soldiers.[218] Further, the sixteen years of war in Mozambique produced an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 war orphans. Moreover,

[214] Millennium Development Goal (MDG) no 1.
[215] The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Articles 22 and 29.
[216] Victor Igreja. (2008). Memories as Weapons: The Politics of Peace and Silence in Post-Civil War Mozambique. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 34(3): 542.
[217] Lloyd Axworthy. (2000). Vital Speeches of the Day. *Human Rights*. LXVI(19): 578.
[218] Carolyn Nordstrom. (1999). Wars and Invinsible Girls, Shadow Industries, and the Politics of Not-Knowing. *International Journal of Politics*. 1(1): 18.

some orphans were used for pornography by European men. Worse still, they were forcing a dog to have sex with girls.[219]

On the other hand, FRELIMO soldiers were also responsible for incidents of mutilation. FRELIMO and RENAMO both were involved in killing of civilians during operations to force them relocate to areas under their control and in some cases as punishment for assisting the enemy. However, largest killings were carried by RENAMO though government troops were also involved as explained above. It needs to be noted that both FRELIMO and RENAMO only punished their soldiers for offences committed against civilians if those offences were committed in the area under their control and not in contested areas.

Both armed groups exercised control over civilians as a means to deny the other group access to supplies held by the population like labour, food etc. and establish legitimacy. The forced control of the populace involved a number of abuses like forced relocation which was carried by both sides, restriction on movement and economic activity. Forced conscription of young men became common method by RENAMO, though FRELIMO also used it to obtain its combatants. RENAMO even used child soldiers less than ten years of age. Moreover, "the process of forcible recruitment such as capture, enlistment and enforcement of discipline involved numerous human rights abuses."[220]

In Angola, every group was responsible for human rights abuses including mass killings, disappearances, illegal detentions, extra-judicial executions, torture, forced displacement, forced conscription, sexual enslavement and abuse, and others.[221] Civilians suffered under government forces in the form of harassment, extortion, property dispossession and rape;[222] and were forcibly removed from their land to urban centres. Crops were destroyed to make sure UNITA troops had no access to food. In the process, force was used and this sometimes resulted in death of civilians including women and children.[223] Civilians were

[219] Op; Cit. p.19-20.
[220] Human Rights Watch. (1992). *Conspicuous Destruction: War, Famine and the Reform Process in Mozambique.* USA.
[221] E A A F Annual Report. (2003). Angola. Available: http://eaaf.typepad.com/pdf/2003/angola.pdf. Accessed: 04-10-2013.
[222] Human Rights Watch, World Report 2003. p 15.
[223] Andrea Lari & Rob Kevliham. (2004). International Human Rights Protection in Situations of Conflict and Post Conflict. *African Security Review*. 13(4): 29-4.

also put at higher risk of death due to starvation and infectious diseases as the government failed to provide basic needs such as food and health care in contested or UNITA held areas.

On the other hand, UNITA targeted civilian population and inflicted protracted violence. Government supporters and informers were mainly targeted in the process as well as women, old men, nuns, and children. In later stages of the war UNITA took responsibility and pride in these abuses in contrast to earlier periods when it had apologized for abuse as collateral damage or denied it altogether.[224] The violence committed evolved into heighted brutality as torture, the sexual mutilation of victims and the dead, and rape became status quo. Combatants participated in increasingly horrifying and ritualized forms of torture.[225] UNITA added gruesome tactics to its repertoire which including the use of human shields in combat, death by crucifixion, taxing food and public witch-burnings among others.[226]

Further, civilians who stayed in UNITA controlled areas were prevented from leaving and sometimes forced to follow UNITA troops and provide support services.[227] According to Amnesty International, a lack of a sense of accountability by both government and UNITA persisted throughout the war, in which both parties avoided investigations of abuses and ignored calls to implement corrective or preventive measures.[228]

**Why Child Soldiers have not been Protected?**

Children in conflict have not been protected regardless of the sheer volume of declarations, protocols, resolutions, charters, treaties and conventions being enormous as stated above. A plethora of intergovernmental organisations have signed and committed their member states to the protection of children. This seems to be only on paper as armed groups and combatants seem to be complete strangers to the laws of armed conflict and customary international law as well as other protocols. This is due to several problems.

[224] Jen Ziemke. (2008). From Battles to Massacres. Prepared for the 3rd Annual Harvard-Yale-MIT Graduate Student Conference on Order, Conflict and Violence. Yale University, New Haven, CT. April 18-19, 2008. Available: http://www.yale.edu/macmillan/ocvprogram/conf_papers/Ziemke.pdf. Accessed: 04-10-2013. p. 28.

[225] Inge Brinkman. (2000). Ways of Death: Accounts of Terror from Angolan Refugees in Namibia. *Africa* 70(1).

[226] Jen Ziemke. (2008). p. 28.

[227] Andrea Lari. (2004). Returning Home to a Normal Life? The Plight of Ddisplaced Angolans. *ISS Paper 85*. p. 2. Pretoria.

[228] Amnesty International. (1996). Angola: From War to ..What? No Reconciliation without Accountability. p. 15.

The reluctance and failure of the international community to enforce its own standards on child soldiers is a major problem.[229] Many states and organisations who are signatories enforce these standards incorrectly and in a selective manner, and often due to strategic self-interests, pay lip service to the implementation of the child protection standards. The other reason is due to the social construction of the meaning of childhood in Africa as compared to the Western understanding. The different meaning, understanding and perception of being a child in Africa undermine and dilute the practical implementation of international protection mechanism. For example, while the African Charter defines a child as being under 18, in some African societies this distinction is blurred between the adolescent age of 14 and upwards, to the age of young adult and/or youngster of 18.[230] Moreover, traditional ceremonies that mark the passage from one age-grade to another, like from puberty to adulthood confer on children as young as 14 the status and obligation of adulthood. It needs to be noted therefore that the restrictive, Western-centric view of what a child is, does not correspond to other contexts. However, it has been accepted as a globally accepted definition of a child or childhood in spite of it being contrary to African construct and of the fact that childhood differs in different societies. Therefore, the international definition of a child is problematic and bears limited relevance to the socio-cultural context of children and social construction of childhood across much of Africa.[231] Furthermore, the tasks performed by child soldiers are generally perceived as an extension of traditional child labour practices in much of Africa. It is important to note that the debate between universal and cultural relativist construction of childhood has been controversial and has undermined negotiations of the Conventions of the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol for many years.[232]

Another reason is that most African states have found it difficult to incorporate international treaties (law) into their domestic laws due to the fact that they think that if they do so, they agree to uphold certain fundamental rights and protection of children. However, the ratification of these treaties has not led to immediate enforcement powers in national law.[233] This is so regardless of a number of treaties providing grounds for

[229] David J. Francis. (2007). Loc Cit. p 221.
[230] Op; Cit. p. 222.
[231] Op; Cit.
[232] Op; Cit. p. 223.
[233] Op; Cit.

jurisdiction over international crimes and empowering to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. In this case, states are reluctant to exercise that jurisdiction. According to Cassese, states have failed to exercise their criminal jurisdiction over those responsible for international crimes and to enact the legislation to implement duly ratified international treaties; some states have entered reservations upon ratification of some international treaties. Other states have evaded their inter-national obligations by passing implementing legislation that restricts or narrows the scopes or ground of jurisdiction outlined in the international treaties and national courts have often developed in their judicial practice a restrictive tendency to limit as much as possible the impact of international rules or the exercise of jurisdiction by national courts over international crimes.[234] Moreover, many states that have signed such conventions, some have not put into place the constitutional process or adopted the necessary legislative measures to give effect to the child protection mechanisms.[235]

The other reason has been the lack of individual punishment as a preventive measure in the past. The current mechanism to give power to international child protection mechanisms will help in addressing the issue of the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict is a war crime under customary international law. Hopefully, it will end the culture of recruiting and using child soldiers by holding leaders accountable for these abuses. This has seen the recent arrest and prosecution of the former president of Liberia, Charles Taylor in 2006 by the ICC and the Congolese warlord Lubanga Dyilo, accused of conscripting child soldiers in the DRC war.[236] But these are only two people and not many have been prosecuted.

**Roles played by Civil Society and International Organisations**

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) played important roles during the Mozambican and Angolan wars to secure and build peace though their actions were limited. This was due to the fact that CSOs do not have the legal, political or military power. They only have the power to persuade, change people's perception about the conflict and raise awareness of the costs of the conflict and the benefits of having a political solution. Moreover, it is difficult for CSOs to operate amidst lawlessness. Further, the role of CSOs in the

[234] Antonio Cassese. (2003). *International Criminal Law*. Oxford University Press.
[235] International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). (1991). National Implementation of Humanitarian Law. Available:http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteengo.nsf/iwpList386/. Accessed: 03-10-2013.
[236] David J. Francis. (2007). Loc Cit. p 221.

promotion of peace and security remains contested by some who see CSOs as either irrelevant or a threat to the sovereignty of the state.[237]

In Mozambique, their role included the performance of plays and dances that condemned the war, peace marches, conciliatory soccer matches between opposing side, and special ceremonies to heal and reintegrate victims of war into their communities including child soldiers.[238] Women also played an important role in all these initiatives and provided support to the many women and children displaced or affected by the war.[239] Further, village female spiritual healers (*curandeiras*) played important roles fortifying village residents against the threat of attack or cleansing and reintegrating them into communities if they had been kidnapped, raped or had gone off to fight.[240]

The community of Saint'Egidio helped orphans, students and others suffering from the war.[241] They developed ties to missionaries and served in the no-man's-land or in the war zones controlled by RENAMO. Church leaders also worked hard by asking both FRELIMO and RENAMO to commit to the principle of renouncing violence as a way to bring about change.[242] This became the basis for dialogue. It is noteworthy that plans initiated by the ICRC in late 1980s and early 1990 were not successful because RENAMO made it difficult to have access to the children within its ranks.[243] Later, UNICEF negotiated with RENAMO and FRELIMO leadership to have access to child soldiers. One of UNICEF's objectives was to establish contact with the child soldiers, facilitate their reunification with their families and integrate them into civilian life. This was a success because of the willingness of the child soldiers to be reunified with their families. Apart from UNICEF, other NGOs such as the Alliance Save the Children and World Food

[237] Anja Muller-Deibicht. (2010). *The Role of Civil Society in the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of Child Soldiers: Lessons learned from Angola*. Research Report submitted to the Faculty of humanities and social sciences in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts In International Relations. University of the Witwatersrand. Johannesburg. p. 37.
[238] Mary H Moran & M Anne Pitcher. (2004). The 'basket case' and the 'poster child': explaining the end of civil conflicts in Liberia and Mozambique. *Third World Quarterly*. 25(3): 511.
[239] Organization of Mozambican Women. (1991). Semina´rio sobre a 'mulher em situac¸a˜o dificil', Segunda fase, Comunicado final, 12–13 September, mimeo.
[240] Mary H Moran & & M Anne Pitcher. (2004). p. 512.
[241] Cameron R Hume. (1994). *Ending Mozambique's War: the Role of Mediation and Good Offices*. United States Institute of Peace Press. Washington D.C. p. 18
[242] Ibid. p. 27.
[243] Dossou David Zounmenou. (2001). *The United Nations response to the Phenomenon of Child Soldiers in Africa: Case Studies of Mozambique and Sierra Leone*. Research Report submitted to the Faculty of Arts in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts. University of the Witwatersrand. Johannesburg.

Programme (WFP) also assisted in the process. Save the Children Foundation (SCF) helped in reuniting the children with their families.[244]

Government and traditional healers also helped child soldiers in Mozambique. The government started an initiative called "Child in Difficult Situation" in 1985 to help children victims of war and child combatants in reuniting with their families or substitute family in case it did not exist. In 1988 this initiative was reinforced by the Programme for Family Localisation and Reunification (PLRF) which coordinated social structures and NGOs actions in provision of assistance to children affected by the war.[245]

Traditional healers also complemented the work done by UNICEF, the government and NGOs in assisting child soldiers. The initiatives were drawn from traditional customs and rituals to overcome the problem. This was based on the belief that "when an individual leaves his community for a certain period of time and comes in contact with other social groups, he always runs the risk of learning harmful, improper and strange things, which can pollute his community when he returns."[246] In this case, those who were involved in the war or became victims had to undergo through cleansing ritual which was meant to facilitate the reintegration of the child soldier into the community. It was also meant to ensure acceptance and forgiveness of the members of the community.

In Angola, CSOs played an important role in regards to the child soldiers. Organisations like the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers assisted in the identification of child soldiers who served with UNITA and government forces. The Human Rights Watch focused on the human rights abuses while UNICEF provided psychological support to former child soldiers. Other international organizations provided basic foods and medical care to residents in many of the quartering areas.[247]

During reintegration, UN agencies and children's rights groups implemented several programmes aimed at rehabilitating ex-child soldiers. The programmes formulated by

[244] Cindy Andrew. (1999). *UNICEF Assistance to Ex-Child Soldiers in Mozambique*. UNICEF HQ 93-1850. p. 1.
[245] Dossou David Zounmenou. (2001). p. 66.
[246] Alcinda Honwana. (1999). The Refugee Experience: Psychosocial Training Module. *Refugee Studies Programme.* 1: 114. Oxford University.
[247] Human Rights Watch. (2003). Angola: Forgotten fighters: Child Soldiers in Angola. Available: http://www.refworld.org/docid/3f4f594e7.html. Accessed: 13-10-2013.

CSOs focused on family and community reunification, psychological support and education opportunities. Some child soldiers were given building materials to construct their own homes. This was done in consultation with family or community leaders to provide land to the child soldiers to construct their new home.[248] Cultural cleansing ceremonies were also conducted. These ceremonies acted as healing agents mainly for young girls who were forced into marriages without which they would have been considered as social outcasts.

The reintegration programme in Angola is an example of successful cooperation between government and CSOs. There was also collaboration between international CSOs and the churches that assisted in family reunification and follow up support services on demobilised child soldiers as well as helping them access education and vocational training opportunities which was run by ILO.[249]

[248] Verhey, B. (2001b). Child Soldiers: Preventing, Demobilising and Reintegrating. *Africa Regional Working Papers Series.* 20: 1.
[249] Ibid. pp. 16-17.

## Chapter Six

## Conclusion

The main objective of this thesis was to investigate why more child soldiers were used in Mozambican war than in the Angolan war. The study was guided by a number of hypotheses among which were if high levels of poverty, unemployment, ethnic fractionalization, insufficient numbers of military personnel and the failure of the groups hierarchy to punish subordinates for infractions or lacks groups norms concerning violence against civilians will result in more child soldiers being used in armed conflict. In the cases of Angola and Mozambique, this thesis has shown that; high levels of poverty, high levels of unemployment, high levels of ethnic fractionalization, insufficient numbers of military personnel, desire to take control of events/ protection offered by using the gun and forced recruitment were the main reasons child soldiers were used in the conflicts. This is also in line with the Economic Roots Theory and the Relative Deprivation Theory as explained in Chapter 1 under theoretical foundation.

This thesis has further demonstrated that armed conflicts are associated with human suffering which is borne by the civilian population. Civilians are targeted by the warring parties and pay the heaviest cost. However, big variations exist with regard to the extent civilians suffer at the hands of the warring factions over time, across conflicts, and across countries experiencing civil wars. This is so because different armed groups exhibit different patterns of behaviour in dealing with civilian populations. This can take the form of launching campaigns of ethnic cleansing, displacement, extermination and abduction of children to fill the ranks. Other armed groups have shown restraint in their relationship with civilians and perpetrated low levels of violence.

In Africa children have been used in political campaigns, liberation struggles and insurgencies as they form the majority of the population. This **thesis** therefore has looked at the use of child soldiers in the Angolan and Mozambican civil wars as comparative case studies against the background that the two wars took place almost the same period and under almost the same conditions but had divergent usage of child soldiers. Reports show that more child soldiers were used in Mozambique (25,498) than in Angola (8,000). The

thesis has further looked at the factors that led to the use of child soldiers, how and why the phenomenon of child soldiers takes place in different context.

**Motives and Patterns for the Recruitment of Child Soldiers in the Angolan Civil War**

The parties to the civil war in Angola came to understand the significance of young people in the conflict and in the maintenance of power. This realization paved the way for forced recruitment of young people and children to increase their fighting strength and ensure that a section of the Angolan society supported them with loyalty. Children made up more than half of the population and as such provided a fertile resource to the armies. Children also became victims of conscription practices. This was due to the reluctance of a majority of Angolan people to fight. This pushed the government to recruit even children. In the process, some children were press ganged or kidnapped, while others were forced to join to defend their families. Moreover, there were few opportunities available to them in terms of formal education and jobs. As a result, they were easily mobilised and incorporated into the dynamics of the war. The move by UNITA to expand into a regular force led it to recruit and use children as well; a strategy called by Savimbi "the theory of large numbers."[250] Local commanders were ordered to abduct from government controlled territories in order to meet their quotas of recruits. Coercion and intimidation was also used.

On the part of the children, the rewards of military life provided some positive incentive in the form of independence from family. By being in possession of a gun they had access to food, loot and women. This applied to Mozambique as well. Other opportunities for advancement in the army also existed in the form of overseas training in Morocco and other countries and scholarships in Portugal.

There were mixed patterns of recruitment in Angola although it was less prominent than in Mozambique. Those who joined in 1974-1976 did so voluntarily because they considered UNITA as the natural movement for their Umbundu Region and for ethnically diverse Moxico Province. In this case, they joined because of an emotional attachment to kinship and tribe. Later, children were recruited by force or were being abducted. Forced recruitment was wide spread in the 1980s. The trend therefore seems to be that of predominantly voluntary recruitment at the start of the war to forced recruitment as the war

[250] William Minter. (1994). p. 178.

progressed. This trend could be due to war fatigue and the need to increase bayonet strength (fighting force) for conventional warfare on both sides.

Some children said they joined UNITA to fight for political reasons after being frustrated with the situation they found themselves in. This could be due to political motivation under UNITA education and propaganda. It may also be linked to feelings of grievances against the government for lack of opportunities like education and jobs as well as the culture of violence and displacement. Many of the children had never experienced peace since they were born. Some had witnessed relatives being killed by government troops or police, UNITA or by the Cubans.

**Motives and Patterns for the Recruitment of Child Soldiers in the Mozambique Civil War**

In Mozambique, RENAMO recruited young boys into its ranks. Girls were recruited as personal servants. These later became wives providing sexual services. The government of Mozambique, under FRELIMO, forcefully recruited unemployed urban youth into its ranks. In this case, children were used by both the FRELIMO government and RENAMO. RENAMO believed that adults were not good fighters as compared to children and hence the consistent and systematic forced recruitment of children in its ranks. It preferred children because they were strong and had stamina, did not complain, could survive better in the bush and they easily followed orders. They could easily be turned into fierce fighters through brutal indoctrination where the child soldier was forced to kill someone known to him in his village. This was meant to close the door for the child to ever return to the village and further desensitizes them to suffering and makes them more likely to commit violent acts. Consequently RENAMO preferred children more than adult combatants.

The recruitment pattern in Mozambique was far more consistent than in Angola with forced recruitment becoming more dominant. Some were abducted or kidnapped in their fields, at home or on their way to visit relatives while others got captured after attack on their town, villages or schools. Voluntary recruitment was present though not much. This was mainly at the beginning of the war when several chiefs voluntarily supported RENAMO. This resulted in the youth loyal and under their leadership joining the group. Some joined after being disillusioned by the government while others after being offered substantial payments by South African intelligence agents. It was also seen that

marginalised youth showed some voluntary adherence to RENAMO. This was as a result of economic marginalization due to the escalation of the war and the structural adjustment programmes which began in 1987. Forced recruitment of children was widespread and the most common form of entry into RENAMO military ranks. Those who were deemed too old or too young for combat were used as porterage, messengers or servants for officers. Apart from forced recruitment or volunteering, other children were recruited into RENAMO while looking for employment in Malawi among the white people who were staying there. Other unemployed youths were recruited in Mozambique on the pretence of going to be offered employment or becoming illegal migrants in South Africa. FRELIMO conducted forced recruitment of young people perceived to be strong enough to fight. Students who were offered scholarships to study abroad ended up in military academies in the host countries while others were lured into special national programmes which turned out to conduct military training. If not recruited by **FRELIMO**, children were supposed to join the militia or other groups of civilians who possessed guns and underwent training conducted by RENAMO. These youth were supposed to defend and secure their communities and villages against attack.

In Angola, female combatants under UNITA served as domestics, assistants, and "wives" to soldiers. Women and girls were also forcibly given as "comfort women" to visiting guests in UNITA-held areas during the war. some were trained in pillaging techniques following an attack, loading and dismounting arms, defence techniques, accompanying male soldiers, sabotage, midwifery, welcoming, rousing, singing and dancing during special events. They were also used in transporting military goods during withdraw when under attack. After victory, the girls would dance with loud voice proclaiming victory. Sexual dances were also performed by girls to maintain male soldiers' morale, and to ensure they remained awake and alert during critical times when enemy attack was imminent. It is believed that, it was following such celebration that girls would be sexually abused and given out to commanders as rewards for their bravery.

**Case Comparisons**

In Mozambique, apart from being trained how to use a gun, girl child soldiers were used for cooking, cleaning and growing crops for the men. RENAMO exploited women as reward to combatants. Moreover, they were also raped and used as slave wives by the soldiers who had special rights to women and girls. RENAMO promised the girls

scholarships to study abroad to attract them into its forces. It is noteworthy that girls in the front lines in Angola and Mozambique conscripted, abducted and gang press other girls into the armed groups.

Given the above, it can be concluded that, the variation in the use of child soldiers in Angola and Mozambique is as a result of a number of factors some of which have been explained. The huge disparity in the number of child combatants involved is due to the very nature of contemporary armed conflicts. The Rebel groups UNITA and RENAMO lacked the institutional structures and means of control to account for their forces—especially children and relied much on the information provided by the tactical level commanders without verification. The policy of villagization in Mozambique which became unpopular and forced many people into the communal villages encouraged many young people to join RENAMO because they wanted freedom and to live as they wanted rather than being forced to stay in the communal villages. Moreover, many people felt excluded and marginalized by the FRELIMO project and RENAMO capitalised on this discontent to persuade people politically of the need to overthrow FRELIMO. As RENAMO was a party predominantly located in the peripheral rural areas where people felt excluded from the state, political sympathy contributed to the use of more child soldiers.

The regular pattern of recruitment campaigns by RENAMO, with orders to round up children of between thirteen and seventeen years resulted in more children being recruited than in Angola. Further, the recruits and their parents were told that the children were being taken to do a 'job' and would later return home after the completion of the task. This became a very important tactic as most young people were unemployed and eager to work. Moreover, the payment of salaries to guerrillas by the Rhodesians in the early phase of the war attracted both young men and their parents to accept the war as 'work'. A significant number of children were taken by RENAMO when they came across them by chance while working in the fields, feeding animals or fetching food for the family. The migration of men to work in South Africa meant a shortage of adult men to fill the ranks and hence the subsequent recruitment of more children. The pro-rebel Mambos (chiefs) also encouraged children to join the rebels in the Central and Northern provinces as they had great authority and proclaimed that they could immunize them from bullets.

RENAMO's policy of courting support from religious communities in an attempt to gather into its fold all those marginalized by FRELIMO is another reason why more child soldiers were used in Mozambique than in Angola. Some soldiers integrated their religious beliefs into the war time work and some went to church before the war. This might have acted as a motivation factor for more children to join the war in Mozambique. RENAMO also targeted school dropout children and promised scholarships and jobs within the movement.

The use of few child soldiers in Angola was likely mitigated by the involvement of Cuban soldiers and advisers as it is believed that about 50,000 Cuban troops participated in the war in support of the MPLA from 1975 to 1988. The involvement of the US military mainly the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and South African troops who cooperated in support of UNITA against the MPLA offers another explanation as to why few child soldiers were used. These two actors were also involved in the recruitment of mercenaries. Private military forces (companies) and mercenary Special Forces units were also used in training the warring parties and in combat duties. Guerrilla veterans and former colonial troops were used in Angola. Fewer child soldiers were recruited as a lot of international actors were involved.

The desertion of many soldiers in Angola which might have included child soldiers during the quartering and demobilisation which weakened the government army and reduced its strength between 1991 and 1992 also may have contributed to the smaller numbers of child soldiers. The bigger number of officers in Angola with secondary education than in Mozambique meant that they were in a better position to understand that it was against International Law to recruit and use children in war. Therefore, the above account justifies why more children were used in the Mozambican war than in the Angolan war.

**Way Forward**

The issue of using child soldiers in Africa will not end until the wars that drive child soldiering are prevented; managed and ultimately resolved. This is because the strategies used in today's wars are meant to target and terrorize civilian populations more than the opposing army. Part of this strategy is the use of children to fight and conduct the most brutal forms of atrocities against civilian populations because of their innocence. One cannot therefore separate the use of children with the strategies of today's wars. Unless

today's wars are ended, all the movements and campaigns in the world may reduce child soldiering, but never end it.[251]

**Recommendations**

It is therefore recommended that:

- There is need to continue raising awareness (human rights awareness) by educating people about the dangers of using children in armed conflicts;
- Governments should develop educational and economic opportunities for children so that they are not lured by the rebels;
- Support should be given to international and civil organisations as well as United Nations committees on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF, IRC etc in their efforts to eradicate the use of children under 18 years of age as soldiers;
- The media should be encouraged to expose the use of child soldiers and the need for demobilization;
- Those involved in the recruitment and usage of children as soldiers should be prosecuted and given stiff punishment.

[251] United Movement to End Child Soldiering (UMECS). (2004). Child Soldiering in Africa: What we can do to end Child Soldiering. Available: www.endchildsoldiering.org/pdf/0300.pdf. Accessed: 23-10-2013.

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