

**A peace process in a deadlock: Critical assessment of the peace processes of the Dagbon  
intra-chieftaincy conflict in the Northern Region of Ghana**

By

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## **Abstract**

The peace processes initiated in 2003 to bring lasting peace to the Dagbon intra-chieftaincy conflict hit a deadlock when the first Roadmap (2006-2018) signed by the two parties - Abudu Gate and Andani Gate - was not successfully implemented. This study examined the conditions that undermined the implementation of the first Dagbon Roadmap to Peace. The study was structured to address three main objectives. The first objective examined how the actions of third parties and political parties contributed to the failure of the Roadmap. The second objective interrogated how the management of the peace processes accounted for the failure of the Roadmap. The third objective investigated the context conditions that influenced the failure of the Dagbon Roadmap I.

To achieve these objectives, the study adopted a qualitative research approach grounded on the post-positivist paradigm and critical ethnographic-case study as the method of inquiry. The study was conducted in the Dagbon Kingdom of the Northern Region of Ghana. A total of 63 participants were selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The study collected primary data through in-depth interviews with 23 participants and five focus group discussions with 40 participants. Secondary data was obtained through the analysis of news articles. The data obtained was analyzed using inductive thematic analysis approach.

The findings of the study show that the motivation to continue the conflict, the exclusion of some segments of the society, the content of the Roadmap, and the absence of an implementation strategy were some of the conditions that contributed to the failure of the Roadmap. Also, the absence of political and security guarantees, the absence of internal leadership, socio-psychological barriers, and the culture and traditions of Dagbon were identified as some of the conditions that undermined the success of the first Roadmap to peace.

The analysis of the findings points to the conclusion that the failure of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace was not a result of a single condition, rather it was due to the interaction and interplay of many conditions. These conditions created an environment characterized by mistrust, fear, lack of confidence in the processes, the unwillingness to compromise and the weak implementation of the Dagbon peace processes. There is the need, therefore, to always analyze the conflict context to identify the conditions that have the potential to derail the initiation and implementation of peace processes before such endeavors are initiated. Likewise,

appropriate structures must be identified and instituted to address these conditions in the initiation and implementation of peace processes.

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this research to the following people:

1. My wife and children: Kilian, Maxmillan, Aubrey, and Andreana
2. My Mum, Veronica, and my siblings, Diana, Mary, and Mavis.
3. To the memory of my Dad (William Ateng) and my elder brother (Dominic Ateng). May your souls rest in peace.

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## **Acronyms**

APD: Association of Persons with Disabilities

CECs: Committee of Eminent Chiefs

CNR: Catholic Nationalist Republican

COE: Council of Elders

CPP: Convention Peoples Party

CSOs: Civil Society Organizations

IDRC: International Development Research Centre

KDP: Kurdish Democratic Party

MKC: Mate-Kole Committee

MSC: Municipal Security Committee

NDC: National Democratic Congress

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

NLC: National Liberation Council

NPC: National Peace Council

NPP: New Patriotic Party

NRC: National Redemption Council

OAC: Opoku-Afari Committee

PACS: Peace and Conflict Studies

PAM: Peace Accord Matrix

PNDC: Provisional National Defence Council

PUK: Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

PUL: Protestant Unionist Loyalist

RPC: Regional Peace Council

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1. Background to the study

The post-Cold War era was predicted to be a period of peacefulness, especially in the Global South. This was not the case, however, as many states were plunged into ethnic conflicts that were ethnopolitical in nature. These conflicts became a major barrier to the political stability of the world and more pronounced in states that were used as a proxy for the Cold War (Cordell & Wolff, 2011). Defined as conflicts over a political, economic, social, cultural or territorial issue between two or more ethnic groups (Brown, 1993), ethnopolitical conflicts are spread over all regions of the world and have the most devastating effects both on human lives and public property. In the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, ethnopolitical conflicts accounted for the highest incidents of civilian causalities and fatalities. In most cases, civilians have been killed, tortured, raped, displaced, and starved to death (Cordell & Wolff, 2011). Similarly, genocides as witnessed in Rwanda, Cambodia, and Bosnia have resulted in the loss of millions of lives (Jones, 2011).

These conflicts became what Mitchell calls intractable and protracted, defying many peace intervention and mitigation processes (Mitchell, 2014). The complex nature of these conflicts became a major concern to the international community, regional blocs, international development community and other agencies, which ignited a debate as to what could be done to address the fundamental and structural deficiencies that have led to these conflicts. Negotiated peace processes were therefore seen as the way out to transforming these conflicts and ultimately terminating them (Ramsbotham et al., 2016). The intervention strategies were not only intended to support the contending parties in finding an amicable solution to the conflict but also to create an environment favourable for holistic human development (Darby & Mac Ginty, 2008). These efforts culminated in the growth and application of negotiated peace processes such as mitigation, conciliation, reconciliation as well as other third-party intervention strategies in the peaceful resolution of conflicts in recent decades (Tonge, 2014).

Negotiated peace processes consequentially became the main mechanisms to the peaceful and sustainable resolution of conflicts, especially ethnopolitical conflicts, and are now widely accepted by conflicting parties and third parties. In all regions of the world, successful peace

processes have been developed (Tonge, 2014). Available statistics indicate an increasing trend in the application of negotiated peace processes in ethnopolitical conflict resolution. The 2015 Peace Process Report indicates that 39.3 percent of the 112 conflicts in the last thirty years ended through a negotiated peace agreement, 47.3 percent remain unresolved and are still active and 9.8 percent were brought to an end through a military victory by one of the sides (Fisas, 2015). Out of the 59 conflicts that ended in the last thirty years, 44 were through negotiated peace agreements (74.6 percent), four without any peace agreement or peace accord (6.8 percent) and 11 were ended through military victory (Fisas, 2015).

For the year 2014, out of the 33 conflicts that underwent some form of negotiated peace processes, 15.1 percent of the negotiations were successful, 24.2 percent experienced difficulties and 57.6 percent went bad (Fisas, 2015). In the 2016 Peace Process Report, 40.2 percent of the 117 conflicts considered for the last 35 years ended in a peace agreement, and 47.9 percent remain unresolved (Fisas, 2016). Out of the 61 conflicts that ended in the same period, 77 percent were through negotiated peace agreements, while 16.4 percent were through a military victory of one side of the parties (Fisas, 2016). In terms of durability, 32 percent of the 61 conflicts that ended lasted less than five years while 53.2 percent lasted less than 10 years (Fisas, 2016). For the year 2015 specifically, out of the 39 conflicts that underwent one form of a peace process or the other, 15.4 percent of the negotiations went well or were resolved, 33.3 percent had difficulties, and 43.6 percent failed or collapsed (Fisas, 2016).

Similar trends have been observed by the Peace Accord Matrix (PAM) Programme at the Kroc Institute of International Peace, University of Notre Dame and the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme, Uppsala University. The Uppsala Conflict Data Programme, between 2015-2018, concluded an analysis of 23 peace agreements. It found that not all of the 23 peace agreements were fully implemented, that is, some parties officially withdrew from the peace agreement resulting in the failure of the peace agreements (Pettersson et al., 2019). In addition, the Peace Accord Matrix dataset's analysis of 34 comprehensive peace agreements signed between 1989-2012 reveals a total of 724 provisions contained in the 34 comprehensive peace agreements. Out of the 724 provisions, 353 provisions (49 percent) were fully implemented, 166 provisions (23 percent) were at the intermediary stages of implementation, 108 provisions (15 percent) were at the minimal stages of implementation, and 97 provisions (13 percent) were never initiated. So

out of the total number of provisions, under half were implemented and 28 percent of all the provisions were either or never initiated or were minimally implemented (Joshi et al., 2015).

The statistics or trends presented above underscore two fundamental points. In the first place, there is an indication that negotiated peace processes have become an acceptable way to the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Therefore, it can be concluded that the culture of negotiation is becoming a reality - a positive development for the peace industry. However, the second observation is the fact that most of the negotiations or peace processes do not last and usually end poorly. Most of the negotiated peace processes often became fragile and collapsed in the course of their implementation, which sometimes led to the intensity of the conflict.

These statistics reinforce the conclusions of many studies. Tonge (2014) for instance observed that out of the 23 peace agreements reached in the final decades of the twentieth century, two broke down completely, with the rest followed by at least sporadic violence. Also, Doyle and Sambanis argue that the overall success rate of peace processes measured in terms of the absence of violence for two years is 41 percent (as cited in Tonge, 2014). Similarly, only 50 percent of all peace processes survive past five years (Bekoe, 2008).

Many peace processes in civil wars are usually unsuccessful resulting in renewed and often escalated violence (Newman & Richmond, 2006). The huge cost associated with failed peace processes became a prime concern to the international community and other third-party stakeholders. For instance, the former Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Anna, expressed the need for particular attention to be given to the sustainability of peace processes. He made the observation in the following words:

Our record of success in mediating and implementing peace agreements is sadly blemished by some devastating failures. Indeed, several of the most violent and tragic episodes of the 1990s occurred after the negotiation of peace agreements- for instance in Angola in 1993 and Rwanda in 1994. Roughly half of all countries that emerge from war lapse back into violence within five years. The two points drive home the message: if we are going to prevent conflict, we must ensure peace agreements are implemented in a sustained and sustainable manner (Anna, 2005, p.4).

Similarly, for the past twenty years, scholars in the PACS discipline have developed a major interest in failed peace processes, the consolidation of peace and the threat that hampered the implementation of peace processes (Byrne et al., 2007; Newman & Richmond, 2006).

Consequently, many PACS scholars have undertaken studies mostly through case studies to understand what has accounted for the success or failure of negotiated peace processes (Byrne, 2001).

PACS researchers have identified several factors that account for success or failure in peace processes in ethnopolitical conflicts. Three factors according to Doyle and Sambanis (2006) account for the success or failure of a peace process in any ethnopolitical conflict. These include the degree of hostility between the factions; the extent of existing local capacities to implement a peace process; and the amount of international assistance. Similarly, Nilsson (2008) argues that the ability of a peace process to capture all parties to the conflict is relevant in explaining the success or failure of the peace process. For Nilsson, the definition of parties should go beyond the frontline actors to include women, children, and local leadership.

Moreover, Boltjes (2007) explains that the role of leadership should not be discounted in understanding the success or failure of peace processes. The ability of political leadership to define the interests and needs of the various groups when designing a peace process is crucial to ensuring the smooth implementation of the provision in the peace process (Byrne, 2017b; Boltjes, 2007). Equally, Hampson (1996) speaks about the role of third parties in facilitating the implementation of peace processes. He notes that the presence of third-party stakeholders to proffer ‘carrots’ or wield ‘sticks’ is relevant in guaranteeing that peace processes are fully implemented.

Likewise, Zartman (2004) opines that what the negotiated peace process seeks to achieve could account for its success or failure. Negotiated peace processes that seek to address the fundamental problem of a conflict or the root causes of a conflict are seminal in their success. However, negotiated peace processes that only focus on political settlements or the cessation of hostilities are doomed to fail. Also, Rothchild (2002) explains that the success or failure of negotiated peace processes depends on the content of the peace agreement. Rothchild articulates that negotiated peace agreements that are vague, unclear, and unrealistic are difficult to implement. However, peace agreements that have objectives that are clear and achievable can be successfully implemented. A combination of these factors could account for the success or failure of every peace process.

These studies have, however, focused on only inter-state and intra-state conflicts with the most focusing on intra-state conflicts that involve government and rebel groups. These studies

have not given attention to communal conflicts or local conflicts where the state is not an active party, but a third party tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that these conflicts are resolved peacefully as is the case of the Dagbon ethnopolitical conflict in the Northern Region of Ghana. It is this gap that this research is seeking to address.

In Ghana, ethnopolitical conflicts occur quite frequently in the northern part of the country. It is estimated that about 23 of such violent conflicts took place in this region between 1980 and 2002 (Bombande, 2007). Many attempts at resolving these conflicts have not yielded the desired results as the strategies have largely been reactive, involving the use of state institutions such as security agencies and the law courts (Asiedu, 2008). One such conflict is the Dagbon Chieftaincy conflict which has been in existence since the pre-independence era.

The amenability of the conflict to many intervention strategies initiated by the state and non-state actors alike has been negative. The failure to bring finality to the conflict resulted in a clash between the two major parties – Andani Gate and Abudu Gate – in 2002 resulting in the killing and beheading of the Overlord of Dagbon Yaa-Naa Yakubu Andani II and 40 other people (Kendie et al., 2014). As a result, in 2003, the Government of Ghana, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), initiated a peace process through the Committee of Eminent Chiefs to bring sustainable peace to the Dagbon Chieftaincy conflict in northern Ghana. The process resulted in the signing of a peace agreement or Road Map (Dagbon Roadmap I) with 10 provisions for the resolution of this intra-chieftaincy conflict. Although these processes have succeeded in establishing negative peace – the absence of direct violence – positive peace or social justice (Galtung, 1996) (i.e., the presence of social equity, the fair distribution of resources and power, trust, security, equal protection and impartial enforcement of the law) is yet to be achieved. This has resulted in suspicion, mistrust, and counteraccusations as part of everyday conversations of the parties involved in these conflicts.

Except for the first two provisions of Roadmap I (which were implemented), all other issues remained outstanding from March 2006 to November 2018. For more than 10 years, the outcomes of the peace agreement (Dagbon Roadmap I) have been described as a failure or stalemate, thereby raising the question: *how can the outcome (failure) of the Dagbon Roadmap I (peace agreement) be explained?* The academic literature on this issue is decidedly unclear as research on the conflict has largely focused on understanding the causes using case study methods, with limited attention to the trajectories of the peace processes. Many scholars have

therefore found it difficult to provide an objective reality on the deadlock of the Dagbon Peace Processes. The reflection below is a demonstration of the reality that I have personally encountered as a practitioner, when confronted with the research question above:

On one sunny day namely April 13, 2012, while out in the field as a Human Security Specialist with the United Nations Development Programme Joint Human Security Project in Yendi, Northern Region of Ghana, a friend asked me a question which has since infused my thinking as a researcher and practitioner in Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS): "Why are the parties in the Dagbon conflict finding it difficult to implement the Roadmap/the peace agreement that they have willingly signed and pledged to abide by?" Although I used theories to explain the impasse to my colleague at the time, I viewed my response as unsatisfactory because it did not reflect the representation of the voices of the key stakeholders in the conflict and was therefore inadequate to develop a comprehensive conclusion. This collegial conversation eventually developed my interest in seeking to engage the major stakeholders in the implementation of the Dagbon peace processes and outcomes (Dagbon Roadmap/peace agreement I), which I have undertaken as my Ph.D. research project.

Experiences of these nature (like mine) have called for detailed research to espouse the conditions that have accounted for the deadlock of the Dagbon Peace Processes. Accordingly, this study sought to address this gap by interrogating the trajectories of the Dagbon peace processes using a critical ethnographic-case study approach.

This research is based on the social-psychological approach to negotiated peace processes. Brewer (2010) referred to this as cosmopolitan virtue - trust, tolerance, respect, and empathy among other - which is similar to the argument of Ramsbotham et al. (2016) on the need to approach peace processes from a cosmopolitan perspective. Based on these perspectives, this research interrogates the initiation and implementation of the negotiated peace processes, examining the factors that negatively impacted the process and what could be done to facilitate the successful implementation of the negotiated peace processes.

## **1.2. Research objectives and questions**

The main objective of this research is to interrogate the conditions that accounted for the failure (outcome) of Roadmap I of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftaincy conflict in the Northern Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine how the management of the peace processes influenced the outcome of Dagbon Roadmap I,
2. To discuss how the actions of third parties and political parties influenced the outcome of Dagbon Roadmap I, and,
3. To investigate the dynamics and context of the conflict that influenced the outcome of Dagbon Roadmap I.

To achieve these objectives, the research addresses the research question, what conditions have impeded the full implementation of Dagbon Roadmap I from 2006-2018? The research specifically addresses the following research questions:

1. How did management of the peace processes influence the outcomes of Dagbon Roadmap I?
2. How has the conflict environment influenced the outcomes of Dagbon Roadmap I?
3. What role have third parties and political parties played in the outcomes of the Dagbon Roadmap I?

## **1.3. Significance of the study**

The significance of this study is at different levels: academia, policymaking, and community. First, for academia, the study will contribute to the literature on peace processes. Research on peace processes has largely focused on national conflicts that involve the government and rebel groups with little attention paid to peace processes that are initiated in communal conflicts where the state is a third party. As such there is little knowledge, literature or empirical studies about the initiation and implementation of peace processes in communal conflicts. In terms of pedagogy, the research findings also assist educational instructors to understand the complexities of differences in cultures, as well as the heterogeneity and dynamic nature of culture . Recognizing these complexities help educational instructors in their communication with students during instructional sessions. With respect to the context of the study, research has largely focused on the causes and effects of the conflict. What has accounted for the delay in the

peace process has not been given the attention needed in academic research, and it is this gap that this research seeks to fill.

Second, findings from this research can improve practice in peace processes in communal conflicts; specifically, to assist the Committee of Eminent Chiefs (who have been tasked to mediate the process) as well as other stakeholders understand the gaps in the peace processes, and take necessary measures to address these gaps. The study also provides policy direction for the initiation and implementation of peace processes in other communal conflicts in Ghana. Likewise, the study draws our attention to the fact that, while it is imperative to use indigenous practices in the resolution of communal conflicts, indigenous institutions and structures sometimes become the foundation of these communal conflicts because some political actors may use them nefariously to maintain their interests and agenda. Within the community, this study most significantly provides the space for the voices of the participants and the community at large to be heard. It projects and amplifies the voices of the stakeholders, especially the vulnerable such as women, people with disabilities and the youth.

#### **1.4. Structure of the thesis**

The thesis is divided into eight chapters. Chapter one is the introduction and focuses on outlining the background to the study, the research problem, research objectives, research questions as well as the significance and limitations of the study. In Chapter two, the context of the conflict is of interest. Specifically, this chapter discusses the people, the traditional political system, the dynamics of the conflict namely the emergence, escalation, and de-escalation of conflict, and then the peacemaking and conflict resolution efforts. Chapter three is the literature review. Included in this chapter are issues of conceptual clarity around the key concepts underpinning the study - conflict, peace processes, and intragroup conflict. Also, discussed in this chapter are some of the theories outlining peacemaking processes and the literature on conditions explaining the success and failure of peace processes.

Chapter four is an outline of the methodological framework for the study. Of particular focus is the strategy of inquiry, philosophical and theoretical paradigms, study site and the participants, sampling procedures and sample size, recruitment, and data sources. Also discussed in this chapter are the data analysis plan and strategy as well as ethical considerations. Chapters five, six and seven entail the presentation of empirical data and the discussion of the findings.

Specifically, Chapter five focuses on the role and influence of third parties in explaining the deadlock of the Roadmap or peace processes. Chapter six describes the deadlock of the Roadmap from the standpoint of the peace processes itself, while Chapter seven explores the deadlock of the Roadmap from the dimension of the context of the conflict. In Chapter eight, the overall key findings of the study, future research, and implications for policy are discussed.

### **1.5. Conclusion**

Since the inception of the Dagbon conflict, many conflict resolution strategies adopted to find a lasting solution to the dispute did not yield the desired results. This culminated in the March 2002 clashes that resulted in the death of Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II and 40 other people. The aftermath of this incident was the establishment of a Committee of Eminent Chiefs, tasked with the responsibility of developing a comprehensive peace process for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. The outcome of the Committee's work was the Dagbon Roadmap I, which was to serve as the framework for the resolution of the conflict. There was, however, a deadlock in the implementation of Roadmap I after the implementation of the first two provisions thereby raising a critical question, *how can the outcome (failure) of Dagbon Roadmap I (peace agreement) be explained?* The goal of this research, therefore, is to understand from the perspectives of the key stakeholders the conditions that have accounted for the deadlock. To achieve this goal, it is imperative to provide a contextual analysis of the conflict for readers to appreciate the dynamics and complexities of the Dagbon conflict. The next chapter, therefore, discusses the context of the Dagbon conflict.

## Chapter 2

### **Context of the study: The people, the socio-cultural systems, and the conflict dynamics**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

To appreciate the trajectory of the peace processes (Roadmap I) that were initiated to resolve the Dagbon ethnopolitical conflict, it is imperative to explore some aspects of the context that shape the conflict and the peace processes. Chapter two therefore discusses some of the contextual issues that are relevant to the study. First, the chapter explores the people of Dagbon including their origin, language, religion, demography, and some cultural facets of the society. Second, the chapter discusses the traditional political system of Dagbon including the institutions, systems, processes, and structure. Third, the chapter highlights the dynamics of the conflict such as the emergence, escalation, and de-escalation of the Dagbon ethnopolitical conflict. The last section of the chapter is an exploration of the peacemaking and conflict resolution efforts. The chapter ends with a conclusion, which focuses on drawing on some key issues within the context that are relevant in the discussion of the trajectory of the peace processes.

#### **2.2. The people of Dagbon**

The people of the Dagbon Kingdom are called the Dagbamba but pronounced Dagomba by non-natives of the Kingdom of Dagbon and are found mainly in the heart of the Northern Region of Ghana, located within the Volta basin of Northern Ghana (Tonah, 2012). The Dagbambas are considered the largest ethnic group in the Northern Region of Ghana. The main language of the Dagombas is the Dagbani language, which is a sub-category of the Mole-Dagbani category of languages which belong to the Gur language group (Tsikata & Seini, 2004).

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census of Ghana, Dagombas constituted about 1,012,108 representing about 41 percent of the total population of the Northern Region of Ghana (2,468,557). Dagbambas (Dagombas) are predominantly Muslims since the time of Naa Zangina (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013). Islam plays a key role in the cultural and traditional setup of the Dagbon Kingdom. For instance, some Imams are appointed into the Gbewaa Palace by the Ya-Na and given royal titles and responsibilities (Staniland, 1975). However, there are other religions such as Christianity and Ancestry worship, which are in the minority (Awedoba, 2009). The major economic activity engaged by the people of Dagbon is agriculture which

involves the cultivation of crops and livestock production, with a few engaged in administrative, executive, managerial, professional, technical, and other related activities (Staniland, 1975; Tonah, 2012).

Oral tradition has it that the Dagbambas (Dagombas) are originally from the ancient Kingdom of Mali and they moved towards the south to establish their hegemony in their present-day location, the Dagbon Kingdom, through the wars and assassinations that resulted in the conquering of autochthon groups (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011). The Dagbon Kingdom is said to have been established in 1403 by Naa Sitobue, following the dismemberment of the Gbewaa Kingdom. The male descendants of the Naa Gbewaa migrated to establish new Kingdoms, namely Moshi, Dagbon, Mamprugu, and Nanum (Staniland, 1975).

The Dagbon Kingdom subsequently expanded to become the largest of the four Kingdoms. Currently, it occupies about 9,611 square miles of the savannah plains. The Kingdom shares boundaries with the Konkomba to the east, the Mamprusi to the north, and the Nanumba to the south. Their other neighbours are the Gonjas, Tampolensi, and Chokosi (Staniland, 1975). The Dagombas, therefore, came to their current territory as conquerors to establish the Dagbon traditional state and brought with them the institution of chieftaincy, which did not exist among the original inhabitants of the land. The Dagbon traditional city is Yendi where the Ya-Na (the King of Dagbon) resides (Tsikata & Seini, 2004). The modern political centre of Dagbon, however, is Tamale, the Northern Regional capital (MacGaffey, 2006).

### **2.3. The socio-cultural systems**

The socio-cultural system of Dagbon comprises the social, political, cultural, and economic systems. These systems are intertwined. For this discussion, the focus is on the political system. The political structure of Dagbon is a state society with a centralized authority in the person of the Ya-Na, which means the King of absolute power and who resides in Yendi, the traditional capital of the Kingdom (Fortes & Evans-Pritchard, 1940). The Ya-Na represents the symbol of authority of the Kingdom of Dagbon and his symbol is that of the lion. As the overlord of the Kingdom, the Ya-Na among others things performs judiciary functions, appoints chiefs and elders, and conducts the administration of the state with the support of his elders and other chiefs (Staniland, 1975). Also, all lands within the Kingdom are under the control of Ya-Na, who acts as the custodian and trustee of the people and head of authority of the Kingdom. The Ya-Na also

has the sole right to officiate the celebration of the Damba and Eid-ul Adha festivals (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011).

The political structure of the Kingdom is hierarchical because under the Ya-Na (King), there are hierarchies of chiefdoms and a complex network of dynastic politics. The Kingdom is divided into three provinces, namely Karaga, Mion and Savelugu, and these provinces are ruled by royal dukes (Staniland, 1975). Each of these provinces is sub-divided. The political structure of the Dagbon Kingdom has several levels of authority that start with Ya-Na (kingship) to paramount, divisional, sub-divisional, and settlement levels (Staniland, 1975).

Promotion within the political structure is limited to young men of royal blood who climb the ladder of the political structure through appointments to small villages and move upwards until they reach the divisional towns and the ultimate, which is Namship/Ya-Na (Yendi Skin<sup>1</sup>) as well. This procedure implies that only sons of a Ya-Na could become a Ya-Na, and that no man can rise above his father (Staniland, 1975). The Ya-Na has the authority to appoint chiefs from the qualified royal groups to occupy large settlements as paramount chiefs. For example, the Ya-Na appoints chiefs to places such as Karaga, Mion, Savelugu, Tamale, Tolon, Gushiegu, Nanton, Nyankpala, and Sagnerigu among others. These chiefs, in turn, appoint divisional chiefs for settlements that are under their jurisdiction (Staniland, 1975).

The political system of the Dagbon Kingdom is structured along chiefdoms and is described as hierarchical. For that reason, royals who are appointed chiefs at the divisional, sub-divisional, and smaller settlements aspire to become paramount chiefs of major towns, and if it is the gateway to the kingship (Mion, Karaga, and Savelugu) one could rise to become the Ya-Na (Brukum, 2004). To be considered for the ultimate position of Ya-Na, a royal must first occupy one of the Gates Skins, namely Mion, Karaga, and Savelugu. Only occupants of these skins are eligible to contest for the Yendi skin. However, there have been situations where Regents have risen to occupy the Yendi skin without occupying any of the three Gates Skins (Staniland, 1975).

In addition to the chiefs who are appointed to paramountcies, sub-paramountcies and smaller settlements, some chiefs<sup>2</sup> are also appointed to perform certain administrative functions

<sup>1</sup> Skin is the term used to describe the throne of kings and chiefs in Northern Ghana while stool is used in the Southern part of the country. The type of skin utilized is gotten from the animal that represents the significance of the king. It is the skin of a lion in the case of the Yaa-Naa.

<sup>2</sup> Some of these chiefs include the Kuga Na, who is the principal adviser to the Ya-Na; the Zohe Na is the principal counsellor to the Ya-Na; the Kum-Lana is the official Counsellor of the Ya-

within the Kingdom and for the Ya-Na. These appointed chiefs are responsible for the Kingship. Some of these offices are also hereditary, such as the Kuga Na. Although the political structure is highly patriarchal, female chiefs are also appointed by the Ya-Na. For instance, within the Kingdom, five posts are purposely reserved for daughters of the paramountcies. These women occupy positions such as Gundogo and Kpatuya and are only eligible after passing menopause (Staniland, 1975).

Succession to the Yendi throne is very competitive and sometimes bedeviled with disputes such as the rights of the candidates to the skin, and conflicting accounts on the proper procedures and crucial elements of the selection processes (Staniland, 1975). Also, the chieftaincy institution is one of the revered institutions of the Dagbon Kingdom. The people of Dagbon are strongly attached to the institution, which largely accounts for the high intensity of conflicts that occur over chieftaincy (Ladouceur, 1972) such as the Abudu-Andani conflict over the Yendi Skin, which is the subject of this study. The next section discusses the dynamics of the Dagbon conflict from its emergence to de-escalation.

#### **2.4. The dynamics of the conflict**

This section aims to contribute to our understanding of the context of the Dagbon conflict by discussing the dynamics of one of the communal conflicts in the political history of Ghana, the Dagbon Chieftaincy conflict, using the empirical and theoretical literature.

The Dagbon ethnopolitical conflict is situated in the Dagbon traditional kingdom<sup>3</sup> of the Northern Region of Ghana. The conflict is a chieftaincy dispute between two royal families of the same lineage - the Abudus and Andanis – over the selection of the Ya-Na/Yaa-Naa<sup>4</sup>. The parties also contest the procedure for the selection of the king, as well as the institutions or persons whose responsibility it is to do the selection (Awedoba, 2009; Tsikata & Seini, 2004).

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Na; the Mbadugu is the Ya-Na's official linguist; and the Tuguri-Nam is the fetish priest (Staniland, 1975).

<sup>3</sup> A Kingdom within the context of Ghana is defined as a territory that has a centralized form of authority or state (Daannaa, 1994) and chiefs of these territories are sometimes referred to as kings.

<sup>4</sup> Ya-Na/Yaa-Naa is the title given to the King of Dagbon. There is no agreed-on spelling of the title of the king. Some of the literature uses Ya-Na whilst others utilize Yaa-Naa. For this study, both spellings are used interchangeably.

This section explores the conflict cycle with a specific focus on the emergence, escalation, and de-escalation of conflict as well as peacemaking processes.

## **2.5. The emergence of the conflict**

The emergence of every conflict is induced by factors internal and external to the context of the conflict. A review of the empirical literature on the Dagbon conflict reveals several causes. The underlying causes of the conflict relate more to the structural makeup of the chieftaincy institution of Dagbon, concerning cultural practices that border on eligibility, legitimacy, and proper enskinment procedures (Kendie et al., 2014; Mahama & Longi, 2013; Weiss, 2007). The institution of chieftaincy is an important cultural setup defining the identity of Dagbon. Procedures for selecting the Ya-Na, as well as the enskinment processes and eligibility, are defined and outlined by culture.

However, cultural practices relating to eligibility, legitimacy, and the enskinment procedure have been interpreted differently by both contending parties. This concurs with Avruch's (2012) observation that misinterpretations as well as the different interpretations of culture whether within the same ethnic group or different ethnic groups are at the forefront of many conflicts. In the Dagbon conflict, the two parties have different perspectives and worldviews about shared cultural practices relating to the chieftaincy institution.

Some empirical studies on the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict have identified the procedure for the selection of the successor to the skin as one of the underlying causes of the conflict (Ladouceur, 1972; Staniland, 1973; Tsikata & Seini, 2004). Both royal families disagree on two issues: the rightful person or structure to select the Ya-Na (Tsikata & Seini, 2004) as well as the enskinment process itself (Ladouceur, 1972). The initial structure or procedure for the selection of a Ya-Na rested on the Soothsayer and three elders - the Kuga Na, Tuguri-Nam, and Gombi (Staniland, 1973). This was the selection procedure until the 1920s when the British occupied the traditional area as part of the annexation of the northern territories (Staniland, 1973).

The introduction of indirect rule witnessed the advent of a local educated elite who were mostly sons of chiefs who had benefited from colonial educational policies. This had a telling impact on the traditional political system because local educated elite became part of the traditional political system and subsequently requested a change in the structure of the traditional political system (Albert, 2008; Debrah et al., 2014). MacGaffey (2006) notes that

The idea of a democracy caught on with educated Ghanaians, some of whom, affiliated with the Abudu house, apparently pushed through the State Council of Dagbon on 12 May 1948 for a change in the rules of succession to the throne, the skin of Yendi<sup>5</sup>, to make it a matter of election by a committee of chiefs and elders rather than, as in the past, a choice by specially consulted oracles (p. 82).

This culminated in a change in the selection procedure of the Ya-Na in 1948 with an agreement with the colonial administration (MacGaffey, 2006). The new procedure involved selection by a committee of seven chiefs (two royal and five common divisional chiefs) plus four elders (including the three previously responsible for the selection of the Ya-Na) (MacGaffey, 2006).

Whilst the Abudu Royal Gate favour the new system because the old system was replaced in 1948 based on an agreement with the colonial administration, the Andani Royal Gate support the old system with the argument that the new system infringes upon the traditions and cultures of the Dagbon Kingdom (MacGaffey, 2012; Ladouceur, 1972). After the death of Ya-Na Abudulai III in 1967, both Royal families enskinned their respective candidates as Ya-Na through both approaches elaborated upon above.

The Mion-Lana<sup>6</sup> Andani was chosen as the Ya-Na by the Soothsayer and the three elders while the Gbon-lana<sup>7</sup>, Mahamadu Abudulai, was chosen by the selection committee as the Ya-Na (MacGaffey, 2006). The different interpretations that the two royal families bring to bear on the selection and enskinment of the Ya-Na thus indicate a lack of consensus in this regard. This corroborates the view of Pruitt and Kim (2004) that when groups lack normative consensus, there is the likelihood that members will have incompatible goals, which can lead to conflict.

The second structural condition pertaining to the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict relates more to the person's eligibility to the Skin (Throne). In other words, there are varied views and opinions by the families concerning the rules of succession (Ladouceur, 1972). In some instances, it is stated that only the sons of a former Ya-Na occupying one of the "Gate Skins" of Savelugu, Karaga or Mion<sup>8</sup> could be chosen as Ya-Na. On other occasions, it is stated that only the sons of a Ya-Na are eligible. A Regent, at some point in the history of Dagbon, has also

<sup>5</sup> Yendi is the headquarters of the Dagbon Kingdom and the seat of the Ya-Na. It is also where the Gbewaa palace is situated.

<sup>6</sup> The Mion-Lana is the Chief of Mion, one of the Skin Gates to the position of Ya-Na

<sup>7</sup> The Gbon-Lana is the Regent, usually the elder son of a deceased Ya-Na.

<sup>8</sup> Savelugu, Karaga, and Mion are the three communities with sub-chiefs under the Ya-Na. From these three Skin Gates, a Ya-Na is selected.

contested and become Ya-Na (Ladouceur, 1972). The lack of clarity on the eligibility criteria has led to different interpretations or opinions on the rules of succession by the two families, and this remains one of the underpinning factors of the conflict (MacGaffey, 2006).

For instance, after the death of Mahama III from the Abudu Royal Family, it was the turn of the Andani Royal Family based on the principle of rotation. This was however not the case, as Abudulai III, who was the Regent<sup>9</sup>, succeeded his father as King of Dagbon (Debrah et al., 2014). The Andani Family protested the enskinment of Abudulai III as Ya-Na. One of the arguments put forward by the Andani Royal Family was that Abudulai III did not occupy any of the Skins of the three gates from which the Ya-Na is traditionally selected (Ladouceur, 1972). The differences between both royal families are largely a result of the lack of clarity in the culture of Dagbon regarding the rules of succession. This has created the opportunity for different interpretations to be assigned to the existing rules of succession.

Disagreements between the two families on the rules of succession and who is eligible to be Ya-Na culminated in a meeting between the first President of the Republic of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and the Dagomba Chiefs in 1960 (Debrah et al., 2014). The purpose of that meeting was to outline appropriate and eligible rules of succession. The outcome of the negotiation was the creation of a Legislative Instrument (L.I. 59 of 1960). L.I. 59 limited succession to the Yendi Skin to only the Abudulai and Andani Families on a rotational basis, and was considered by many as a pragmatic approach to addressing the different interpretations applied to the rules of succession (Debrah et al., 2014).

However, the overthrow of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and his government eventually made L.I 59 redundant when it was revoked by the new military regime in 1966 (Debrah et al., 2014). Several decades later, however, the Supreme Court's judgement of 1986 by majority decision reaffirmed the legality of L.I. 59 as the appropriate rule of succession (Debrah et al., 2014). Although the ruling of the Supreme Court is thought to have brought finality to the differences in opinion with respect to the rules of succession, the families' reluctance to adhere to the rotational system raises serious concerns regarding the commitment of the parties to their own agreed rules.

The third factor underpinning the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict is the closely related issue of challenges to legitimacy between the two royal families (MacGaffey, 2006; Tonah, 2012;

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<sup>9</sup> The Regent is the caretaker King after the death of a Ya-Na and supervises the funeral rites of the dead Ya-Na. The Regent is usually the elder son of the deceased Ya-Na.

Ahorsu, 2014; Weiss, 2007). Relying on their different interpretations, worldviews, and opinions on the procedures of selection and enskinment of a Ya-Na as well as the rules of succession to the Skin, each family has challenged the legitimacy of any Ya-Na coming from the other Gate (McGaffey, 2006; Tonah, 2012). For instance, in 1967, after the death of Ya-Na Abudulai III from the Abudu Royal Gate, his son attempted to succeed him by sidestepping the rotational principle.

The kingmakers, based on the principle of rotation, however, selected Mion Lana Andani as the Ya-Na (Tsikata & Seini, 2004). The legitimacy of Mion Lana Andani as Ya-Na was challenged by the Abudu Royal Gate (Ladouceur, 1972; Albert, 2008). The challenge was made in a petition to the government of the Progress Party led by Dr. Busia in 1969. The government upheld the petition of the Abudu Royal Gate based on the conclusion of the Mate Kole Report, which rejected L.I. 59. The outcome of the government's decree was the forceful removal of the Andani royal family from the palace and the enskinment of Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai III as Ya-Na (MacGaffey, 2006; Ladouceur, 1972).

Similarly, in 1972, the Andanis challenged the legitimacy of Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai III through a petition to the military government of the National Redemption Council (NRC). The appeal was upheld by the Ollenu Commission, which was set up by the military government to look into the issue. The Commission declared that the enskinment of Mahamadu Abudulai III as Ya-Na was illegal, and he should be replaced by the Andani candidate, Ya-Na Yakubu II (MacGaffey, 2006). There was also a counter appeal by the Abudu royal family with regards to the legitimacy of Ya-Na Yakubu II through the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) and the supreme court, yet the appeal was rejected, while the findings of the Ollenu Commission and the enskinment of Ya-Na Yakubu were upheld (MacGaffey, 2006; Tonah, 2012).

The narrative above reveals two important dilemmas that are worth reflecting upon. In the first place, the value placed on the institution of chieftaincy has made the aspiration to the skin prestigious and cumbersome. This observation is in tandem with Pruitt and Kim's (2004) argument that when people place a high value on something, be it a territory or political position, they will value it more and want to possess it especially if it is scarce. When situations of this nature do arise, there are higher aspirations to acquire the item in question. Also, the processes of acquiring the item become rigid and more cumbersome (Pruitt & Kim, 2004).

The signification of the Dagbon chieftaincy institution through colonialism and the post-colonial government has made aspirations to the skin very competitive and uncompromising. All lands in Dagbon, for instance, are vested in the Ya-Na. In addition, the Ya-Na has the authority to appoint and enskin other sub-chiefs (Ahorsu, 2014). The significance of the Skin at both the national and local levels, as well as the political influence of the Ya-Na, has made it problematic for one family to pass on the title to another (Ahorsu, 2014). Although ultimate power is vested in the Ghanaian state (the executive arm of government) and decentralized to local government structures, traditional authorities still wield a lot of power and influence within their areas of jurisdictions and sometimes beyond. These traditional institutions are more revered by the people. Also, kings and chiefs have the powers to take decisions without consulting the state/government/local government authority. For example, on July 12, 2020 the Ya-Na gave the police commander of the Yendi divisional police command a one day ultimatum to leave Yendi for disrespecting his orders which was complied by the police commander and the national police authority (Anaba & Alabira, 2020).

Moreover, the narrative demonstrates the potential of traditional structures and cultural practices to ignite conflict situations especially when parties have different interpretations and values ascribed to these structures and practices. Traditional structures and cultural practices do play an important role in the development of society. However, these structures and practices have become the basis for conflicts in most societies as the case of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict shows (Ahorsu, 2014). It is based on this and other examples that Mac Ginty (2011) argues that it is imperative not to over-romanticize traditional structures and cultural resources because such resources are sometimes oppressive and could be abused by unscrupulous leaders. This is not to suggest that traditional structures and cultural practices are in themselves oppressive or abusive. It is how these structures and practices are interpreted, viewed, and implemented in society that could determine whether they are oppressive or abusive.

The bases of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict are found in the structural makeup of the chieftaincy institution of the Kingdom. This makeup proffers some structural deficiencies relating to the procedures for the selection and enskinment of a Ya-Na, the rules of succession, and the legitimacy of any of the royal families to occupy the Skin. These structural deficiencies have become enablers of the conflict and constraints to peacemaking in the Kingdom (Ahorsu, 2014). The structure of the chieftaincy institution has shaped existing relationships between the

two royal gates as well as the relationship between the royal gates and the national political structure. These two outcomes have in turn played a significant role in the escalation and de-escalation of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict.

## **2.6. Escalation and de-escalation of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict**

Every conflict cycle is characterized by escalation and de-escalation (Kriesberg & Dayton, 2012). This section seeks to understand the escalation and de-escalation of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict. Specifically, the section explains some of the factors that have accounted for the escalation and de-escalation of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict.

### ***2.6.1. Escalation of the Dagbon conflict: The contributing factors***

The inability of the parties to constructively address the structural conditions underlying the conflict has often led to the conflict becoming intense and destructive. It is at this point that escalation is said to have set in (Pruitt & Kim, 2004). Escalation according to Maiese (2003) is the “increase in the intensity of a conflict and in the severity of the tactics used in pursuing it” (p. 2). When escalation sets in during a conflict situation, there is a movement from the application of light to heavy tactics such as threats and open violence, expansion of the issues underlying the conflict, movement from specific to general issues, and deterioration of relationships (Pruitt & Kim, 2004). In addition, during the course of conflict escalation, more parties are drawn into the conflict and the goal of the parties is to hurt each other (Maiese, 2003).

Since the inception of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict, it has escalated even to the point where the application of violence became part of the strategy to address the conflict. The escalation per se is not induced by the structural conditions of the chieftaincy system, but by other factors such as the psychological dynamics of the parties, changes in relations between the parties, and group dynamics (Pruitt & Kim, 2004; Kriesberg & Dayton, 2012; Zartman & Faure, 2005). The escalation of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict is a product of the interplay of several factors such as politicization and political interference by the state, the power asymmetry of the two royal gates, the social-psychological dynamics of the parties, as well as the relationship dynamics of the parties.

Third party or external interference such as political interference by the colonial administration and the post-colonial state, according to the empirical literature, is one external factor in this regard (Albert, 2008; Tonah, 2012; MacGaffey, 2006; Staniland, 1973). In the

colonial times, the British administration's quest to change the procedures for the selection of the Ya-Na was critical in inducing the escalation of the conflict. This was done through the codification of the Dagomba constitution and the amendment of the 1948 Dagomba Succession Constitution (Staniland, 1973; Bolaji, 2016). The two acts created what Bolaji (2016) referred to as a constitutional crisis in Dagbon. In the first place, the 1930 constitution was inadequate in its prescription of the selection procedure, whilst the 1948 Dagomba Constitution lacked legitimacy in the selection of the Ya-Na (Bolaji, 2016).

Likewise, the creation of the native authority in Yendi paved the way for the involvement of the local educated elite in the traditional political system of Dagbon (Staniland, 1973). This elite demanded changes in the chieftaincy structure of Dagbon including the procedures of selection, without taking into consideration the culture and traditional practices of Dagbon (Staniland, 1973). Although the major intent of the British colonial administration in Yendi was that of stability, through the correct interpretation of the procedures of selection, it was not done within the full context of the culture and tradition of Dagbon (Weiss, 2007). It was subjected to the will and vision of the colonial administration toward the traditional political system of Dagbon (Weiss, 2007). The outcome of the actions of the colonial policy of indirect rule/native authorities was "a challenge to the traditional constitution on three vital matters: who was qualified to become king; who was responsible for the selection of the king; and how power was distributed within the Kingdom" (Staniland, 1975, p. 106).

In addition, the introduction of indirect rule in the Northern Territories elevated the status of the Ya-Na culminating in higher stakes in the chiefdom. According to Ahorsu (2014) "indirect rule added qualitative value to the stature of the chiefs and chieftaincy as an institution" (p. 102). As a result, parties interested in the skin tried to circumvent the process by interpreting the procedures or rules of engagement to match their interest or ambition. This not only led to the escalation of the conflict but also its sustenance (Ahorsu, 2014).

Political influence and interference in the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict became intense in the postcolonial era. The strategic position of the Ya-Na and his authority in the Northern Region attracted many political parties to the area (Tonah, 2012). Likewise, the local educated elite especially those from the two royal families exploited the opportunities that the postcolonial political class offered. The outcome was the introduction of national politics into the Dagbon

chieftaincy crisis with the two royal gates allying themselves to the United Party and the Convention Peoples Party respectively (Ahorsu, 2014; Ladouceur, 1972; Tonah, 2012).

The first post-colonial government, the CPP, although allied to the Andani royal family, in its quest to make political gains in the Northern Region considered it unwise to interfere in the political crisis of Dagbon and especially to dethrone a Ya-Na (Rathbone, 2000). Consequentially, the request of the Andani royal family to their political ally for the removal of Ya-Na Abudulai III was not implemented even though the Justice Opoku-Afari Commission had established that the Andanis had a case (Tonah, 2012).

The outcome of the Commission's work was the passage of L.I. 59, 1960, which restored the Andani-Abudu rotational system (Ahorsu, 2014). After the overthrow of the CPP government by the National Liberation Council (NLC), there were no drastic changes in Dagbon chieftaincy until the death of Ya-Na Abudulai III and the subsequent selection of the Mion-Lana Andani by the soothsayer as Ya-Na Andani III (Ahorsu, 2014; Tonah, 2012; MacGaffey, 2006; Ladouceur, 1972). After the death of Ya-Na Andani III in 1969, his eldest son was installed as the Gbon-Lana and later projected as Ya-Na by the Andani family (Debrah et al., 2014).

The installation of Yakubu as Gbon-Lana and his subsequent recognition as Ya-Na by the Andani royal family was challenged by the Abudu royal family through a petition to the NLC, which consequently set aside L.I. 59 and set up the Mate-Kole Committee to look into the matter. The Committee among other things reversed L.I. 59 and declared that the enskinment of Ya-Na Andani III was "null and void" (Ahorsu, 2014, p. 106). The findings of the report, however, were not made public nor implemented. Upon assumption of office of the Progress Party, an ally to the Abudu royal family, the findings of the Mate-Kole report were made public and implemented in 1969. The Abudu royal family with support from the state security apparatus – both police and military – ejected the Andani family from the Gbewaa palace paving the way for the installation of Prince Mahamadu Abudulai as Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV. The outcome of this action was the massacre of 35 members of the Andani family in 1969 (Ahorsu, 2014).

The overthrow of the Progress Party government by the National Redemption Council (NRC) in 1972 brought another dimension of political interference to the Dagbon crisis. The NRC upon the receipt of an appeal from the Andani family set up the Ollenu Committee in 1972 to determine the legitimacy of Ya-Na Andani III and Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV (Debrah et

al., 2014). The Committee recommended the recognition of Ya-Na Andani III as the legitimate Ya-Na and for the dethronement of Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV. The Committee also indirectly supported the rotational system as prescribed by L.I. 59 (Tonah, 2012; Ahorsu, 2014). As a result, Ya-Na Yakubu was enskinned as Ya-Na and Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai became ex-Ya-Na. This event created a serious cultural crisis in Dagbon (MacGaffey, 2006). Per the culture of Dagbon, a Ya-Na once enskinned cannot be disposed of or removed from the skin, unless he dies, or he is ostracised from the community (Ahorsu, 2014).

From 1986 when the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) came into power up until 2001, there were no major escalations regarding the Dagbon conflict although the PNDC and subsequently the NDC appeared to be on the side of the Andanis (Kirby, 2007). What was however significant during that period was the ruling of the Supreme court in 1986, which upheld the Ollenu Committee Report and that of Yakubu Andani as Ya-Na. It was not until 2001 after the election victory of the NPP that the Abudu Gate began exercising some political authority in Yendi (MacGaffey, 2006; Tonah, 2012). The Bolin-Lana of the Abudu Gate for instance began taking decisions that were the sole prerogative of Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II (MacGaffey, 2006; Tonah, 2012). Some have suggested that the NPP made a promise to the Abudu Gate to perform the funeral of Mahamadu Abudulai IV and oust Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II, should they win the elections and come into power (Kirby, 2007; MacGaffey, 2006).

The outcome of political interference in Dagbon Chieftaincy reached its zenith with another massacre of Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II and forty of his elders on March 27, 2002 (Asiedu, 2008; Ahorsu and Gebe, 2011; Kirby, 2007). There was an apparent failure on the part of the state to protect the King and his elders. It is also maintained in some quarters that the NPP government provided support for the Abudu Gate and was on the verge of fulfilling their promise to the Abudu family (MacGaffey, 2006; Debrah et al., 2014; Ahorsu, 2014; Tonah, 2012; Kirby, 2007). It was concluded that within the context of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict, the Andani Royal Gate evolved from a pro-CPP to a pro-NDC group while the Abudu Royal Gate evolved from a pro-PP to a pro-NPP group (Weiss, 2007). The various political regimes, instead of acting as third parties and providing or creating conducive platforms for the peaceful resolution of the conflict, are seen to have inflamed the conflict. These regimes stand accused of using the conflict as an opportunity to execute and further their political ambitions (Kendie et al., 2014; Kirby, 2007; Weiss, 2007). The active involvement of the state as an ally has therefore made it

practically impossible to be a neutral intermediary in the conflict. Religious institutions and CSOs are therefore considered appropriate external intermediaries in the conflict.

The active involvement of a third party, such as the state, resulted in the over-politicization of the conflict as well as regime manipulations of the conflict, the outcome of which has been the continuous escalation of the conflict (Weiss, 2007). This observation is in line with the position of Kriesberg (1998) and Bose (2007) that the involvement of other parties, especially third parties, in a conflict can increase the capacity of the conflict escalating. Kriesberg notes that outside parties may see the conflict as an opportunity to maximize some benefits or retaliate an older wrong by an enemy or former ally.

The involvement of third parties could be direct (such as by sending troops) or indirect (by providing material and political support). Likewise, conflicts tend to escalate when parties believe that they have external or outside support (Pruitt & Kim, 2004; Ramsbotham et al., 2016; Mitchell, 2014). Citing the case of the Israel-Palestine conflict, Pruitt and Kim (2004) observe that the escalation of the conflict in 2000 was a result of the support provided by the US and the Arab world to the Israelis and Palestinians respectively. Similarly, the support received by the Greek Cypriot paramilitary from Greece and Turkey was instrumental in the continuity of the Cyprus conflict (Byrne, 2006). We can infer, therefore, that external support provided by the state to one or the other party at each point of the conflict has contributed immensely to its escalation.

Other authors have attributed the escalation of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict to factors internal to the parties (Ahorsu, 2014; Weiss, 2007). These factors include the commitment of the two parties to their goals, entrapment, negative attitudes, selective perceptions as well as attributional distortions. These factors are referred to as the “social-psychological processes” (Kriesberg & Dayton, 2012, p. 145) or “psychological changes” (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 102). Since the inception of the conflict, both parties, the Abudu and Andani Royal Gates, have taken entrenched positions and goals that they are committed to. The identity and existence of the lineage of each of the parties are highly tied to the outcome of the conflict. For the parties, the paramount goal is to ensure that they each become and remain relevant within the chieftaincy institution. The fear of extinction and identity cleansing within the Dagbon chieftaincy front has led the parties to make uncompromising commitments (Ahorsu, 2014).

To this end, the parties have developed narratives that seek to justify or give credence to their positions (Weiss, 2007). The historical narrative of the rules of succession and procedures of selection of a Ya-Na are interpreted differently by the two parties. The Andani perspective of the history of succession is different from that of the Abudu (Weiss, 2007). In addition to the narratives, the parties' commitment to their goals is amply reflected in the drive to court external support for their efforts, that have largely been successful. To gain the necessary political support for their ambitions, the two royal families have allied themselves to the major political parties since the postcolonial era (Weiss, 2007; Tonah, 2012; MacGaffey, 2006).

The commitment of the parties to their goals, coupled with their justifications as contained in their narratives regarding the chieftaincy structure as well as their recourse to external support, contributes to the escalation of the conflict and to a zero-sum approach to the resolution of the conflict (Debrah et al., 2014; Ahorsu, 2014). With external support, which alternates the power asymmetries of the parties, the application of violence in waging the conflict is always considered an alternative. Kriesberg and Dayton (2012) argue that when parties are committed to an action, they develop mental narratives to justify their actions. This becomes even more entrenched when the parties lose something in the course of undertaking the action or when the parties have committed resources to the action. At this point, the parties place a value on the action and justify it (Kriesberg & Dayton, 2012). Similarly, Jeong (2008) notes that the commitment of a party to a conflict is justified on the grounds of previous investments, and as such, withdrawing is not considered an option even when it is evident that one cannot win.

Related to the above is the sacrificial trap or entrapment that has characterized the conflict. Sacrificial trap or entrapment according to Mitchell (2014) "is the process by which parties in conflict especially their leaders become trapped into a course of action that involves continuity or intensifying the conflict with apparently no chance of changing policy or backing away" (p.74). Sacrificial trap within the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict is undeniably one of the factors contributing to the escalation of the conflict. Since the inception of the conflict, the numerous peacemaking processes initiated by both state and non-state actors have brought no end to the conflict. Rather the parties have resorted to continuing the conflict and have taken advantage of any opportunity to alter the power dynamics and to escalate the conflict (Ahorsu, 2014). For instance, from the post-colonial period to 2001, the parties have often taken the

advantage of a change in government to appeal for the removal of a sitting Ya-Na (Weiss, 2007; Tonah, 2012).

The entrapment of the parties in the conflict is attributable to its long duration as well as the material and human resources that both royal families have committed to the conflict. The parties see this as a cost as well as an investment that is worth protecting and defending. In addition to the spiral of defeats suffered by both parties, there is an element of pride, including face-saving that each party is contesting to protect (Weiss, 2007). Mitchell (2014) underscores the point that entrapment dynamics are a result of face-saving, the desire of parties to protect their positions and influence as well as the unwillingness to admit to mistakes. The active and continuous engagement of the two royal families in the conflict since pre-independence times through to the post-independence era has created a "sacrificial trap" thereby making it difficult for the parties to compromise and agree to a sustainable peace process.

This is evident in the actions and reactions of both royal families to the current peace processes under the auspices of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs. The peace accord signed by the leaders of the two royal families is more focused on protecting the interest of the parties instead of on a reconciliatory or transformative objective (Ahorsu, 2014). The two parties, therefore, consider withdrawal as indicating that their past struggles were an exercise in futility. To that end, they prefer to continue the conflict (see Jeong 2008). In such situations, the only viable option for the parties is total commitment to continue the conflict, which escalates the struggle (see Maiese, 2004; Kriesberg, 1998).

Moreover, others have argued that the negative attitudes and perceptions of both parties in the conflict have significantly contributed to escalation (Ahorsu, 2014; MacGaffey, 2006; Azuimah, 2011). Such attitudes include hostile feelings towards the other group (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 106); perceptions include constructed understandings of the group based in part on data gathered with their senses (Bar-Tal, 2013), such as data about interactions, verbal threats, power asymmetries and resource distribution (Azuimah, 2011).

The attitude of both the Andani and Abudu Gates towards each other appears to be one of negativity. Particularly at points where one party considers that the power asymmetry is balanced in its favour, a hostile attitude is expressed toward the other. For example, the attitude of an educated local elite toward the chieftaincy structure and for that matter, the succession procedure of soothsaying has tended to be one of ambivalence, which has culminated in the change of the

procedure to a selection committee (Albert, 2008). Also, the negative attitude of the parties towards each other is evident in the numerous appeals made by each of the Gates to their allies at the national level for the removal of their rival as Ya-Na (Weiss, 2007). Likewise, it is exhibited in the current peace processes, which have partly contributed to the present deadlock.

Similarly, both royal gates have developed negative perceptions of each other. Each of the gates holds the perception that the rival is bad and capable of causing harm or attacking at the least provocation (Ahorsu, 2014). This has often resulted in hostile reactions to the activities of the rival even when such activities do not pose any threat (Ahorsu, 2014). The historical antecedents and experiences such as the numerous violent encounters as well as counterattacks since the inception of the conflict have resulted in the development of negative perceptions about each other. This observation confirms the argument of Bar-Tal (2013) that a party's perception of the ability and intentions of the opponent has implications for the escalation of conflicts. Bar-Tal (2013) recognizes that perceptions about threat largely escalate conflicts. For instance, the perception that each party was stockpiling firearms to attack the other immensely contributed to the outbreak of violence in 2002 (Ahorsu, 2014; Weiss, 2007; MacGaffey, 2006; Tonah, 2012).

The negative attitudes and perceptions of the parties have resulted in a blame game phenomenon by both parties, stereotyping, distrust, polarization, and most importantly the escalation of the conflict (Ahorsu, 2014; Weiss, 2007; Bolaji, 2016; Tonah, 2012). The escalation of the conflict, as well as its persistence and reoccurrence, are therefore attributable to the changes in the dynamics of the context and the socio-psychological dimensions of the parties.

### ***2.6.2. De-escalation of the Dagbon Conflict: The contributory factors***

In addition to the escalation phase, the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict has also gone through a de-escalation phase. Currently, it can be said that the conflict is between de-escalation and the peacemaking stages (negative peace<sup>10</sup>). Within this discussion, 'de-escalation' is referred to as the "reduction in the severity of the coercive means used and in the number of parties engaged in the struggle" (Kriesberg, 1998, p. 181). Jeong (2008) argues that de-escalation is a multifaceted process to reduce "the effects of conflict entrapment" (p. 179). In other words, de-escalation is about changing the negative attitudes and perceptions of the parties and shifting towards adopting more constructive ways of dealing with conflict (Maiese, 2004).

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<sup>10</sup> Negative peace refers to the absence of direct violence (Galtung, 1996).

De-escalation is, therefore, a conflict ameliorating process that is geared toward eliminating the many situations that could make the conflict protracted (Mitchell, 2014). Since the inception of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict, many factors have contributed to its de-escalation. These factors are peacekeeping by the state security agencies, the role of third parties, and conflict fatigue or entrapment.

The role of third parties (state and non-state actors) is one major factor that has contributed to the de-escalation. On the part of the state, there has been a conscious effort to depoliticize the conflict. Since the 2002 crisis, the various governments have trodden carefully concerning responding to the issues underlying the conflict (MacGaffey, 2006). For instance, the NPP government (2001-2008) under whose tenure the 2002 crisis occurred, was careful in its engagement with the substantive issues, especially since the government was accused of having aided the Abudu Royal Gate to kill the Ya-Na (Ahorsu, 2014). The government, mindful of this, created a non-partisan commission of inquiry (the Wuaku Commission) to investigate the crisis (Ahorsu, 2014; Tonah, 2012). In addition, the government requested the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to help establish a mediation committee to mediate the crisis between both families (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011). The outcome of this request was the establishment of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs (Tonah, 2012).

Similarly, the new NDC government (2009-2016) upon assumption of office recognized the work of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs and pledged its support to the Committee. The new government's action was in sharp contrast to its pledge while in opposition that it would prosecute the perpetrators of what they called "heinous crimes" committed against the Ya-Na when elected into office (Tonah, 2012). Although an effort was initially made to prosecute the perpetrators, it was not successful (Tonah, 2012). Recognizing that such actions could further polarize the conflict, the government decided to pledge its support to the work of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs. The actions of the two governments signaled a reduction of political interference in the conflict and the need for a more credible third party such as the Committee of Eminent Chiefs to lead the mediation process.

This is not to suggest that political interference does no longer exist. What is significant though is the reduction in the open declaration of support, as well as political speeches and state actions that provide political support to the parties. This had a bearing on the attitudes and behaviours of the parties. Jeong (2008) argues that third parties' action such as that of the state

has the potential to help reduce the psychological burden of the parties and their entrenched positions. Likewise, Pruitt and Kim (2004) contend that when parties lose support from third parties, a stalemate sets in which compels the parties to abandon the use of coercive methods and adopt constructive approaches such as negotiation in the resolution of the conflict.

Like the state, non-state actors such as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have intervened in the conflict to create the necessary conditions for its de-escalation (Ahorsu, 2014). Civil society actors such as the West African Network for Peacebuilding, the Ghana Catholic Bishops Conference, the Christian Council of Ghana, as well as the office of the National Chief Imam have intervened in this regard (Ahorsu, 2014). Through intervention strategies such as public education, problem-solving workshops, reconciliation, dialogue, and engagements, as well as early warning and early response systems, there is increased interparty tolerance for interaction and cooperation (Ahorsu, 2014). Trust and communication among the parties have also improved. The efforts of non-state actors have increased levels of contact among the parties, and made progress in transforming multiple fronts including the behaviours, attitudes, and perceptions of the parties (Ateng, 2011).

The work of these non-state actors has established conditions of trust, communication, and tolerance that have contributed to the de-escalation of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict. These conditions relate more to the social-psychological dynamics of the parties and the relationship among the parties. Maiese (2004) contends that non-state actors such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play a critical role in conflict de-escalation. Through activities such as the organization of group dialogues and problem-solving workshops, parties to a conflict are assisted to develop innovative ways to resolving and de-escalating conflicts (Kriesberg, 1998; Kriesberg & Dayton, 2012).

In addition to the role of third parties, the state security agencies' peacekeeping efforts have contributed to the de-escalation of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict. Through the efforts of the Northern Regional Security Council and Yendi Municipal Security Council, security forces comprising the police and army were deployed to the area after the outbreak of violence in 2002. Their sole mandate was to keep the minimal peace in the area and create the necessary conditions for the de-escalation of the conflict and negotiation efforts (Asiedu, 2008; Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011). Moreover, the imposition of numerous curfews and state of emergencies in the

community and the ban on the possession, sale, and importation of arms since March 2002 has helped to de-escalate the conflict (Asiedu, 2008; Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011).

The deployment of security agencies and imposition of curfews helped to reduce the use of coercive strategies in the conflict, and created the space for the intervention of other stakeholders and the protection of the lives and properties of the people. This is in line with Kriesberg and Dayton's (2012) observation that third parties can set and enforce the limits to conflict escalation. Kriesberg and Dayton narrate that third parties such as the state can enforce such interventions as the imposition of cessation to prevent the outbreak of violence and destruction.

Moreover, entrapment is one other factor that has contributed to the de-escalation of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict. Indeed, entrapment can be viewed as both a conflict escalation condition in some circumstances, and also as something that can contribute to the de-escalation of conflicts in a positive way (Kriesberg & Dayton, 2012), when the parties commit themselves to a peace process (Kriesberg, 1998). In the case of the Dagbon conflict, the establishment of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs (CEC) to mediate the impasse between the two royal families entrapped the parties. The chiefs who constitute the CEC are highly respected throughout the country<sup>11</sup>. Because of the nature of their dilemma, the parties have no other option than to engage with the CEC to address the underlying issues of the conflict. Submitting to the CEC also provided an option to save face.

Another dimension of entrapment in this case is the Roadmap signed by both contending parties. After two-three years of continuous engagement, dialogue and negotiations led and facilitated by the CEC, a Roadmap was developed with ten key provisions to be implemented. The Roadmap was signed in 2006 with the two parties committing themselves to it, and pledging to adhere to its implementation and provisions. The Roadmap's provisions largely addressed the respective interests and concerns of the parties. Considering the time and resources committed by

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<sup>11</sup> For instance, the chair of the CEC, the Asantehene (King of the Ashanti Kingdom), is respected beyond his area of jurisdiction. His influence within the political space of Ghana makes him acceptable and respected by all people including the two contending parties in the Dagbon conflict. In addition, the other two chiefs, the Nayiri (King of the Mamprugu Kingdom) and the Yagbonwura (King of the Gonja Kingdom), share a common ancestral relation with Dagbon. It is widely held that the founders of the three northern Kingdoms - Mamprugu, Gonja, and Dagbon - were brothers (Brukum, 2000)

the parties to the work of the CEC, in addition to their pledge to adhere to the Roadmap by appending their signatures, as well as the consideration of the Roadmap as a pathway to addressing their interests, the parties find it difficult to escape and are, as such, entrapped.

Pruitt and Kim (2004) refer to this kind of entrapment as positive entrapment. They articulate that when parties commit themselves psychologically, materially, and physically to any peacemaking process, it becomes very difficult for the parties to escape or drop from the process. The parties view such commitments as investments that have to be protected and will commit themselves to see to it that the process is completed (Pruitt & Kim, 2004). Likewise, Kriesberg (1998) argues that the strong engagement of parties in conflict resolution processes makes it difficult for parties to leave until they have completed the process. Kriesberg (1998) communicates that such strong engagements result in the entrapment of the parties in the process.

The de-escalation of any conflict is a process, which starts gradually and reaches a point where the necessary conditions have been created for negotiations to start. Also, de-escalation affects the three basic dimensions - attitudes, behaviours, and situations - of conflict that interact with each other and do change over time. Moreover, conflict de-escalation is determined by an interplay of factors that relate to the group dynamics, psychological dynamics of the parties, and changes in relationships among the parties. All these characteristics of de-escalation are present in the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict. While the de-escalation is largely influenced by external actors, the social-psychological dynamics of the parties also contributed. One of the major outcomes of de-escalation of the Dagbon conflict is that an enabling environment was created for the peace processes to be initiated to bring a lasting solution.

## **2.7. Peacemaking and conflict resolution efforts**

Since the inception of the Dagbon ethnopolitical conflict, key stakeholders such as the state and non-state actors have initiated and implemented several peacemaking and conflict resolution efforts to resolve the dispute. This section briefly elaborates on some of these efforts initiated and implemented in post-independent Ghana (1957 and beyond). This includes the work of the Opoku-Afari Commission, the Mate-Kole Committee and the Ollenu Committee. Likewise, the section discusses the Supreme court rulings, the Wuaku Commission, the CEC's mediation efforts, and the work of non-state actors.

### ***2.7.1. Opoku-Afari Committee***

The first major post-independence step towards resolving the Dagbon conflict was through the work of the Opoku-Afari Commission (OAC). In 1960, the government of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah set-up the OAC to investigate the causes of the Dagbon conflict and make recommendations for its resolution. This step became necessary as a result of a petition submitted to the government by the Andani family on the grounds of unfair treatment with respect to the Dagbon Skin. The outcome of the OAC was a mediation that led to the signing of a peace agreement between both families and the enactment of L.I 59 which restored the rotational system (Ahorsu, 2014).

It was agreed that on the death of Ya-Na Abdulai III, the next two lines of successions should go to the Andani family. The reason behind this decision was the stay of the Abudu Gate on the Skin for two consecutive terms. In accordance with L.I 59, Ya-Na Andani III was enshrinced as Ya-Na in 1968 after the death of Ya-Na Abdulai III. The mediation efforts of the OAC brought stability to Dagbon and were viewed by many as a practical step to resolving the conflict. The L.I 59, however, existed until 1968 (Mahama & Longi, 2013; Mahama, 2009).

### ***2.7.2. Mate-Kole Committee***

In 1968, the National Liberation Movement Government set-up the Mate-Kole Committee (MKC) to look into the Dagbon conflict. This became necessary after a petition was submitted by the Abudu family. The MKC in its work and ruling declared L.I 59 as null and void and indicated that the enshrinment of Ya-Na Andani III was not in accordance with Dagbon tradition and custom and as such his stay on the Skin was illegal. The MKC recommended the enshrinment of Gbonlana Mahamadu as Ya-Na. The recommendations of the MKC were however not implemented during the regime of the National Liberation Government (Tonah, 2012).

Upon assumption of office of the Progress Party led by Dr. Busia, the MKC's report and its recommendations were accepted and implemented. The result was the forceful eviction of Ya-Na Andani III and the Andani family from the Gbewaa royal palace, which culminated in the death of 30 members of the Andani family. Gbonlana Mahamadu was then installed as Ya-Na in accordance with the recommendations of the MKC. Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV remained Ya-Na until the overthrow of the Busia government by the National Redemption Council in 1972 (Ahorsu, 2014).

### ***2.7.3. Ollenu Committee***

Following the overthrow of the government of the Progress Party, the National Redemption Council (NRC) under general Acheampong set-up the Ollenu Committee “to ascertain the correct custom and customary practices for the nomination, selection, and enskinment of a Ya-Na” (Tonah, 2012, p. 7). Again, this was in response to a request by the Andani family for a review of the MKC’s recommendations. The Ollenu Committee in its report ruled that the de-enskinment of Ya-Na Andani III was illegal and the same for the enskinment of Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV. In accordance with the recommendations of the Ollenu Committee, Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV was removed from the Skin and Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II was enskinned as Ya-Na (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011).

The Ollenu Committee in its report recommended strict adherence to the rotational system, and as such decree NCRD 299 was passed which prohibited all courts from adjudicating the Dagbon conflict especially the de-enskinment of Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV. Several requests by the Abudu family for a review of the recommendations of the Committee did not materialize. The status quo remained the same until the death of Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II in March 2002 (Ahorsu, 2014).

The OAC sought to bring clarity and a pragmatic resolution to the conflict, while the efforts of the other two Committees were not geared towards resolving the conflict. At best they were politically motivated, with the aim of satisfying one party or the other. In fact, the counter-recommendations contained in the reports of the various Commissions and Committees contributed to the protracted and intractable nature of the conflict.

### ***2.7.4. Supreme court ruling***

The conflict was also a subject of judiciary review. The Abudu family in 1986 requested a review of the recommendations of the Ollenu Committee. To find a lasting solution to the dispute, the Provisional National Defence Council Government set aside NRCD 299 and set-up a tripartite committee consisting of members of the two families and the government (Asiedu, 2008). Subsequently, the Ollenu Committee's report was referred by the Government to the supreme court for consideration. The supreme court in a 6 to 1 ruling upheld the Ollenu Committee. The Apex court also ruled that the rotational principle between the two families was

hereby established as a traditional rule in Dagbon. The rotational system was then elevated to the status of national law (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011; Mahama, 2009).

Also, the supreme court in its ruling stated that the deposed Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV should be recognized as a former Ya-Na and his descendants are eligible to the "Namship" in the future. In its ruling, the supreme court noted, "Having regard to the Dagbon Constitution that de-enskinment is unknown in Dagbon, all persons who have occupied the Nam in Yendi shall without regard to how they cease to be Ya-Na be regarded as former Ya-Nas" (Sankah as cited in Ahorsu, 2014, p. 14). The supreme court ruling was considered by many stakeholders to have brought finality to the Dagbon dispute. It was, therefore, a shock to many when violence broke out in Yendi on March 21, 2002, resulting in the death of Ya-Na Yakubu Andani and 40 of his elders (Ahorsu, 2014). It can therefore be deduced from the above narrative that legal systems and structures are not the appropriate venues for addressing communal conflicts, most especially conflicts that are structured along tradition and culture. The legal systems and structures do not create the space for critical issues such as security, fear, hurt, emotion, and mistrust to be addressed.

#### ***2.7.5. Wuaku Commission***

Following the events of March 2002, the Ghanaian government established a commission of inquiry chaired by Justice Wuaku, a retired supreme court judge and two other members, namely Professor Kwesi Yanka and Mrs. Florence Brew (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011; Tonah, 2012). This Wuaku Commission was, among other things, to investigate the circumstances that led to the outbreak of violence and make proposals for a peaceful resolution of the conflict (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011). The Commission in the conclusion of its work categorized the incident that occurred on March 21, 2002, as an act of war. It recommended the arrest and prosecution of individuals found to have been involved in the gruesome murder of the King (Asiedu, 2008).

The Wuaku Commission also recommended that the funeral of Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV be carried out according to Dagbon tradition. Other recommendations included the burial of the late Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II and the promotion of genuine reconciliation (Ahorsu, 2014). The findings and recommendations of the Wuaku Commission were accepted by the government; however, it was difficult to implement some of recommendations such as the arrest

and prosecution of the perpetrators or the individuals involved in the murder of the King (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011; Mahama & Longi, 2013).

## **2.8. Mediation efforts of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs**

The mediation efforts of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs (CEC) are considered the most pragmatic step towards the resolution of the Dagbon conflict. The government, in an effort to establish a credible mediation team, constituted the CEC with Otumfuo Osei Tutu, the Asantehene as the chairperson. Other members included the Nayiri, Na Bohugu Shirigu, the overlord of the Mamprugu Kingdom and the Yagbonwura, Bawa Dosie, the overlord of the Gonja Kingdom (Asiedu, 2008).

The CEC members were selected based on their shared characteristics of traditional administrative structures and chieftaincy culture (Ahorsu, 2014). The CEC's work was largely based on the ruling of the supreme court, reports of the various commissions and committees, and the culture and traditions of Dagbon (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011; Tonah, 2012). The outcome of the CEC's work was Dagbon Roadmap I and Dagbon Roadmap II.

### ***2.8.1. Dagbon Roadmap I***

After its appointment, the CEC began a series of consultative meetings with the parties to address the underlying issues of the conflict. After a series of interactive conflict resolution meetings facilitated by the UNDP (with support from the Ministries of Interior and Chieftaincy and based on the culture and traditions of Dagon), the CEC and the parties developed a peace agreement known as the 'Dagbon Roadmap' (Dagbon Roadmap I) which was signed on March 30, 2006 (Asiedu, 2008). The Roadmap contained 13 provisions for the return of peace to Dagbon; prominent among these provisions are:

- a. The installation of the Regent of Ya-Naa Yakubu Andani takes precedence over the installation of Naa Mahamadu Abudulai's Regent since Naa Yakubu died in office and Dagbon custom did not contemplate a situation where there would be two sitting Ya-Nas or Regents at the same time.
- b. A Council of Elders comprising three representatives each from the Andani and Abudu Families shall be constituted immediately to act in concert with the Kuga-Naa and the Regent of Naa Yakubu Andani to handle all traditional arrangements from the date of

burial of Naa Yakubu Andani, the performance of funeral rites of both late Ya-Nas to the installation of a new Ya-Na.

- c. The Council of Elders shall comprise the following persons:
  - 1. For the Andani family: Sung Lana Abdulai Mahama; Kunkon Lana Fuseini Ziblim and the Kpan Naa M.B. Bawah.
  - 2. The Mion Lana shall be the leader of the Abudu family on the Council of Elders and shall consult with other members of the family to submit two additional names to the Committee of Eminent Kings. The names of the members of the Council of Elders from the Abudu family shall be submitted by the Mion Lana to the Kuga Naa on or before Saturday 1st April 2006 and notified to each of the Eminent Kings as soon as possible.
- d. The burial of Naa Yakubu Andani should take place on 10th April 2006, with the consultation and active participation of the Council of Elders, and his Regent appointed shortly thereafter in accordance with Dagbon customs and traditions.
- e. The Kuga Na is enjoined to act as father of all, to be impartial and to ensure the full participation of the Abudu family in all matters relating to the burial of Naa Yakubu Andani and the management of the Dagbon State.
- f. The powers of the Regent shall be limited because of the peculiar circumstances in Dagbon today. In this context, the Regent shall not have powers to appoint any chiefs or alienate any lands or other resources belonging to the Dagbon State.
- g. Without prejudice to clause "e" above, the Regent with the concurrence of the Kuga Naa and the Council of Elders shall appoint chiefs to vacant skins whose participation will be crucial to the performance of the funeral rites of Naa Mahamadu and Naa Yakubu Andani, and to assign the Regent of Naa Mahamadu to a skin after the performance of the funeral of his father.
- h. The burial of Naa Yakubu Andani shall be performed in the royal mausoleum. All other purposes connected to his burial shall be performed at the temporary palace.
- i. There can only be one palace in Dagbon kingdom. The temporary palace was constructed following the unfortunate incidents of 2002. In this connection, the old Gbewaa Palace should remain free of occupation or any activity until a date is set for the performance of the funeral rites of Naa Mahamadu Abudulai.

- j. After the burial of Naa Yakubu Andani, both sides shall meet again with the Committee of Eminent Kings to work out a programme for the funeral rites of Naa Mahamadu and Naa Yakubu Andani. Since Naa Mahamadu died before Naa Yakubu Andani, his funeral shall be performed first.
- k. The Eminent Kings shall agree upon a time frame with all the parties within which the respective funerals of the late Yaa-Nas shall be performed. The eminent Kings will continue to engage with the parties on the way forward until a New Ya-Na is enskinned.
- l. All the parties pledged to abide by this Roadmap to peace and to encourage their supporters to continue to keep the peace.
- m. The agreements reached hereunder do not represent a victory to any side. The parties are urged to continue in the spirit of accommodation, compromise and oneness that constitute the foundation for this agreement, and to avoid celebrations or acts that depict a victory or loss on any side (Committee of Eminent Chiefs, 2006, p.1-5).

More than ten years since the agreement was signed, only two provisions of the Roadmap were implemented. These were the burial of the late Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II in the Gbewaa Palace and the appointment of his eldest son, Kamkpakuya-Naa Andani, as the Regent of Dagbon (Tonah, 2012). The outstanding provisions in the Roadmap which were critical to attaining and consolidating peace, especially the funeral rites of the Late Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV, were not implemented (Tonah, 2012). This resulted in a deadlock with respect to the implementation of the other provisions and consequently the collapse of the peace process in general.

### **2.8.2. *Dagbon Roadmap II***

The CEC invited the parties for another round of consultative processes in order to achieve their mandate. With support from the inter-ministerial committee (set up by the government to facilitate the return of the parties to the negotiation table), the parties agreed on September 5, 2017 to resume talks at the Manhyia palace (Karim, 2018). These talks resulted in the parties recommitting themselves to the resolution of the Dagbon conflict by signing a new peace agreement in November 2018. The new agreement contained the last three provisions of the old peace agreement, namely,

1. The funeral of the former Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV should be performed at the Gbewaa Palace;
2. The funeral of the late Ya-Na Yakubu Andani should be performed; and
3. The enskinment of a new Ya-Na (Afanyi-Dadzie, 2019; Karim, 2018).

The funeral of Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV took place in December 2018, while that of Ya-Na Yakubu Andani was held in January 2019. After the funerals of both Ya-Nas, the final provision (the enskinment of a new king) was implemented. On January 18, the Gushie Na and the Kuga Na, the main custodians of Dagbon's traditions, appointed the Chief of Savelugu as the successor to Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II, who was assassinated in 2002 (Afanyi-Dadzie, 2019). This peace agreement (Dagbon Roadmap II) was successfully implemented, although with certain challenges.

## **2.9. The work of non-state actors**

In addition to the efforts of the state in resolving the Dagbon conflict, non-state actors also undertook many activities geared toward conflict resolution. Organizations such as the Yendi Peace Centre of the Catholic Diocese of Yendi, the West African Network for Peacebuilding, the Ghana Developing Communities Association, and the Centre for Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding among others have used their resources and presence in this regard (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011).

These organizations provided training for the representatives of both families, youth groups, women's groups and opinion leaders in conflict resolution, conflict transformation, human rights, justice, reconciliation, and trust-building. They have also undertaken peace education activities through sports, entertainment, festivals, and marriages. The organizations' peace education component centred on the effects of the conflict on the community, the importance of compromise, trust-building, and youth participation in decision making (Ahorsu, 2014).

The efforts of the non-state actors are to complement those of the state by changing the parties' perceptions , existing mistrust, and the dominant narratives embedded within the parties discourse as well as the general public's perceptions. The efforts were also aimed at mobilizing the necessary societal support for implementing the Roadmap (Ateng & Abazaami, 2016).

## **2.10. Conclusion**

The collapse of Dagbon Roadmap I requires an empirical study to understand the reasons that account for this collapse, from the perspectives of the people who have an interest in the de-escalation of conflict, and in implementing a peace process. Taking a critical look at what similar studies in different contexts have found concerning peace processes helps situate my research within the broader knowledge and theorization of peace processes. In that regard, the next chapter reviews this knowledge, including different theoretical perspectives on peace processes.

## Chapter 3

### Literature review and theoretical orientation of the study

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Peace processes have reached a zenith in the international conflict management spectrum; the realist argument that peace processes are irrelevant to the durability of peace has been challenged in that regard (Tonge, 2014). The chapter provides conceptual clarity to some of the literature that guided this study. Specifically, this chapter reviews some of the theories that explain the what, why, and how of peace processes. Moreover, I provide working definitions of the key terms used in this study – peace processes, the outcome of peace processes, conflict, intragroup conflicts, and power. Related empirical literature on peace processes is also delineated.

#### **3.2. Definition of key concepts**

A number of key concepts were adopted and applied in this thesis. Considering the multiple definitions and interpretations that are usually brought to bear in the conceptualization of concepts, it is imperative to provide clarity to their meaning. This section accordingly provides some definitions of the key concepts used in this research. The key concepts defined in this section include intra-group conflict, power and conflict, peace process, and outcome of peace processes.

##### ***3.2.1. Intragroup conflicts***

PACS research has largely concentrated on intergroup conflicts with limited attention to intragroup and intracommunal conflicts that has resulted in the existence of limited literature on the factors that give rise to these conflicts as well as the best strategies to address divisions within these groups (Warren & Troy, 2015). The primordial and instrumentalist construction of ethnic conflicts, for instance, ignores within-group internal dynamics (Barak, 2002). In every distinct group (ethnic group), there are actors with identities, positions, goals, interests, and beliefs that they seek to protect, both within and beyond their group (Barak, 2002; Krause, 2019). Consequently, conflicts within a distinct ethnic group itself are inevitable.

The end of the Cold War not only resulted in the outbreak of intergroup conflicts within the state but also intragroup conflicts. Intragroup conflicts have become a major threat to the

stability of both communities and the state within which these occur (Brosché & Elfversson, 2012; Krause, 2019). Intragroup conflicts are confined to a certain geographical area within a country or state (Brosché & Elfversson, 2012). In these conflicts, the role of the state is normally one of a neutral third party and not a contender, even though in some cases, the state is accused of being biased (Brosché & Elfversson, 2012).

The conflicts are usually not of interest to the international media although they cause a lot of havoc to the communities within which they occur. Warren and Troy (2015) observed that intragroup conflicts account for the mass displacement and the death of thousands of people. These conflicts also affect the political stability of the state (Krause, 2019; Warren & Troy, 2015).

There is no generally agreed-upon definition for intragroup conflicts. Brosché and Elfversson (2012) defined them as "violent conflicts between non-state groups that are organized along with a shared communal identity" (p. 33). Caspersen (2006) further defined intragroup conflict as the competition among the elite within a group over the control and dominance of the group. One of the core features of such competition is the claim by the elite that they are legitimate representatives of the group (Caspersen, 2006).

The competition is usually over power, status, succession, and policies or the interpretation of group culture (Caspersen, 2008). These conflicts involve non-state actors and the group is defined by a common identity. High profile intragroup conflicts include the Hamas and Fatah conflict in the Palestinian territories, and the conflict between the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) faction in Iraqi Kurdistan (Warren & Troy, 2015).

The literature notes that one of the identifiable causes of intragroup conflicts is the struggle for power. The internal struggle by elites for control of a group has often generated internal rivalry, which sometimes becomes volatile (Warren & Troy, 2015). The main objective of elites is the acquisition and sustenance of the desired power. To do this, elites have to garner popular support and control of critical institutions such as security forces (Caspersen, 2008). For example, in a study of intra-ethnic divisions in Croatia, Bosnia, and Nagorno Karabakh, Caspersen (2008) discloses that intense struggle among the elites of the three ethnic groups was traced to the struggle for power. These ambitions culminated in the weakening of these groups (Caspersen, 2008).

The rivalry between Babić and Raskovic of the Serb Democratic Party (SDP) was influenced largely by personal power ambitions although other factors such as political differences were of equal importance (Casperson, 2008). As another example, during the Lebanon conflict (1975-1976), an intracommunal competition was witnessed within the Maronite and Sunni communities that accounted for the struggle for power among the elites of these ethnic groups (Barak, 2002).

While distinct ethnic or communal groups are seen to be homogenous and united in the pursuit of their objectives, an internal power struggle and competition among elites for group control, leadership positions and succession has underpinned intragroup conflicts over the world. Similar observations were made concerning the conflict between the KDP and the PUK faction in Iraqi Kurdistan. The nested factor explaining this intragroup conflict was the political competition and power struggle among the various leaders for the control of the Kurdish region in Iraq (Gunter, 1996).

Other literature also postulates that differences between ethnic elites (over what goals to pursue and the strategy to adopt in achieving these goals) in interethnic conflict account for intragroup conflicts. Although there is the claim that groups (ethnic groups) are homogenous in terms of interest and needs, internal divisions and rivalry are inevitable (Casperson, 2008). For example, Jinadu (2005) reports that,

Ethnic groups are oftentimes polarized among themselves, over, for example, strategies to pursue in competitive situations with other ethnic groups, over leadership succession, all leading to fractures and, in many cases, the emergence of subethnic or even newly constructed ethnic groups within them (p. 8).

For example, the rivalry between Hamas and Fatah of the Palestinian Authority in the Palestinian territories has been explained by differences in ideologies and approaches to the Palestine-Israel conflict (Brown, 2010; Kurz, 2015). With respect to the latter, Hamas on the one hand, guided by "a fundamental Islamic orientation," objects to a negotiated settlement of the conflict. Fatah, on the other hand, favours a negotiated settlement (Brown, 2010; Kurz, 2015). More severe differences exist between these groups regarding the two-state solution and other forms of resistance (Brown, 2010).

In terms of ideology, Fatah and Hamas differ regarding the role of nation and religion in the construction of Palestinian identity (Brown 2010). These differences widen divisions and

rivalry between the groups' political leaders, which has affected the peace processes with Israel (Bose, 2007). As a further example, Caspersen (2008) notes that internal rivalry and division in Croatia and Nagorno Karabakh was attributed to divergent views and goals as well as the ideological differences between group leaders in approaching the interethnic conflicts that they were engaged in. In addition, intragroup differences between moderates and extremists within the Catholic Nationalist Republican (CNR) and Protestant Unionist Loyalist (PUL) communities in Northern Ireland shaped the nature of the conflict and the eventual peace process over the past 30 years (Byrne, 2009, 2001)

Based on the literature discussed above, intragroup divisions are driven by the struggle for power and differences in views concerning the goals, interests, needs, and strategies to deploy in intergroup conflict. Such rivalry and divisions sometimes become intractable and protracted. Resolving divisions of this nature requires the institutionalization of measures that address the undercurrents of these divisions. In circumstances where the underlying factor of the divisions is the struggle for political power, a recommended strategy is for third parties to implement processes that keep the key leaders in power.

Also, if divisions are driven by differences in ideology, interests, needs, and strategies, then it is prudent to design resolution strategies oriented towards collective interests and needs (Caspersen, 2008). Taking cognizance of the role of power in intragroup conflicts, it is prudent to review the literature on the role of power in conflicts – this is the focus of the next section.

### ***3.2.2. Power, leadership and conflict***

Power is an important variable in the trajectory of every conflict, especially intragroup conflicts. It shapes the dynamics of every conflict (including its emergence, escalation, de-escalation) as well as peacemaking processes (Coleman, 2014; Folger et al., 2009). As such, it is imperative to review the literature on the specific relationship between power and conflict as it has to do with inter and intra ethnic conflict. This section provides a brief discussion of this issue. Before proceeding, it is critical to operationalize a definition of power.

Within the social sciences, there are different definitions of power. For example, Ken Boulding (1990) defines personal and organizational power as destructive, productive or integrative. Folger et al. (2009) define power as “the ability to influence or control events” (p. 140). This definition contextualizes power as a bi-directional phenomenon in that the party who

is said to have the power resource will only realize it when it is endorsed by the second party (Folger et al., 2009). Resources that provide power include skills and ability, knowledge about a job, formal position in an organization, loyal allies, and persuasive skills among others (Folger et al., 2009). Whether power is endorsed by others is shaped by “preconception(s) as to whether the party is strong or weak, the evidence of a valued skill and ability, the magical aura about power, interaction, and legitimacy” (Folger et al., 2009, p. 141).

Another definition of power relevant to our understanding of power and conflict is "the ability (or the perception of the ability) to leverage relevant resources in a specific situation to achieve personal, relational, or environmental goals, often through using various strategies and channels of influence of both a primary and secondary nature" (Coleman, 2014, p. 142). Similar to Folger et al.’s definition, Coleman’s conceptualization recognizes power as a resource that can be deployed during times of conflict. Likewise, the definition refers to two important concepts relevant in a constructive discussion of power and conflict - strategies and goals.

Accordingly, power is applied towards the attainment of a goal. In other words, power could be the means to an end or the end in itself. Moreover, power determines the strategies that parties adopt in times of conflict. Within both conceptualizations, power shapes the interactions between individuals and groups in conflict, which in turn influences conflict dynamics. How does power shape the dynamics of conflict, especially intragroup conflict? To situate the power-conflict nexus within this study, this review discusses two implications of power for conflict: a) power as a cause of conflict and b) power as shaping the parties' selection of their response strategies.

People or groups sometimes engage in conflict because of a struggle for power. This is largely the argument of political realism, wherein the underpinning cause of conflict is viewed as the competition among parties for the acquisition, maintenance, and expansion of power (Rioux & Redekop, 2013). Thus, the struggle for power by elites either of the same group (intragroup) or different groups (intergroup) is usually the cause of many intergroup and intragroup conflicts that exist in the world today.

Ethnic elites struggle for power either within a group or intergroup situations for the control of the group or the resources of the state/community has often generated internal rivalry, which sometimes becomes volatile and leads to conflict (Warren & Troy, 2015). The main objective of elites is the acquisition and sustenance of power which they pursue through the

mobilization of the necessary resources at their disposal (Casperson, 2008). Power, therefore, is a goal that is pursued through conflict, and consequently it is also a cause of conflict.

Moreover, power also determines the kind of strategies that parties deploy during conflict. In the first place, power distance orientations<sup>12</sup> (whether high-power distance orientation or low-power) have implications for conflicts and conflict resolution processes. The atmosphere of a negotiation process, the expectations, and the people engaged in the negotiation are largely shaped by the power-distance orientation (Ateng et al., 2018; Barkai, 2008).

Second, in conflict situations where there are power asymmetries among the parties engaged in the conflict, the parties (primarily the weaker parties) will often adopt a cooperative strategy. This helps to contain the escalation of the conflict as well as to control the engagement of the conflict in an open space. However, when parties feel that there is a balance of power, they use open aggression thus resulting in the conflict's escalation (Deutsch, 1973, as cited in Coleman, 2014, p. 139).

Moul (2003, as cited in Coleman, 2014, p. 152) in a study of wars between 1816 and 1989 concludes that an equal amount of power in terms of the capabilities of the parties led most of the parties to engage in war. There is however a caveat. When trust exists among parties with equal power, cooperative interdependence is usually the most common strategy that the parties will adopt (Coleman, 2014).

In an intragroup conflict such as the Dagbon conflict, the role of power in shaping conflict dynamics cannot be discounted. Indeed, the struggle for power is likely the predominant cause of intragroup conflicts (Warren & Troy, 2015). Likewise, the power capabilities of the parties engaged in these conflicts dictate the strategies that the parties will adopt. It is, therefore, imperative to conduct an analysis of power in designing a peacemaking strategy in intergroup conflicts and peace processes. Moreover, the strategies proposed to address these conflicts should include a strategy that focuses on powersharing or ethnic elite accommodation. More importantly, it is critical to undertake an analysis of the potential influence of power on the outcomes of peace processes. Within this study, the theoretical relationship between power, leadership and conflict helps us to understand the behaviour of ethnic parties and their leaders

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<sup>12</sup> Power distance orientation: Power distance cultural orientation or starting point focuses on the “degree of deference and acceptance of unequal power between people” (Hofstede, 1984, as cited in Pillay, 2006, p. 46).

within the context of the Dagbon conflict as narrated in empirical Chapter Six. The parties' behaviour is underpinned by the struggle for power and control of Dagbon. The next section reviews the conceptual definition of peace processes.

### **3.2.3. Peace process**

A survey of the literature provides varied definitions and interpretations of the concept of "peace process" in terms of timing, objectives, and components. This lack of consensus has negatively affected the study of peace processes (Darby & Mac Ginty, 2008). Nonetheless, it is important to carve out a definition that will guide this study. The concept has its origin in the 1970s following the wars between Israel, Syria and Egypt. The concept however became popular in the 1990s and was defined as "the tentative rapprochement between parties in protracted conflict and to the practice of peacebuilding through staged negotiations" (Kim, 2019, p. 3).

Another definition that is worth exploring is given by Selby. Peace processes are "phased processes for negotiating and nurturing peace" (Selby, 2008, p. 12). Likewise, peace process encompasses all efforts, such as political and diplomatic, aimed at resolving nonviolent conflict that still requires negotiation to reach a satisfactory agreement between the parties (Darby & Mac Ginty, 2008; Fisas, 2016). This definition echoes a view of peace process as a transformative act aimed at addressing the root causes of the conflict through negotiation.

Similarly, Tonge (2014) defines a peace process as "the active attempt at the prevention and management of conflict between and within states, a remit covering the treatment of inter-state, inter-communal and intra-communal violence" (p. 7). One unique feature of Tonge's definition is the broadening of the concept to cover both intercommunal and intracommunal conflicts.

What is common among these definitions is the recognition of peace processes as incremental. Though not necessarily linear, they can encompass the following stages or activities: pre-negotiation, the management of a peace process, the peace accord and post-accord reconstruction (Darby & Mac Ginty, 2008; Fisas, 2016; Tonge, 2014).

The incremental and non-linear nature of peace processes indicates that they could take a long time to be successfully implemented and there is the likelihood that they could fail or collapse. It also means that the conflicting parties are able, at any stage of the peace process, to advance new concerns or narratives. Hence, it is imperative on the part of the mediators to be mindful of this in order to develop a dynamic peace process that will provide the opportunity for

these new concerns to be addressed. In this study, the term peace process involves the deliberate fashioning of activities to engage parties in a conflict towards the resolution of the conflict. These planned activities include the pre-contact, negotiation, management, peace accord, implementation, and post peace accord. Also, in this study, the terms peace process and peace agreement (Roadmap<sup>13</sup>) will be used interchangeably.

### ***3.2.4. Defining the outcome of peace processes***

The outcome of a peace process is defined by two indicators: success and failure. Many scholars writing on the success and failure of peace processes have advanced wide-ranging definitions. This section delineates some of the meanings that are attached to these two concepts and then adopts a working definition for this study.

Some leading scholars of peace processes have noted that the definition of success of peace processes in particular is highly problematic (Hampson, 1996; Mac Ginty & Ozerdem, 2019; Maina, 2016). Fen Hampson raised two critical questions: did the civil strife and violence end? Did the parties fulfill the commitments they agreed to as outlined in the agreement? According to Hampson (1996, as cited in Mohammed, 2012, p. 25) at a minimum level, two conditions or criteria must be met to qualify any peace agreement as successful. First, a successful peace agreement is one where the signatories abide by the terms of the agreement. Second, a successful peace agreement results in the cessation of violence between the parties.

Using time, Hampson argued further that the success of a peace agreement could be defined in minimalist terms as associated with the onset of negotiations, the conclusion of a formal agreement or with more comprehensive criteria like the demobilization of forces, the laying down of arms and the eventual restoration of political order.

In the view of Stedman (2002), the successful implementation of a peace agreement is measured through two criteria: the ending of violence and the conclusion of war on a self-enforcing basis. Westendorf (2015) also referred to the reoccurrence of violence as an indicator of a failed peace agreement.

Discussing the cessation of hostilities as an indicator, Westendorf (2015) argued that even when agreements successfully prevent the resumption of conflict, they are often

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<sup>13</sup> The term is used to describe the peace agreement to transform the Dagbon conflict.

unsuccessful in establishing durable peace or even the basic hallmarks of security and stability. Instead they entrench situations of “neither war nor peace” or liminal peace in many post-conflict states (Mac Ginty, 2006). In the view of Westendorf (2015) therefore, issues of instability, insecurity, mistrust, suspicion and negative peace are the minimal requirements for establishing whether a peace agreement is successful or not.

The definitions adopted for this study are provided by DeRouen et al. (2010) and Melander (2016). A peace process is considered successful if the various parties and stakeholders hold onto the peace processes and take the necessary steps to ensure that the terms and conditions agreed by all the parties are adequately implemented and there is a cessation of the previous conflict (DeRouen et al., 2010; Melander, 2016). Failure, on the other hand, is defined as the deviation of the parties and stakeholders from the terms and conditions of the peace processes, coupled with non-compliance of the parties and the inadequate implementation of the peace processes which results in the resumption of the previous conflict (DeRouen et al., 2010; Melander, 2016).

Based on the aforementioned scholarly discussion of indicators, the evaluation of the success or failure of the Dagbon peace process in this study will be based on the following: the full implementation of the Roadmap, the situation of security and stability and the commitment of the parties to the Roadmap. Subjecting the first Dagbon peace process (2006-2018) to the three parameters above, one can conclude that the peace process was a failure. The terms and conditions of the peace process agreed by the two Gates were not fully implemented. Also, the parties did not comply with the processes. Finally, there were tensions, suspicion, and insecurity in the community because of the non-implementation of the peace processes.

### **3.3. Models to understand peace processes**

Within the PACS literature, many models are used to explain the constituent parts of peace processes, namely the required actions, the actors and the underlying assumptions. These models include the realist model, the liberal model, and the social-psychological model. This section discusses these models in order to understand the factors that accounted for the deadlock of the Dagbon peace processes and to elucidate critical themes for the analysis of the Dagbon peacemaking processes.

### ***3.3.1. Realist model***

The realists' model of peace processes is premised on the assumptions that states are self-seeking entities and all actors engaging in conflict are rational. Building on these assumptions, the realist model proposed two intervening strategies; power sharing and the use of force (Tonge, 2014). For the hard realists, states' motivation to engage in conflict is based on the security dilemma and therefore, the best approach to managing such conflicts is to maintain a balance of military power between the partisans (Collins, 2007). This involves supporting one side of the conflict, probably the weaker side, with a supply of arms (military aid) and placing an embargo and sanctions on the stronger side (Siniver, 2011).

Maintaining the balance of power could also be achieved through direct military intervention by a single state, a regional organization or the international community (Siniver, 2011). The application of coercive interventions for the hard realists is to end violence and create new geopolitical boundaries through partitioning (Tonge, 2014). For the hard realists, therefore, seeking reconciliation and political accommodation is not an option (Kaufman, 2006).

The soft realists, in contrast, advocate for non-coercive intervention by third parties (states and international organizations: Siniver, 2006; Zartman, 1995) in conflict situations. These interventions include mediation, the provision of good offices and other confidence-building measures (Bercovitch 2002; Zartman & Touval, 1996 as cited in Siniver, 2011, p. 188). Mediation by third parties according to the soft realists creates the opportunity for powersharing, political accommodation and other mechanisms to push the parties towards the settlement of the conflict (Siniver, 2011; Byrne, 2017a).

The effectiveness of these strategies, however, depends on the willingness of the partisans to accept the mediation process offered by the third party and the ripeness of the conflict to undergo any third-party mediation (Zartman, 1995; Tonge, 2014). This theory has also been criticized by the liberal model of peace processes, for being less effective in large-scale conflicts where the parties are heavily armed (Tonge, 2014).

### ***3.3.2. Liberal model***

Liberal peacebuilding theory recognizes the important role of democratic and governance institutions in conflict resolution. The causes of conflicts are identified in weak governance institutions, violations of the fundamental human rights of citizens and the breakdown of the rule

of law (Siniver, 2011). Peace processes, according to this theory, should focus on reconstructing political and security institutions, establishing truth and reconciliation tribunals to restore faith in the judicial process, and installing a new cooperative and peaceful environment, as has been demonstrated in South Africa, East Timor, Haiti and El Salvador (Tom, 2017; Randazzo, 2017; Tonge, 2014; Mani, 2005; Hayner, 2006; Kingston, 2006).

One of the core facets of the model's approach to peacemaking is powersharing, especially in conflict situations that involve different identity groups (Siniver, 2011). This proposal is in line with Caspersen's (2008) position that where the underlying rivalry is about the struggle for political power, the recommended strategy is the implementation of a powersharing process that keeps the key leaders in power.

Third parties' intervening strategies should involve engagement with both national-level actors within the state and a wide range of other stakeholders such as grassroots actors, civil society leaders, and the private sector (Brewer, 2010). The third-party can be the powerful states of the world, the international community, regional organizations, or international nongovernmental organizations (Tonge, 2014). The latter kinds of organizations have the advantage of apparent neutrality and an emphasis on alleviating humanitarian suffering (Siniver, 2011). However, they may lack the clout and resources which are often associated with great-power intervention (Siniver, 2011).

The assumption that democracy is a universal cultural value has been criticized for failing to recognize potential challenges when introducing democracy into an entirely different, war-torn society with no democratic experience (Siniver, 2011). Also, introducing democracy into post-conflict societies prioritizes setting up procedures and institutions rather than engaging civil society groups and grassroots actors (Brewer, 2010).

When democratic values are not sufficiently diffused within post-peace accord societies, the return of violence and political instability is likely (Tocci, 2007). Similarly, when fears and perceptions underlining the conflict are not adequately addressed through democratic practices such as election and powersharing, violence may be inevitable (Siniver, 2011). The inherent weaknesses of the liberal model were illuminated by social-psychological theory, which is reviewed in the next section.

### ***3.3.3. Social-psychological model***

The social-psychological theory of peace processes argues that the causes of conflicts are not found in security dilemmas or the breakdown of state authority, as argued by liberal peacebuilding theory. Rather, this theory contends that the formation and reinforcement of 'enemy images' or 'US versus THEM' mentalities are at the root of every conflict, especially identity conflicts (Stein, 2005). According to this theory, individuals, groups, and political elites develop physical and emotional experiences or beliefs about the behaviour of an outer group, forming images and identities in their relationship with these groups. Such images result in group formation and differentiation based on 'US' versus 'THEM' (Stein, 2005).

Such differentiations do not automatically lead to conflicts. However, when these images are combined with domestic conditions such as the unequal distribution of and access to political and economic resources, the stage is set for the development of enemy images (Bar-Tal, 2013; Brewer, 2010; Mitchell, 2014; Coleman & Lowe, 2007; Lake & Rothchild, 1996; Ross, 1995). As such, this theory argues that peace processes should focus on addressing the embedded anxieties and identities which inform rival groups' images of each other (Brewer, 2010; Mitchell, 2014).

Change in this regard could involve reconciliation, problem-solving workshops and developing systems that recognize the cultural values and norms of all people (Kaufman, 2006). Such third-party intervention strategies would target people living in the communities rather than changes at the state level. The theory argues that the interventions should focus on enhancing communication and facilitation across all cultures and identified ethnic groups.

Intervening in such conflicts is not usually based on a defined pattern but involves careful consideration of the context of the conflict (Siniver, 2011). Third parties, therefore, need to engage all interested parties to be able to change the perceptions and attitudes associated with the conflict. Intervening in identity-inclined conflicts is usually difficult and requires an in-depth knowledge of the conflict and involved parties (Mitchell, 2014). Appropriate third-party actors for such interventions would be individuals and NGOs, who must remain neutral to be successful (Brewer, 2010). In particular, small informal groups such as academics, retired politicians, and officials may be appropriate; these parties can still influence policy but are removed from decision making (Hampson, 2001).

Critiques of social-psychological approaches highlight challenges that can be involved in implementing these strategies, including accessing local groups; or that third parties may be prevented from intervening because of suspected bias; and failure to generate needed impact, especially in terms of significantly changing conflicting parties perceptions and attitudes in the long-term (Siniver, 2011). The social-psychological model has largely influenced the writings of John Paul Lederach on transformational conflict resolution, Herbert Kelman and Ronald Fisher on problem-solving and interactive conflict resolution respectively, Volkan Vamik on large group identity and chosen trauma, Jay Rothman on identity-based conflict, and the work of John Brewer on the sociological perspective of peace processes. However, the model has not yet been fully applied to understanding communal conflicts.

These three models have dominated the discourse, planning, and implementation of peace processes around the world. Within the context of this thesis, the three models provide a framework to appreciate how third parties, the management of peace processes, and the context of the peace processes as presented in the empirical chapters influenced the outcome (failure) of the Dagbon peace processes. Each model prescribes policy directions for peace processes which are largely based on particular interpretations of the causes of conflict, what constitutes peace, and how peace is achieved. Thus, the models define important variables or parameters that are not only necessary in the process of peacemaking but are also significant in influencing the outcomes of peace processes and agreements.

For instance, the liberal peacebuilding theory's interpretation of peace processes is that the policies or content of peace agreements should focus on institutional building, reconciliation, and trust-building, led by trusted and committed third-party mediators (Tom, 2017) Although designed to understand peacemaking and peacebuilding at the state level, it provides some themes and concepts relevant to studying the Dagbon peace process. Drawing from the liberal peacebuilding theory, this study interrogates how the role of third parties and content of a peace agreement (institutional building, reconciliation and trust-building) influences the outcomes of the Dagbon Peace Processes.

Social-psychological interpretations of peace processes emphasize that the policies of peace processes should go beyond good governance to include other communal variables such as truth, memory, forgiveness, reconciliation, restorative justice, victimhood, civil society, gender among others (Bar-Tal, 2013; Brewer, 2010). In this model, these are important action points

relevant to understanding and sustaining peace processes across the different conflicts that occur in the world. The theory recognizes the imperative role of a credible and trusted third party and leadership, context, and content of the provisions contained in peace processes in influencing outcomes of peace processes.

Researchers have applied these models to study peace processes across the world. These studies seek to understand the conditions that have influenced the success and failure of peace processes from the perspectives of these models. The next subsection discusses related research on why peace processes succeed or fail.

### **3.4. Why peace processes succeed or fail**

Within the PACS literature, many scholars have propounded different theories to explain the success and failure of peace processes. This section presents some key theories in the literature from three strands, namely the role of third parties, the management of peace processes, and the context of peace processes.

#### ***3.4.1. Third parties and peace processes***

The positive or negative presence and role of third parties during the initiation and implementation of a peace process has also been identified by peace scholars as a deciding factor in the outcome of peace processes (Mutwol, 2009; Hampson, 1996; Darby & Mac Ginty, 2008; Melander, 2016; Kieh, 2011; Mohammed, 2012; Walter, 2002). During the implementation of peace processes, credible third parties can “offer carrots or wield sticks” to ensure parties comply and can provide clarity in the interpretation of peace process provisions. This increases the commitment of the parties to the process and invariably its success, as in the case of the Lusaka peace agreement in 1999 (Bekoe, 2008; Melander, 2016). Compliance during peace process implementation is usually a challenge, and therefore when third parties provide the necessary support for the implementation of peace processes, the outcome is generally positive (Melander, 2016).

Moreover, third parties, through the provision of political and security guarantees, can promote successful implementation of peace processes (Walter, 1997). Such guarantees bring certainty into the process which in turn increases the commitment of the parties (Walter, 1997; Stedman, 2002). Likewise, these guarantees address the security dilemma of the parties in the

conflict, ensuring feelings of safety and trust that the terms of the peace processes will be fulfilled by all the actors and that all promises by stakeholders will be kept (Walter, 1997).

Further, the involvement of credible third parties in peace processes contributes to the restoration and building of confidence in these processes (Hampson, 1996). Bearing in mind that historical relations have existed between the parties, confidence-building measures are always crucial at the initiation and implementation stages to stimulate trust-building and collaboration in the implementation of the peace processes (Mac Ginty & Ozerdem, 2019; Hampson, 1996).

However, it is not always the case that third parties will lead to the success of peace processes. Third parties can also derail the success of peace processes or cause delays in implementation. Third parties with a vested interest in the conflict can undermine the implementation of a peace process, which can lead to failure (Hampson, 1996; Mutwol, 2009). This is the case when the continuation of the conflict is necessary for the achievement of their interests (Kieh, 2011; Licklider, 2001), as observed in both the Darfur peace process and the numerous peace processes in Liberia (Kieh, 2011; Mohammed, 2012).

### ***3.4.2. Context of the conflict***

Some scholars have also explained the outcome of peace processes from the dimension of the context of the conflict. Theories usually discussed within this strand include leadership, socio-psychological space, the culture and tradition of the people, and the motivation of the parties. This section briefly presents some of these theories.

One, it has further been argued that credible leadership (whether individual and/or institutional) is an essential condition within the context of the conflict that helps to explain the outcome of peace processes (Hauss, 2010; Miller & Green, 2015; Reyhler, 2006). Credible individual peace leaders working on the drafting and implementation during peace processes enhances their success (Zyl, 2019) by helping to envision a positive and cordial society. These leaders take steps to confront challenges likely to lead the society to conflict; they identify needs, direction and vision of the conflicting groups, and create the space for involving the entire society in the peace processes (Olonisakin, 2012, 2017; von Hehn, 2011).

The contribution of Nelson Mandela to the successful initiation and implementation of the South African peace processes and political transition after the end of the apartheid regime illustrates such impact. Similarly, reference can be made of Sir Seretse Khama of Botswana, Sir

Seewoosagur Ramgoolam of Mauritius, and Mohandas Gandhi of India. These leaders played significant roles in the peaceful transitions of their respective countries through behavioural change, social mobilization, and inclusiveness (Miller & Green, 2015; Reyhler & Stellamans, 2005; Rotberg, 2003; Reyhler, 2006).

Other studies have found that individual peace leaders engaged in processes are likely to make a profound impact if they have certain skills and qualities (Zyl, 2019; Reyhler & Stellamans, 2003; Miller & Green, 2015). These skills and qualities include relational skills, mediation skills, courage, humility, hardiness, wisdom and elicitive skills (Byrne, 2017a; Reyhler & Stellamans, 2003). Individual leaders who cultivate these skills and qualities during peace processes make a significant contribution to success. Therefore, it is not just the presence of an individual leader that makes the difference. What matters is that the individual leader must have the necessary skills, capabilities, and qualities to motivate all stakeholders to commit them to the peace processes (Olonisakin, 2012).

Individual leaders often take into consideration the benefit and cost of implementing peace processes to them and their adversaries (von Hehn, 2011). The motivation and self-interest of the leader are therefore crucial in determining the success and failure of peace processes (Von Hehn, 2011). Self-interested leadership in the initiation and implementation of peace processes, contributes to the likelihood of failure. However, leaders who build bridges, foster dialogue, and create new options for the sustainable resolution of the conflict are establishing an environment for the success of peace processes (Von Hehn, 2011). The credible leadership provided by President Santos of Colombia by inviting FARC to the negotiation table facilitated the successful implementation of the Colombia peace processes (Calderon, 2017). This was possible because the president placed priority on building bridges and dialogue with his adversaries.

The discussion of leadership in peace processes has also been broadened to include the infrastructure, structures, and institutions established within the society to build sustainable peace and to serve as places of support in times of conflict (Reyhler, 2006; Olonisakin, 2017; von Hehn, 2011). These institutions and structures support the initiation and implementation of peace processes and, therefore, must be seen to be transparent and accountable in the discharge of their responsibilities (Olonisakin, 2017). Mobilizing a sense of community for the success of every peace process and sustainable peace processes is not just the sole responsibility of the

individual peace leader, but also of institutions and structures established to guide peacebuilding processes (Reychler, 2006; Olonisakin, 2017; von Hehn, 2011).

In sum, credible and effective leadership is imperative for successful negotiation, mediation, and implementation of peace processes. In peace processes where individual leaders do not support the process and institutional leadership does not exist, such peace processes are likely to fail.

Two, another context-related variable that is used to explain the outcome of peace processes is the socio-psychological environment in which peace processes are initiated and implemented. Socio-psychological environments can be integrative (enhancing) and disintegrative (inhibiting) to peace processes (Reychler & Langer, 2003). Research on the socio-psychological environment has focused on a myriad of issues. For this review, two such issues are discussed; trust and emotions.

One of the variables of a socio-psychological environment that enhances or inhibits peace processes is trust/distrust. Trust or distrust is built based on the historical relations that existed between the parties (Alon & Bar-Tal, 2016). Historical relations that are defined by beneficial experiences, mutual support, and accountability establish trust in the mutual relationships between the parties. However, historical relations characterized by harmful experiences, breaches of agreements, and non-accountability of institutions and individuals in the mutual relationships of the parties establish distrust (Sztompka, 2016).

Trust in peace processes entails confidence that the other party will fulfill their obligation to the processes and will not attempt to deceive; it involves expectations that all stakeholders will undertake required roles and responsibilities, and that there will be no attempts to harm each other (Reychler & Langer, 2003). Where mutual trust exists, the parties are willing to take the risk and rely on each other to implement peace processes (Sztompka, 2016). Mutual trust, therefore, generates confidence between the parties, increases the willingness of the parties to negotiate and compromise, minimizes security dilemmas, and helps the parties to feel secure and have confidence in the outcomes of the negotiations (Netabay, 2009).

Mutual trust among the parties is, therefore, a crucial factor in successful negotiations and implementation of peace processes (Netabay, 2009). According to Darby and Mac Ginty (2008), a successful peace process depends on the parties' willingness to negotiate in good faith. Likewise, Licklider (2001) argues that mutual trust is essential in peace processes because it

engenders compromise and flexibility, key ingredients for success. Peace processes that are not based on mutual trust are on the verge of collapse (Licklider, 2001).

In a study of the Darfur peace processes, Netabay (2009) observed that trust and confidence between the Sudanese government and the rebel movement were not present in the processes, resulting in bad negotiations. Mistrust between the parties was the underlining factor in the collapse of the 2004 N'Djamena and Addis Ababa peace efforts. Also, the Abuja negotiation of 2005 and 2006 that led to the signing of the Darfur peace agreement was characterized by mistrust between the government and the rebels (Netabay, 2009). Moreover, in the former Yugoslavia, there existed a great deal of distrust among the three ethnic groups - Bosnians, Serbs, and Croats - which obstructed peace processes in that country (Reychler & Langer, 2003).

Trust is reciprocal; as such, it is the expectations that no party will go against the agreed terms and conditions in the peace processes (Reychler & Langer, 2003). Mutual distrust between parties undermines peace processes and compromises the ability of the parties to reach a comprehensive and sustainable process, while trust enhances success (Alon & Bar-Tal, 2016; Netabay, 2009).

In addition, negative emotions also constitute a socio-psychological barrier that can inhibit peace processes (Halperin et al., 2008; 2011). In particular, fear and hatred reinforce underlying beliefs of the parties in a conflict, limiting consideration of conflicting parties and hindering information processing (Bar-Tal et al., 2010). Fear, for instance, contributes to cognitive freezing and closed-mindedness (Halperin et al., 2008), and can makes the parties avoid taking risk which increases intolerance. Equally, fear breeds violence (Bar-Tal, 2013). Hatred, as a salient inter-group demonstration of emotions, is used by one group - inner group members- to dehumanize members of another group - the outgroup. It inspires people in a group to harm members of the out-group and to work toward their elimination (Halperin, 2008).

When fear and hatred infuse peace processes, they affect the parties' processing of new information and options. Such emotions create the lens through which people perceive and interpret the reality of the conflict including the conflict resolution processes and the distortion of information (Bar-Tal et al., 2010). The consequence is that the parties are less likely to compromise, it becomes difficult to overcome disagreements, and proposals outlined for the peaceful resolution of the conflict are not accepted by the parties and implemented (Bar-Tal &

Halperin, 2011). In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, fear and hatred constituted socio-psychological barriers that impeded peaceful resolution (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011).

Three, the motivation of conflicting parties to engage in peace processes constitutes a major context factor that determines the outcome of peace processes. When internal parties receive external and internal support and believe there are more benefits to engaging in conflict, there is no motivation to engage in a peace process (Reychler & Langer, 2003; Westendorf, 2015).

The involvement of other parties especially third parties in a conflict can increase the capacity for the conflict to escalate, as noted earlier (Bose, 2007; Kriesberg, 1998). For Kriesberg, outside parties may see the conflict as an opportunity to maximize some benefits or retaliate against an older enemy or an ally to one of the parties. The involvement of third parties could be direct such as sending troops or indirectly, by providing material and political support. Likewise, conflicts tend to escalate when parties believe that they have external support or outside support (Pruitt & Kim, 2004; Ramsbotham et al., 2016; Mitchell, 2014). Citing the case of the Israel-Palestine conflict, Pruitt and Kim (2004) observed that the escalation of the conflict in 2000 was a result of the support provided by the US and the Arab world to the Israelis and Palestinians respectively.

Likewise, in societies themselves divided and polarized along with the conflicting groups, it is difficult to initiate and implement sustainable peace processes. In such a situation 'we-ness' or solidarity, a necessity in the successful development of a peace process, is missing (Reychler & Langer, 2003). This is not limited to only the primary actors of the conflict, but also to secondary actors that have a stake in the conflict and the outcome of the peace processes.

If the implementation of a peace process is considered a threat to the vested interest of these secondary actors in the conflict, they tend not to provide the necessary support for implementation (Mac Ginty & Ozerdem, 2019; Kieh, 2011; Connolly & Maina, 2016; von Hehn, 2011). Stedman (2000) referred to these groups of people as spoilers<sup>14</sup>. In the case of the Somali peace processes spanning from 1991 to 2009, one of the factors that accounted for the failure of the peace processes to take root in the country was war profiteering as the different actors in the conflict were focused on protecting their interests (Apuuli, 2016). Hence, when primary and

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<sup>14</sup> "Leaders and parties who believe the emerging peace threatens their power, world view, and interest and who use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it" (Stedman, 2000, p. 178).

secondary actors in a conflict identify opportunities to continue the conflict, there is no motivation to support implementation of peace processes (Westendorf, 2015).

Four, in recent times, there has been a great deal of literature focusing on the role of culture in conflict and conflict resolution. The general conclusion that emerges is that although culture as a context-related variable is not a cause of conflict, culture is an important variable in understanding conflict dynamics including conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Accordingly, some scholars have argued that the culture and tradition of the conflict context has a bearing on the initiation, implementation, and outcomes of peace processes (Avruch, 2012; Brigg, 2008; Augsburger, 1992; Pillay & Lebaron, 2006; Marsella, 2005). Scholars have delved into this debate from different perspectives.

Some scholars have explained that issues discussed at the negotiation stages of peace processes, and the beliefs parties embody about conflict, are largely dictated by the culture and traditions of the conflict context. This is mostly the case when the conflict under consideration borders on the traditions and customs of the society. As such, issues negotiated during peace processes, as well as any resolution approach that is tailored toward demystifying particular beliefs about the conflict, must be based on groups' cultures and traditions, if implementation is to succeed (Arai, 2006; Brigg, 2008; d'Estrée & Parsons, 2018; Lederach, 1995; Pedersen, 2001; Worchsel, 2005). This argument has largely influenced the writings on indigenous approaches to peacemaking and peacebuilding. Some indigenous peacebuilding scholars note that peacemaking efforts should be premised on a group's cultural norms, institutions, technologies and frameworks of the conflict context (Mac Ginty, 2010a; Tolulope & Muthoni, 2017; Wanis-St. John, 2013). The main argument of indigenous peacemaking scholars is that peacemaking approaches that are based on the culture and traditions of the conflict context are sustainable and less costly, promote relationship building and reconciliation (Lundy & Adjei, 2015; Olowu, 2018; Tuso, 2016).

Other scholars have argued that culture influences the choice of the conflict resolution approach, especially the selection of the third parties or mediators. As noted by Augsburger (1992), in traditional cultures, there are pathways for the resolution of conflicts which must not be ignored in peace processes. As such, third parties or mediators who do not conform to the culture and traditions of the conflict context - especially in high context "we" oriented cultures -

are likely not to be accepted by the parties in conflict (Brett, 2007; de Rivera, 2009; Lebaron, 2003; Lebaron & Pillay, 2006; Lederach, 1995).

Likewise, the third parties or mediators leading the negotiation processes must be knowledgeable, understand, and appreciate the culture and traditions of the conflict context (Avruch, 2003, 2012; d'Estrée & Parsons, 2018; Lebaron & Pillay, 2006). Mediators that are not knowledgeable about the culture and traditions of the conflict context find it challenging to facilitate negotiation (Byrne, 2017a). Parties often take advantage of such a situation to abuse peace processes (Lebaron, 2014; Avruch, 1998). Mediators must, therefore, not forget their ignorance of the context and make conscious effort to emerge themselves inductively in peace processes, a process through which one becomes aware of the complexities of the culture and traditions of the conflict context (Bräuchler, 2015; Brigg, 2008; d'Estrée & Parsons, 2018; Lebaron, 2014).

Some scholars have, however, argued that culture could become an instrument for abuse and discrimination during peace processes. Parties in conflict sometimes use the culture and traditions of the conflict context as a basis for different interpretations. This occurs both in groups that share a similar culture and those that do not share a common culture (Avruch, 2003, 2012). Moreover, cultures and traditions serve as the foundation for discrimination in peacebuilding and conflict resolution so that culture and traditions are used to exclude certain segments of society from peace processes (Ateng et al., 2018; Mac Ginty, 2011; Ozerdem & Lee, 2015; Lee, 2019; Ramsbotham et al., 2016).

Peace processes, therefore, have to be based on the cultural context, and on an emic approach to resolving the conflict (Avruch, 2012; Brigg, 2008; Ross, 2007). When mediator's use the emic approach, they understand that "the conflict is based on the assumption that the local understanding of conflict - the local language used to describe its process, the local pathways or strategies for managing the conflict - are superior to any understanding of any imported understanding of language and pathways" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 37). However, when cultural tradition and the conflict context are not properly integrated into peace processes, this can negatively affect their outcome (Avruch, 2012; Brigg, 2008; Bräuchler, 2015; Lee, 2019; Ozerdem & Lee, 2015). The participants in Chapter five narrated that culture is a context-related variable in shaping peace processes. Dagbon's culture guided both parties' narratives, the negotiation processes, and ultimately the outcome of both peace processes.

### ***3.4.3. Management of the peace processes***

Some scholars have also explained the outcome of peace processes from the perspective of the management of the peace processes. This section discusses some of the management-related factors that account for the deadlock of peace processes. The factors discussed include the implementation of the peace processes, the content of peace agreements, and participation.

First, one of the prominent explanations for the failure or success of peace processes from the perspective of the management of peace processes highlights the crucial importance of the implementation stage of such processes (Bekoe, 2008). The extent to which peace processes are properly implemented has a tremendous impact on outcomes (Joshi & Quinn, 2015; Agbu, 2016; Colchester et al., 2020). For example, poorly implemented peace processes generate mistrust, fear, and suspicion among the parties which results in people developing divergent interpretations (DeRouen et al., 2010) and affect the likelihood of parties neglecting and withdrawing from peace processes and returning to violence (Joshi & Quinn, 2015). Likewise, poor and weak implementation of peace processes tends to derail the efforts of all stakeholders (Maina, 2016) and has the potential to significantly undermine the entire process (DeRouen et al., 2010).

For example, in Cote d'Ivoire, the failure to fully implement the peace process signed by the parties contributed to the outbreak of violence in 2010 and the collapse of the entire process (Agbu, 2016). Forging quality implementation of peace processes is therefore non-negotiable if peace processes are to be sustained and to prevent the return to civil war (Lederach, 2016). It is therefore imperative to pay critical attention to implementation barriers such as vague and expedient peace processes, lack of coordination between mediators and implementers, lack of coordination among implementing agencies, and the emergence of unresolved issues, among others, and outline the appropriate steps and structures to address these barriers (Colchester et al., 2020; Stedman, 2002).

Overcoming implementation barriers requires the presence of third parties (as above), for instance, that can proffer carrots and wield sticks, support mediators, and foster trust (Bekoe, 2008; DeRouen et al., 2010; Hampson, 1996; Joshi & Quinn, 2015). This, however, depends on the capacity and willingness of the third party (Doyle & Sambanis, 2006).

Further, other scholars have noted that transparency and accountability are important during implementation of peace processes. Implementation must occur in a manner that will not

make parties develop the impression that the process was designed to favour a particular party. Rather, it must be conducted in ways that engender trust in the peace processes and their outcomes. Transparency and accountability help to garner the needed support from all stakeholders (Maina, 2016). The absence of transparency and accountability in the implementation of peace processes may lead parties to withdraw from the peace processes, and they may resort to violence as the way to achieve their goals (DeRouen et al., 2010; Maina, 2016).

Moreover, unresolved issues can emerge during the implementation stages of peace processes. How these issues are addressed is important for the sustainability and continuity of the peace processes. When there are no clearly defined solutions or clarity on the procedures for addressing unresolved issues, it becomes problematic and tends to derail the entire peace processes (Colchester et al., 2020).

Peace processes are only good and successful if they are implemented. Conflicts that relapse into violence because of failure in this regard are difficult to renegotiate (DeRouen et al., 2010). When peace processes are successfully implemented, sustainable peace is possible. Therefore, there is a need to put in place the necessary and appropriate frameworks, structures, and procedures for the successful implementation of peace processes. This includes structures and procedures for addressing emerging issues that can derail implementation (Colchester et al., 2020; Maina, 2016; Stedman, 2002).

Second, another theory from the management strand that explains the success or failure of peace process implementation is with regards to timing (Langer & Brown, 2016; Reyhler, 2015; Stimec et al., 2011). Inadequate application of time in peace processes can significantly alter the outcomes (Reyhler, 2015). The question of when to intervene to resolve the conflict is particularly important in this regard, as well as whether the conflict is ripe for negotiations (Zartman, 2008), and when and how to exit (Reyhler, 2015).

Three other theories have been developed to explain the place of time and timing in peace processes: ripeness theory, readiness theory, and grief theory (Campbell, 2011). Ripeness theory, developed by Zartman (2008), argues that the success of peace process efforts is based on taking the initiatives at the ‘right’ time or moment, determined based on contextual conditions between the parties such as power symmetry, mutually hurting stalemate, and a potential way out.

Building on ripeness theory, readiness theory deepens the conversation and defines the ‘right’ moment based on the psychological factors that move parties to engage in negotiation (Stimec et al., 2011). The theory posits that the right moment to engage in negotiations is influenced by the motivations of the parties to end the conflict, which in turn is determined by the perception that the conflict is dysfunctional, the cost of the conflict, the pressure of third parties, and the weariness of the parties (Stimec et al., 2011). Also, readiness is defined by the optimism of the parties about a perceived way out of the conflict or gains of a positive outcome (Stimec et al., 2011). The optimism of the parties is grounded in the perception that the other side is motivated to negotiate, to evaluate the negotiation context, as well as having the presence of credible third parties (Stimec et al., 2011).

The third theory relevant to timing is grief theory. According to grief theory, conflict contexts are characterized by emotions as parties grieve their loss. Therefore, when parties are not allowed to express their feelings of loss, emotions continue and have the potential to affect peacebuilding efforts. Thus, the failure to manage the grief of the parties during a conflict situation culminates in the inability to resolve the conflict (Stimec et al., 2011). The right moment according to grief theory, therefore, is when the grieving is complete such that parties are ready to resolve the conflict (Stimec et al., 2011).

The socio-psychological environment is therefore a potential inhibitor of peace processes (Bar-Tal, 2013). The socio-psychological elements discussed above are used to develop a spectrum through which members of the society receive and interpret information including peace processes (Hameiri et al., 2014). Also, these repertoires inhibit the flow of new information that has the potential to facilitate the successful resolution of conflict (Bar-Tal et al., 2010). Establishing a flourishing socio-psychological environment is a necessary building block for a successful peace process (Reychler & Langer, 2003).

Third, the design and content of peace agreements is another management factor that explains the outcome of peace processes (Fortna, 2003; Hampson, 1996; Mac Ginty & Ozerdem, 2019; Maina, 2016; Westendorf, 2015). Peace agreements that are poorly designed tend to fail during implementation; those that are properly designed stand the chance to succeed (Badran, 2014; Stedman, 2002). The quality of peace agreements is evaluated based on the specific provisions captured in such agreements, the availability of sanctions and credible enforcement

authority, and implementation timelines (Mac Ginty & Ozerdem, 2019; Maina, 2016; Reyhler, 2015; Stedman, 2002).

Peace processes aimed at reconstituting the political structure of a country through power-sharing are most likely to be successful than those that do not address power imbalances (Fortna, 2003; Hampson, 1996; Maina, 2016). However, in situation where there is mistrust among the parties, power-sharing could breakdown and lead to the outbreak of conflict among elites (Jung, 2012). Other scholars have argued that the provisions contained in an accord of a peace process should focus on power-sharing as well as the socio-psychological elements of the society (Brewer, 2010; Mac Ginty, 2018; Mac Ginty & Ozerdem, 2019). Peace accords that address both socio-psychological and power elements of a conflict are more likely to gain general societal support, an ultimate condition for success (Bar-Tal et al., 2010).

Likewise, how the provisions are stated in the peace agreement also have an influence on the implementation and outcome of peace processes. Provisions stated unclearly or ambiguously provide the opportunity for the abuse of the processes and entrenchment of positions and power (Doyle & Sambanis, 2006; Maina, 2016; Rothchild, 2002; Stedman & Rothchild, 1996).

Moreover, peace agreements that include a credible enforcement authority and sanctions stand the chance of succeeding. These aspects serve as a deterrent to deviation from implementation (Hampson, 1996), monitoring compliance of the parties to the peace agreement and the entire peace processes (Westendorf, 2015).

Further, Reyhler (2015) explained that clear timelines are an important factor in peacebuilding, especially when it comes to the planning, implementation, and monitoring of peace agreements. Reyhler (2015) articulates that providing timelines promotes proper coordination and coherence, and allows for proper implementation and evaluation of benchmarks. This can make a difference in terms of the outcomes of the implementation of peace processes. Likewise, Hartzell (2002) noted that good quality peace processes have implementation guidelines and deadlines. In the case of the Nicaragua peace processes, Hartzell (2002) observed that timelines resulted in the establishment of a system that helped to monitor and verify the progress of implementation.

Fourth, some scholars have also argued that the level of participation and inclusion of relevant actors and stakeholders in the initiation, negotiation, and implementation of peace processes is another management conditions that explains the success or failure of peace

processes (Brewer, 2010; Mac Ginty & Ozerdem, 2019; Darby & Mac Ginty, 2000; Nilsson, 2012). Peace processes have largely focused on the traditional actors without much effort to include non-traditional actors. As such, the knowledge and experiences of non-traditional actors such as women, youth groups, former combatants, people living with disabilities, and LGBTTQ2+ citizens are not usually incorporated into peace processes (Byrne et al. 2018; O'Reilly et al., 2015).

Peace processes that provide the opportunity for the inclusion and participation of diverse actors and stakeholders such as civil society groups, women's groups, youth groups among others increase the legitimacy, impact, quality and durability of the processes and may have better prospects of success than those that do not do so (Krause et al., 2018; M. Nilsson, 2018; Belloni, 2008; Jastard & Sisk, 2008; Wanis-St. John & Kew, 2008; Nilsson, 2012).

For the inclusion and participation of different segments of the society there is a need to differentiate between minimal level and maximal level of participation (Melander, 2016). At the minimal level, Melander (2016) conceptualizes participation and inclusion as the involvement of all warring parties in the peace processes. Peace processes that are not signed by all the parties, most notably some conflicting parties in the conflict, will most likely collapse (Nilsson, 2012). When some warring parties are excluded from the peace processes, they are incentivized to defect from the processes, which ultimately leads to a breakdown (Fortna, 2003; Melander, 2016; Mohammed, 2012; Mutwol, 2009).

At the maximal level, Melander (2016) explained that participation and inclusion are not limited only to the warring parties, but also to other segments of the society such as civil society organizations, women groups, business groups, and religious groups. The participation and inclusion of these marginalized groups in peace processes increase the legitimacy, quality, and durability of the processes (Belloni, 2008; Jastard & Sisk, 2008), as well as increasing public and social support for the processes (Krause et al., 2018; Nilsson, 2018; Wanis-St. John & Kew, 2008).

Another dimension of participation and inclusion addresses the issues captured in the peace agreements. Peace processes that concentrate on only the political aspects of society hardly gain public support (Brewer, 2010; O'Reilly et al., 2015). Peace processes must recognize the needs and experiences of different societal groups and address the needs of marginalized groups (Nilsson, 2012). Peace processes that are elite-driven and focus on only political governance

issues reduce the opportunity for including unique needs of diverse segments of society (Krause et al., 2018; Mac Ginty & Ozerdem, 2019).

For scholars from the socio-psychological school of thought and basic human needs<sup>15</sup> perspectives, peace processes that place emphasis largely on only political settlement with little attention to cosmopolitan aspects of recognition, identity, security, reconciliation, and relationship building, or tackling identity-based issues, are doomed to fail (Brewer, 2010; Ramsbotham et al., 2016; Mitchell, 2014; Kelman, 2009).

### **3.5. Conclusion**

The literature reviewed above represents an overview of the current state of knowledge regarding some of the explanations for the success or failure of peace processes. Although these studies do provide an in-depth understanding of the conditions that influence the success or failure of peace processes, there exist some identifiable gaps in these studies. In the first place, the focus of these studies was on intra-state interethnic conflicts or civil war, with little empirical evidence about the influence of these factors on the trajectories of peace processes in intragroup conflicts.

In terms of methodology, case study approaches that are most commonly used are inductive yet not informed by the cultural context of the cases selected. In other words, these studies did not apply critical ethnographic perspectives; nor were they designed as empowering and transformative. The driving question of the present research is how the features outlined in the theories discussed above manifest in the case of the Dagbon intra-chieftaincy peace processes to influence the outcomes of the peace processes. This research explores the influence of these themes in the outcomes of the first Dagbon peace processes in conjunction with the subjective lay knowledge of key stakeholders using a critical ethnographic case study approach.

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<sup>15</sup> John Burton's (1990) Basic Human Needs theory stipulates that for there to be harmony in society, people's basic needs must be met that include participation, autonomy, recognition, identity, and security.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Research methodology**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

Chapter four delineates the methodological procedures employed in addressing the research question and understanding peace processes in the Dagbon intra-chieftaincy conflict. The first section outlines and provides the rationale for the study's strategy of inquiry. The second section discusses and provides the rationale for the philosophical and theoretical paradigms underpinning the study. In the third section, the methodological framework (case study informed by ethnography and to a lesser extent, critical theory) is outlined and justified. The fourth section describes the site and data sources (including participants), the selection and recruitment processes, and data collection procedures. The fifth section summarizes the data analysis procedures. The sixth section presents issues relating to ethics, trustworthiness, and the challenges encountered during the research, followed by a concluding section.

#### **4.2. Strategy of inquiry**

To address the research question, a qualitative research approach served as the guiding principle and framework for the entire study. The choice of a qualitative research methodology for this study was largely influenced by three aspects: the study and research question, and my own philosophical and theoretical perspectives as the researcher. The study was an in-depth analysis of the Dagbon peace processes initiated by the Ghanaian government for resolving the Dagbon conflict, based on the perspectives of participants who have been directly and indirectly involved in the peace processes since 2006. The analysis was grounded in an understanding of the historical, social, cultural, and political environment of the conflict zones and the entire country.

Ongoing experiences of interactions within these contexts largely determine how various parties interpret (construct) the meaning and outcome of the peace processes. Interpretations can only be expressed and therefore explored through words and meanings. Qualitative research provides the opportunity for exploring a phenomenon (and its meaning) from the perspective of the participants (Creswell, 2014). As such, reflecting on the nature of the research question for this study (e.g., Guest et al., 2013), the choice was made to rely on the in-depth responses of

participants to semi-structured questions about the peace processes, considered within the social, cultural, economic, and political context.

Participants were considered the knowledge hub for the implementation of the peace processes (defined within the political, social, cultural, and economic environments of the conflict zone). The philosophical and theoretical assumption that knowledge is socially constructed by human actors (Guest et al., 2013) guided the study and selection of the research approach. This philosophical and theoretical perspective, reflecting a post-positivist epistemology, further aligns with a qualitative research approach (case study), and is discussed further below.

#### **4.3. Philosophical and theoretical paradigm of the study**

This section describes the study's perspective about what constitutes social reality and whether reality is singular or multiple – ontological - and the nature of knowledge and how it is derived or created – epistemological (Yin, 2016). Philosophical paradigms reflecting these assumptions, explicitly and implicitly, guide how knowledge is constructed and generated.

The ontological position of this study was influenced by the argument that objective reality is difficult to achieve. However, based on the responses of participants, the approximation of an objective truth is feasible (Guest et al., 2013). The epistemological position of this study is that knowledge is constructed by the participants and based on the subjective positions of the participants, one can develop an objective conclusion. As such, the post-positivist paradigm was embraced to study the Dagbon peace processes.

The adoption of this paradigm was first premised on the position that the perspectives provided by the participants were not entirely the objective reality with regards to the deadlock of the Dagbon peace processes. However, based on their perspectives, I was able to approximate the objective truth about the factors that accounted for the deadlock of the peace processes and how these factors accounted for the deadlock. The conclusions that were drawn were therefore “evidence-based probabilities rather than the absolute truths” (Guest et al., 2013, p. 11). Thus, the study presented a reasonable amount of reality through my interpretation of the responses of the participants. This reality was therefore a reflection of the participants’ responses (Guest et al., 2013). As a post-positivist defined research, the data collections methods deployed were systematic and transparent (Guest et al., 2013).

Second, the choice of this paradigm was based on the idea that social reality is also constructed jointly through meaningful interaction between the researcher and researched<sup>16</sup> which takes place within the context – political, social, economic and culture – of the researched participants (Rugg & Petre, 2007). This study focused on understanding the outcome of the first Dagbon peace processes within the context of the conflict zone; the multiple and varied ways that the participants understood and interpreted the Roadmap or peace processes were influenced by their everyday contexts in which they lived and worked. The observations of the responses of the participants were therefore interpreted to generate meanings and multiple truths for analysis. Throughout the process, this ultimately allowed for a deeper understanding of the Dagbon peace processes in their complexity and context – social, cultural, economic and political.

#### **4.4. Methodological framework**

To explore the research question, this research used a case study methodology that drew on selected principles from ethnography, and to a lesser extent critical theory.

##### ***4.4.1. Case study***

A case study approach proffered an opportunity for a detailed study and an in-depth description of the peace processes as embedded within the sociocultural contexts of the conflict. In case study research, the aim is not to generalize nor determine a cause-effect relationship (Stake, 2005). Rather, the researcher is focused on learning deeply about (describing, explaining, and evaluating) a unique phenomenon holistically, within its social and political context (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Gall et al., 2007). In a study on “co-existence and reconciliation in the Northern Region of Ghana” a case study approach was adopted that allowed for the researcher’s expanding and deepening engagement with the participants (Assefa, 2001).

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<sup>16</sup> That is, the adoption of this paradigm acknowledges that the researcher and the researched collaborate in the construction of knowledge about the peace processes.

#### **4.4.2. Ethnography**

The experiences of those who live through the dynamics of conflict and are engaged in the peace processes in Ghana's Northern Region are key in understanding the trajectories of the peace processes. Such subjective experiences are, however, "unique to the socio-cultural settings and [are] rooted in cosmologies inherently resistant to simple manipulation by external actors" (Millar, 2018, p. 4). Likewise, the conceptualization and experiences of conflict are culturally determined (Brauchler, 2018). Understanding and unearthing the experiences of these people can be facilitated through methodological orientations that are ethnographically inclined (Brauchler, 2018).

According to scholars who argue in favour of ethnography, the failure of most peace intervention programmes is attributable to the disconnect of these programmes to local needs and contexts and a limited understanding of the local and cultural dynamics (Autesserre, 2014; Millar, 2011; Richmond, 2012; Mac Ginty, 2010b, 2011). To address this gap, ethnographic methods have to be applied to appreciate the undercurrents of conflict and peace (Brauchler, 2018; Millar, 2018).

This study used interviews and focus groups that were informed by ethnographic principles, in that the goal was to understand the peace processes of the Dagbon intra-chieftaincy conflict within the participants' context or environment instead of that of the researcher. The ethnographic methodology in peace research is "concerned with understanding and describing the experiences of conflict or peace nested within and filtered through the social and cultural lenses unique to particular peoples in conflict or post-conflict settings" (Millar, 2018, p. 11).

The use of the ethnographic methodology in the study of the outcomes of the Dagbon peace processes provided an opportunity for a thoughtful analysis of data. It also helped to explain and explore the "why" as well as understand the "how." Thus, an opportunity was created for the understanding of the issues from the perspective of the participant and the researcher. In other words, a condition of reciprocity was established where emic and etic came into play.

#### **4.4.3. Critical theory**

Moreover, the study adopts a critical paradigm to engender reflexivity, collaboration, and emancipation in the research process. The study aims to establish a foundation for the inclusion

of the marginalized in the peace processes by empowering them and creating a space for, and amplifying, their voices. Above all, the method allows participants to critically reflect on the peace processes, which engenders respect, trust, reciprocity, and relationality (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Madison, 2019).

#### **4.5. Data collection procedures**

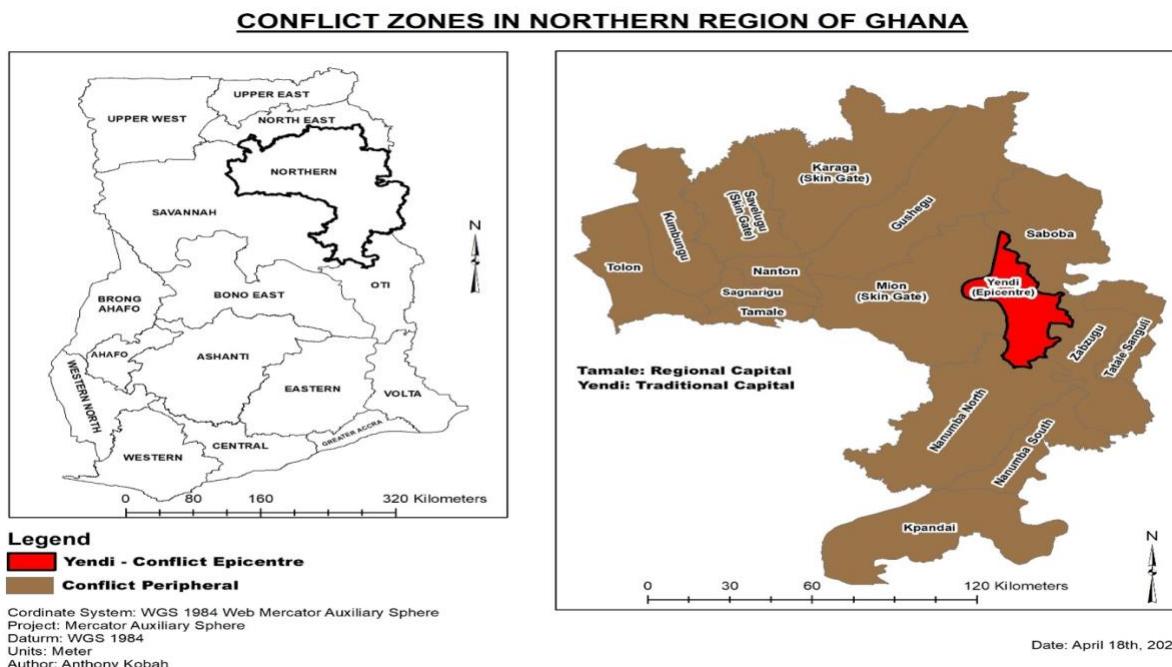
This section delineates the data collection procedures that were deployed in this study. Specifically, the section discusses the study site, the study participants, the selection of participants, and the recruitment of participants.

##### **4.5.1. Study site**

The site for the study was the Dagbon Kingdom (see Figure 1 below). The Kingdom is situated in the Northern Region of Ghana and is the site of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict and the implementation of the Dagbon peace processes.

**Figure 1:**

A map showing the conflict epicenter and periphery



#### **Field work (2019)**

The Dagbon Kingdom is headed by the Ya-Na with Yendi as its traditional capital as shown in Figure 1 above. The Kingdom is divided into three major provinces, namely Karaga, Mion, and Savelugu (Staniland, 1975). The major communities constituting the Mion Province are the Yendi, Sambo, Gushiegu, Zabzugu, Sunson, Nakpali, Demon, and others. Karaga, Gimle, Sung, Kpattinga, Pigu, Nyon, Tudjo, Ga, and Galwie constitute the Karaga province. The largest of all the provinces is the Toma or Savelugu and includes Zugu, Kumbungu, Saganerigu, Zangbalon, Nyankpala, Lungbunga, Dalon, Nantong, Diari, Tolon, Gulkpegu, and many others (Tamakloe, 1931, as cited in Abukari, 2012, p. 67).

The Northern Region is the jurisdiction of the modern political system of the Kingdom. The region is headed by a Regional Minister who is appointed by the President of the nation. The region is further divided into local governance structures referred to as Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies. These local governance structures are tasked with planning, implementing, and monitoring development activities at the local level. The region undertakes a supervisory role. The Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies include Tolon, Kumbungu, Savelugu, Karaga, Nanton, Sagnarigu, Tamale, Gushiegu, Mion, Yendi, Saboba, Zabzugu, Nanumba North, Tatale Sanguli, Nanumba South, and Kpandai (See Figure 1 above).

#### ***4.5.2. Study participants***

The research participants were recruited from the UNDP, the Ghana Office; the National Peace Council (NPC); the Regional Peace Council (RPC) for the Northern Region; the Northern Regional House of Chiefs, the Municipal Security Committee of the Yendi Municipality; youth groups (18 to 35 years old) and women's groups within the conflict site who are engaged in peacebuilding activities; opinion leaders/elders of the community; representatives of each of the parties involved in the conflict; representatives of the peace negotiation teams, the Association of Persons with Disabilities, peace activists, religious leaders, and CSOs.

These participants were active stakeholders involved in the peace processes, and were therefore in a strong position to provide insight into the implementation of the processes. The youth groups represent the umbrella body of young people in Dagbon. They have mostly played a leading role in the conflict and, therefore, have a major stake in the peace process. Women's associations were also actively engaged in peacemaking in Dagbon. Women are mostly affected by the conflict and yet are excluded from the peacemaking processes. Involving the women in

the research provided the platform for them to discuss their perspectives concerning the peace processes.

The Association of Persons with Disabilities (APD) is the umbrella group of persons living with disabilities in Dagon. The APD has over the years undertaken peacebuilding activities among its members and within the study area. Their interest in peacemaking allowed me to understand the dynamics of the Dagbon peace processes from their perspective.

#### ***4.5.3. Selection of participants***

In peace research, the quality of data in part depends on the ability of the researcher to select participants who have deep knowledge about the historical and cultural contexts of the conflict. As such, a combination of non-probability sampling techniques such as purposive sampling and snowballing sampling methods were employed in selecting the participants. To undertake an in-depth analysis of the peace processes, interaction with people, organizations, and institutions that were actively involved and have rich, in-depth information about the conflict was necessary. This process also necessitated purposive sampling - intentionally selecting these ‘information-rich’ individuals, sites or organizations to learn about the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012).

In addition, snowball sampling provided an opportunity to reach out to participants from certain groups who are otherwise hidden because of issues of marginalization, mistrust, suspicion, and fear - a particular concern in conflict environments. The researcher faces the challenge of gaining trust, familiarity, and cooperation among participants, so that snowball sampling can help address this through the use of existing social networks (Cohen & Arieli, 2011). In the present study, combining snowball and purposive sampling methods facilitated the inclusion of women, youth, and members of other marginalized groups such as the APD in the study alongside other individuals who also have in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon under study.

#### ***4.5.4. Recruitment of participants***

Participants were recruited in the Dagbon Kingdom of the Northern Region of Ghana from August 2019 to December 2019. A total of 63 participants comprising 26 females and 37 males participated in the research, as shown in Table 1 below:

**Table 1:** List and number of participants in each category (of type of participant)

No.	Category of participants	Number of participants
1.	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	1
2.	Civil society organisations	4
3.	Opinion leaders in the Kingdom	4
4.	Peace activists	4
5.	Religious leaders	2
6.	Peace researchers	1
7.	Representatives of the Royal Families	2
8.	Municipal Security Committee	1
9.	Committee of Eminent Chiefs	1
10.	National Peace Council	1
11.	Northern Regional Peace Council	1
12.	Northern Regional House of Chiefs	1
13.	Youth groups	16
14.	Association of Persons with Disabilities	8
15.	Women's groups	16
<b>Total</b>		<b>63</b>

### Field Work (2019)

Recruitment was done in consultation with the Northern Regional Peace Council (RPC) (see Appendix 3). Although the RPC was also a potential participant, it also acted as a gatekeeper of the study. While the guidance and advice of the RPC were vital in the selection of the participants, the researcher was mindful of potentially recruiting ineligible participants. In that respect, the researcher developed recruitment guidelines that were culturally and politically sensitive for the organization. These guidelines are outlined in the next section below.

Contacts were made with the RPC who helped to identify, contact and recruit participants for the individual interviews (this facilitated identification and recruitment of participants who had deeper and better knowledge and appreciation of the peace processes) and contributed to establishing trust between the researcher and the participants. Whereas an informal contact was made with the RPC both as participant and gatekeeper, I submitted a formal request to the potential participants that stated the purpose of the study, why the site was chosen, the time frame of the research, the reporting strategy, participant benefits, and assurance that their identity would not be made known in the presentation of the data or in any way that will compromise confidentiality (see Appendices 4, 5, 6, and 7).

Recruitment of participants for the focus group discussions was done through the various associations (The APD, women's groups, and a youth group undertaking peacemaking projects).

Groups provided needed information about their members for recruitment based on the guidelines that were made available to them (age, gender, and language). I undertook recruitment of members of these various groups.

#### **4.6. Methods: Data sources and data collection**

The study relied on both primary and some secondary data (mostly news articles). Primary data sources included in-depth interviews and focus group interviews.

##### ***4.6.1. In-depth interviews***

Arguably, in-depth interviews are one of the most important sources of case study evidence because well-informed interviewees can provide important insights into human affairs or actions (Yin, 2014). In inductive research, interviews also provide the space for participants to freely express candid perspectives on discussion topics which can provide a degree of empowerment for them to control the interview process (Close, 2018; Creswell, 2012). In-depth interviews in this study also provided flexibility in the data collection processes and helped unearth detailed and relevant information with the aid of probing.

I conducted a total of 23 in-depth, face-to-face individual interviews with participants from the UNDP, the NPC, the northern RPC, the Municipal Security Committee (MSC), CSOs, both royal families, the CEF, peace activists, opinion leaders, religious leaders, peace researchers, and the Regional House of Chiefs. Interviews were conducted at locations (homes, palaces, offices, and restaurants) that were suitable for the participants from August 2019 to October 2019.

In-depth interview guides (see Appendix 1) were used to ask participants open-ended questions; responses were audio-recorded with a digital voice recorder, with permission from the participants. Interviews lasted between 55 - 120 minutes. I deployed probing during interviews to bring meaning, clarity, insight as well as identify causal links to enrich the data that the participants provided. Except for the opinion leaders (who were compensated because of entry protocol requirements), other interview participants were not compensated for their time.

During the pre-interview stage, I made formal contacts with selected participants through emails, phone calls, and formal request letters. Initial discussions about interview logistics then occurred with the participants who accepted. A day prior to the interview, I made follow-up calls

and contacts to confirm the interview schedule and details (and to assure the participants that I was prepared).

On the interview days, I arrived at the venue 20 minutes to the start of the interviews. I set up my materials and familiarized myself with the environment and venue, looking for pictures, events or pointers that I used to engage the interviewee to establish rapport prior to the beginning of each interview. At the start of each interview, I deployed a protocol that included self-introduction, and an explanation of the objective and purpose of the study. This was to ensure truthfulness about the objectives, benefits, and possible risks of the research. I also discussed the consent form and obtained informed consent - a signature on the consent form (see Appendix 12).

These protocols differed slightly for the four opinion leader participants - sub-chiefs within the Kingdom, for whom there were laid down (traditional and customary) protocols that I had to follow. These included:

1. An elder/linguist of each of the opinion leaders was asked to lead the introduction process.
2. After the introduction, the opinion leader presented *kola* to the researcher as a symbol of peace (indicates that you are welcome to the Palace of the opinion leader).
3. I was also required to reciprocate the same by presenting *kola* (in the form of cash) to the chief.

Upon completion of the required protocols in both groups (opinion leaders and others), I led the interviewee into the discussions. Questions focused on guiding topics such as the initiation of the peace processes, their content, the role of the state and civil society, participation and inclusion (see Appendix 1). Nonetheless, the opening remarks of the participant and their particular role in the peace processes primarily dictated the exact type and line of questioning (e.g., for all the individual participants, questions differed).

Probing was also widely used during the in-depth interview sessions to gain clarity on participant comments and elicit details on issues that were raised. In-depth interviews were primarily conducted in English. However, in some cases, it was a combination of English and Dagbani, with one of my research assistants serving as a translator. After I had finished asking my question, I offered the interviewees the opportunity to ask me any questions. At the closure of the interview, I thanked the interviewees for participating and informed them of next steps.

At the post-interview stage, I made contacts again with the participants to express my appreciation and to share the transcripts of the interviews via email or physical delivery. In doing so, I sought to ensure that the information provided was appropriately transcribed and that the participants were comfortable with the words used, also providing them the opportunity to amend the interview or to withdraw from the research at any time.

#### ***4.6.2. Focus group discussions***

In addition to the in-depth interviews, I also conducted five focus group discussions with two youth groups, two women's groups, and the Northern Regional Association of Persons with Disabilities (APD) (see section 4.5.2 of page 72 for details of each of the groups) and these focus group discussions were from August 2019 to December 2019.

In essence, these identified groups were key stakeholders in the peace processes so their opinions and views about the peace processes were relevant. Through the focus group interviews, I had the opportunity to efficiently obtain a large amount of data from three otherwise more marginalized groups that had in-depth knowledge and an interest in the outcome of the peace process in a short time. Focus group interviews "provide a means for collecting qualitative data in some settings and situations where a one-shot collection is necessary" (Berg, 2007, p. 147).

Despite their similarities in demographic characteristics, within these groups, a variety of perspectives about the peace processes exist, and focus group discussions explored these wide ranges of perspectives (Krueger & Casey, 2015; Guest et al., 2013). The choice of focus groups as a strategy for collecting data was also guided by concerns for promoting feelings of safety, comfort, and cultural sensitivity (Sodestrom, 2011; Guest et al., 2013).

The focus group discussions were conducted in the form of workshops using a focus group interview guide (see Appendix 2), and each group had eight participants. This size allowed me to easily moderate and facilitate the discussion and help people to have the opportunity to contribute (Alasuutari et al., 2008). Participants in the focus group discussions had no prior relationships except for the APD. Moreover, there were no power differentials among the participants. These measures enhanced our discussions and invariably the data that was collected.

The focus group discussions were conducted in English. In some situations, however, the local dialect, Dagbani was also used when preferred by some participants. The research

assistants were always on hand to translate. Discussions were moderated by the researcher; the research assistants were tasked with note taking and translation when necessary. The focus group discussions were only held on weekends and on different days, and were usually conducted in the mornings to early afternoons, that is between the hours of 10 am to 2 pm. Thus, each focus group discussion lasted for 3-4 hours. There were two breaks (one 15 minutes coffee break and an hour lunch break). The discussions were recorded using an audio recorder digital voice recorder as well as notetaking. Participants in the focus group discussions received an honorarium of CAD \$40.00 and compensation for transportation (\$10.00).

The focus group discussions were more of an exploration and a deliberation of the issues that were put before my research participants. Each focus group had three main topics. I placed each of the three topics before the participants who were asked to reflect and discuss each topic. In the course of our discussion, I observed/learned four issues. One, I noticed that there was a general consensus among the group members about some of the issues that were raised by the participants. Two, there were also situations of general consensus among participants on an issue yet they offered different angles to those issues. For instance, while my participants agreed that the political class from the national level contributed to the peace processes deadlock , they gave different standpoints about the political class's contribution to the deadlock. Three, there were instances of disagreements among the participants on some of the issues they raised with me. Four, there was a sense of honesty and reflexivity in the discussion. In other words, some participants did identify themselves as members of one of the Gates, discussed the issue from the narrative of the Gate and the other Gate, and then provided his/her opinions, which were in variance with his/her Gate. Although the focus group discussions were targeted at gathering the subjective narratives of the group, for the purpose of the data analysis, the individual subjective narratives are used.

At the pre-focus group discussion stage, I made formal contacts with the selected participants through emails, phone calls, and formal request letters. Initial discussions about the focus group logistics were then held with the participants who accepted. A day prior to the focus group discussion, I contacted participants again to confirm and to remind them. I also informed the participants about the venue (location) and the time of the focus group discussions.

On the day of the focus group discussion, I arrived at the venue one hour prior to the start of the discussion to ensure that the place was appropriately arranged and the necessary tools such

as flip charts, and markers were made available. I also used that as an opportunity to interact with the participants who arrived on time.

At the start of each focus group discussion, I deployed a protocol that included self-introduction, explaining the objective of the study and focus group discussion, discussion and signing of consent form, and the oath of confidentiality form. This was to ensure truthfulness about the objectives, benefits, and possible risks of the research.

After the opening, the discussions were in three parts interspersed with two breaks (a snack break and a lunch break). Each discussion explored topics such as participation, party politics, Dagbon culture, the role of the state, the work of the mediation committee among others (see Appendix 2) and lasted for roughly an hour. Questions asked were open-ended. Similar questions were posed to all participants, yet the responses provided by each participant led to different follow-up questions. Likewise, probing was utilized to elicit more information, responses, clarity, and details of the responses given. The last part of the discussion was the closure where participants were asked to provide their final thoughts on the issues and to ask the researcher any questions. I thanked the participants and handed out their compensations.

A day after the focus group discussion, I contacted the participants to thank them again for taking part in the focus group, to confirm they had arrived home safely, and I asked them if they had any concerns or issues to bring to my attention. I recognized that research is a process encompassing relationship building that is anchored in mutual respect and trust. Undertaking these activities was, therefore, necessary to sustain that relationship for my future research projects and to build the participants' trust towards researchers in general. I also shared with the participants the focus group transcript discussions when they were ready. This was to afford the participants the opportunity to make corrections and inquire from them if their thoughts and perspectives were appropriately captured.

#### ***4.6.3. Document analysis***

The study also relied on and analysed secondary sources (documents) to purposively understand the conflict's context. In some instances, however, a few secondary sources (online news sources) were used in the analysis of the dynamics and outcomes of the Dagbon peace processes. These documents included the 1930 Dagbon Constitution, the Dagbon Roadmap to Peace (Peace Agreement), the government's White Paper on the Wuaku Commission's Report, CSO

newspapers, online news articles, and textbooks on the history of Dagbon and the Dagbon conflict.

These documents were purposively sampled, in that they were directly related to the conflict and peace processes. The criteria used to sample these documents were whether the documents are conceptually relevant to my research question and contained the necessary information to assist in exploring the research question. Moreover, most of these documents had been recommended by some of the participants during the individual in-depth interviews.

These documents were obtained from the NPC, the RPC, the CEC, the UNDP, and the selected CSOs. Others were derived from the websites of major news outlets. The use of documentary evidence enhanced the narratives of the participants from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Documents were analyzed alongside the interviews and focus group discussions using content-driven or exploratory document analysis, as outlined below.

Employing multiple methods of data collection in this study enhanced the validity of the findings. For Yin (2014), a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources. Using multiple sources of evidence or triangulation allows the researcher to consider a wide range of issues in the study of the phenomenon and from a wide range of perspectives (Yin, 2014).

#### **4.7. Data analysis procedures**

Interview and focus group data were analyzed using an inductive thematic analysis approach consisting of “reading through the textual data, identifying themes, and then interpreting the structure and content of the theme” (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012, as cited in Guest et al., 2013, p. 72). Themes and codes are grounded or emergent within the data (Guest et al., 2013). This inductive, exploratory approach allowed the study to explore the complexity of different and multiple participant perspectives about the peace processes. Coding was conducted within NVivo 12.0 software. The study followed the steps outlined below in analyzing the data:

1. Audio interviews and focus groups recordings were transcribed verbatim by both research assistants and the researcher. The process was complemented by the notes that were taken by the researcher and the research assistants. The transcripts were then repeatedly read by the researcher for accuracy. This process also helped me to become

familiar with as well as immerse myself to connect with the data. Likewise, the transcripts were shared with the participants for their comments and review. Out of the 63 participants that were given the transcripts, 39 responded with issues that related to the spelling of some words and requests for additional information. However, 22 responded indicating that they had no issues with the transcripts. Two participants did not provide any feedback. The participants responses were then integrated into the final transcripts.

2. The final transcripts and secondary sources (documents) were then transferred to the NVivo 12.0 software and labelled focus group interviews, individual interviews, and literature under the folder named files within the data section of the software.
3. With the transcripts and documents in the software, I proceeded with the first stage of coding of the transcripts using the software. The process involved reading through the text, dividing the text into segments, assigning labels or codes to the text segments. The codes were inductive in that they were based on participant narratives and the documents. However, I also developed codes based on the literature on peace processes. This reflects a more intermediate approach, situated between inductive and deductive (Gall et al., 2007; Guest et al., 2012).
4. After the first round of coding, then came the second round of coding of the transcripts. The objective of the second round of coding was to reduce redundancy. As a result, some codes were merged, rearranged, and deleted, which led to the generation of the final codes for the analysis (see Appendix 13). Some codes were found to cut across most of the interviews and focus group discussions. Also, some codes were specific to some interviews and focus group discussions. In other words, there were codes that varied based on the type of data under scrutiny. The position of each respondent accounted for this variation. For example, there were some codes that were peculiar to only representatives of CSOs, opinion leaders, young people, women, and persons living with disabilities.
5. The final codes were then categorized; codes that refer to a similar phenomenon or explain a similar phenomenon were put under the same phenomenon or category. Moreover, some of the categories had subcategories. These major categories generated were third-party variables, process variables, and context variables.

6. The categories became the major themes for the presentation of the results. Here participant perspectives were described in relation to the identified codes under the three categories (themes) and subcategories (sub-themes). The description of the codes was done using the participants' voices, that is, the participants' narratives or stories (Senehi, 2002, 2019) were used to reflect upon their perspectives or opinions with regards to the deadlock surrounding the Dagbon peace processes.
7. When analyzing the material within each of the codes under the three categories/themes, several issues emerged, which served as the bases for the discussion and interpretation chapter and the development of theory. The interpretation of the data involved the exploration of the deeper meanings of the responses (thick interpretation) (Wolcott, 1994), to understand the phenomenon under the study. The findings and conclusions were then contextualized within the literature. This was done to help strengthen existing knowledge, theories and practice about the peace processes; and challenge the existing knowledge and theories about peace processes or contribute to the body of knowledge on the field of peace processes (Guest et al., 2012).

## **4.8. Ethical considerations**

In conducting this study, I considered the following ethical issues: informed consent, confidentiality, incentives, dealing with marginalized groups, and access and respect for the culture and traditions of Dagbon to ensure respect for the interviewees (Guest et al., 2013).

### ***4.8.1. Informed consent***

First, I ensured that there was informed consent during the entire research process. This was necessary for participants' understanding of their role in the research/study to take the appropriate and voluntary decision as to whether they wanted to participate in the study or not. Three issues were addressed in ensuring informed consent. These included providing the right information to the participants, comprehension, and voluntariness (Guest et al., 2013).

In obtaining informed consent, I presented the relevant information about the research that participants needed to know, namely, the study description including its objectives and intended use, the potential risk and benefits of the study, and issues of confidentiality. Other informed consent information elements related to compensation, contacts, voluntary

participation, and counselling processes. These elements were presented to the participants both in written and oral formats. The information was in a written form for the participants who could read and write. Before the interviews, the participants were provided the consent forms to read through. Also, I explained to the participants the various elements of the consent form. The information was read out and translated to the respondents who could not read and write by the research assistants. This was done largely for the focus group discussions.

The participants consented by signing the consent form (see Appendices 11 and 12). The participants who could not provide a signature thumb printed the informed consent forms. The researcher also signed the informed consent form.

#### ***4.8.2. Confidentiality***

Second, the confidentiality of the information provided by the participants as well as their identities was another ethical issue that was highly considered during the entire research process. I identified issues that could lead to the loss of confidentiality/privacy and the attendant potential risk, and instituted measures to address these potential breaches. These were at the early stages of recruitment where the identities of the participants were made known to the research assistants, during the interviews and focus group sessions, and during the transcription and data analysis.

To address the potential breaches, I ensured that participants were identified by pseudonyms during the individual interviews, focus group discussions, transcription, and presentation of the data during analysis and writing. Also, I organized confidentiality training for participants in the focus group discussions and both research assistants. They were also made to sign an oath of confidentiality and privacy form committing themselves not to reveal the identity and information provided by any participant (See Appendices 9 and 10).

Further, data including the recorded audios and transcripts were immediately transferred to my computer which was secured with a password and encrypted to avoid access by a third party. Contact information (email address, place of work, and names used in the recruitment processes) were only accessed by me. I destroyed all the information after the transcripts were returned. Communications through emails were also destroyed. Moreover, I assured the participants that any information discussed during the focus group sessions was not shared with any external party and was only used for its intended purposes.

#### ***4.8.3. Access and respect for the culture and traditions of the Dagbon***

Third, the research processes adhered to the traditional and cultural protocols of access/community entry and exit, out of respect for the cultures and traditions of the Dagbon. To facilitate these processes, I identified a gatekeeper within the community who organized a brief orientation for both research assistants and myself on some of the traditional and cultural protocols that are to be followed while in the community. Also, the gatekeeper led the entry and exit processes. For instance, visits to the various traditional leaders were organized and led by the gatekeeper. Protocols relating to the presentation of gifts to the traditional leaders were also implemented (see Appendix 8).

Before undertaking the research, the protocol was approved by the Research Ethics Board of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Manitoba (Please see Appendix 14).

#### **4.9. Trustworthiness of the research**

Trustworthiness is a key factor that qualitative researchers cannot gloss over when conducting qualitative research. Trustworthiness helps to establish the credibility and dependability of the research processes and the research findings. I deployed the following techniques to enhance the trustworthiness of the research and research findings.

One, the study used multiple methods (triangulation) in the collection and analysis of the data: in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. Data was obtained from different sources including CSOs, peace activists, youth groups, religious leaders, women's groups, opinion leaders, persons living with disabilities among others. Multiple data collection methods and different sources provided the opportunity to explore differences and similarities in opinions and perspectives of the participants about the Dagbon peace processes.

Two, the data collected was shared with the participants. This was accomplished in two ways: first, transcripts from the interviews and focus groups were shared with the participants. Second, a community forum was organized where the research findings were presented to key stakeholders. Both of these approaches elicited feedback from the participants, validation of the research, and a way to seek clarity on some of the issues raised by participants.

Three, in presenting and interpreting the results of the research, I deployed the stories and narratives of the participants to support the issues raised. In other words, direct quotes or

verbatim quotes supported the presentation and interpretation of the results, connecting the discussions with the participants' stories (Senehi, 2002, 2019).

Four, using an open-ended instrument for the focus group discussions and interviews provided an opportunity for me to seek clarity on the responses provided by the participants. In situations where the participants did not understand a question, I addressed this by rephrasing the question. The inductive nature of the instrument and the methods of data collection created the space to seek valid responses to the questions that I posed to the participants.

#### **4.10. Challenges encountered during the study**

Conducting qualitative research in a conflict context such as in Dagbon comes with some challenges. Some of the challenges that were encountered in undertaking my research project in Dagbon included language barriers, accessibility, and research fatigue.

First, language barrier was a key challenge of this study. The main language spoken by the people of Dagbon is the Dagbani language, which is entirely different from the researcher's mother tongue. This created some difficulties in some of the interviews. Although both research assistants who understood and communicated well in the Dagbani language were employed to help in the translation, it was difficult to engage in in-depth probing of responses provided by participants who did not communicate in the English language because in the translation processes some words were omitted. Some of these participants included the chiefs and opinion leaders, who are major stakeholders in the peace processes and have in-depth knowledge not only about the peace processes but also the culture and traditions of the Dagbon.

Also, the language barrier made it difficult for me to vet the transcripts that were transcribed from the Dagbani language into English. In some instances, the services of a Dagbani language professional were employed in the transcription of the audio interviews that were conducted in the Dagbani language.

Second, there was a lot of long-distance travel during data collection which to some extent affected access to some participants. The unpredictability of the security situation in Dagbon made it quite difficult for the researcher and the research assistants to stay in Yendi. The team was therefore based in Tamale, the Northern Regional capital city, and we travelled to Yendi (which is about two hours from Tamale) on days that an interview or interviews were to be conducted. This situation created two challenges for the research team: in some cases, the

research team missed some of the participants, which required re-scheduling the interview to another day. Moreover, this came with a huge cost because vehicles were rented to embark on the journeys, and some of that travel was just to complete one interview only.

Third, research fatigue and a lack of trust in the researchers affected the recruitment of some of the participants. During the process of contacting people to schedule interviews, some potential participants argued that many researchers have come into the community to research the Dagbon conflict, and they did not come back to share their research findings with the community. Some also stated that they have not seen the benefits of these numerous research studies conducted in the community. I responded to the concerns raised by some of the participants by outlining my intention to conduct community fora to present the research findings, and this was done in the community (see Smith, 2012). Also, a conference was organized with key stakeholders and some of the research participants to discuss the findings that is also in keeping with PACS practices. My professional relationships and contacts with some of the participants assisted me in overcoming the concern of research fatigue raised by the participants.

#### **4.11. Conclusion**

This chapter sketched the research methodology and the methods used to explore the research question about the Dagbon peace processes. The various research strategies were guided by the philosophy of allowing the participants' voices to do the talking in the analysis and discussion of the findings. The stories and voices of the participants constituted an enormous resource that helped to address the research question (Senehi, 2002, 2019). As a result, the inductive strategy of the research (and open-ended interview questioning) provided the space for the participants' voices and stories to be heard and expressed freely and willingly. The next three chapters describe the participants' stories (data) and present the research findings.

## Chapter 5

### **Deadlock of Dagbon Roadmap 1: The role of third parties and party politics**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

The actions or inactions of third parties and secondary actors in a peace process can either enhance or derail the success of that peace process. Chapter five presents and discusses the perspectives of the study participants about how the actions of third parties and party-political elements (especially the state government, mediation team, and both major political parties) contributed to the deadlock of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace. Particularly, the chapter explores the participants' perspectives and experiences about the lack of political will at the state level to enforce the Roadmap and the absence of guarantees, and how these influenced the outcome of the first Dagbon Roadmap. In addition, the chapter presents some factors relating to the mediation team - the CEC - including its composition/structure, perceptions of the committee members, and the CEC's understanding of Dagbon culture, and how these impacted the outcome of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace.

Moreover, the chapter explores the actions of national party politics - political support and political interest - on the outcome of the first Roadmap. Deriving from participants' perspectives on the above themes, the chapter delves into emerging issues that seek to explain how the actions of third parties and party politics can influence the outcome of peace processes and peace accords such as the Dagbon Peace Roadmap I.

#### **5.2. State actions**

State actions were identified by the participants as one key factor contributing to the deadlock of the first Dagbon Roadmap. Two state actions were highlighted in particular:

- 1) Lack of political will to enforce the implementation of the Roadmap, and,
- 2) Failure to provide guarantees to the factions at war.

The sub-sections that follow present snapshot views by the participants in this regard, with particular reference to how the state (either purposefully or inadvertently) detracted from the Roadmap's progress.

### **5.2.1. The state had no political will to enforce the implementation of the Roadmap**

Some participants expressed the view that the state had no political will to enforce the implementation of the first Roadmap to peace. Participants identified three conditions that made it difficult for the state to muster this political will: fear of taking the risk, fear of losing political support and votes, and political dilemma.

Some participants believed the state was not willing to take the risk to enforce the implementation of the Roadmap because of the fear of the unknown or what might happen considering the history of the conflict. A young female, Asaana, during a focus group discussion with young people said the government was afraid to implement the Roadmap. Asaana described this perspective in these words:

**Asaana:** The government was afraid of the conflict. They were afraid that there will be a potential uprising if the Roadmap is implemented. You know, anytime there is an attempt to resolve the conflict, the parties issue threats to the government. You will hear them say “if you try you will see,” and then they will say “let us forget it.” Another reason why this thing was delayed was that they were having fears, and also fear that if they settle it, they may not gain power, or they will be voted out and the other party would come to power if he tries to settle it.

They were also afraid that something will happen. They were also getting threats on their lives. I quite remember that in the Yendi area, when the MP went to the chiefs to talk about it, they told him that if he jokes, they will give him a line; he won’t cross that line. You see, so people fear. They were having fears of losing their seats, their lives and their families as well, you see.

For Asaana, the fear of a potential uprising on the part of the government made it unenthusiastic to enforce the implementation of the Roadmap to peace.

Corroborating Asaana’s point of view, another female, Khadijah, noted that the state was afraid that it would be branded as supporting one Gate or the other should the roadmap be implemented. Khadijah noted the following during another focus group discussion with women:

**Khadijah:** You see, the Andanis gave a condition for the settlement of the matter and their condition was that, at the end of the day, the chieftaincy should come back to them. Do you get it? And the mediation team couldn’t decide that. They will need the support of the ruling government, you understand, and I told you Kufuor was branded to be part of the problem.

So, when Mahama came, the fear that, hmmm, because most of the Abudus are predominantly NPP, you understand, and the thing is rotation, the Supreme Court says

they should rotate. So, giving this chieftaincy back to the Andanis is going to give him a problem.

Let me tell you something, if it were Mahama who had then given the chieftaincy back to the Andanis, there would have been a problem, there would have been a big problem in this country, because the perception would be he is doing that because the Andanis are his supporters. So, he didn't have that political will to do it, because of the image it will create on him, do you get it?

It is clear from the narrative of Khadijah that the government (NDC) was not in the position to take the risk to implement the Roadmap for the fear that it could cause the displeasure of the Gates, in which ever way the Roadmap was implemented.

For participants like Asaana and Khadija the historical antecedents where state intervention had led to the outbreak of violent conflict between both families coupled with threats from the two Gates created fear and hesitancy among the state actors. As such, in the face of these complications, the state or its actors were not willing to take any risks to ensure the successful implementation of the provisions of the first Dagbon Roadmap to Peace.

Other participants argued that the lack of state will to enforce the implementation of the Roadmap also stemmed from the fear of losing political backing or votes from within the Kingdom. An opinion leader in the community, Gadafi, had this to say with respect to the fear of losing political support from the community:

**Gadafi:** You know politicians, they want votes. He was thinking that, "if I come out and do this maybe I won't get votes from." Hmm, you know the majority of his votes come from the Northern Region. Just Tamale, look at all the constituencies.

So, he was thinking that maybe if I do a mistake, I won't get that vote and I told him that look if you bring peace, they will forget all these things. So, to me I thought maybe he is afraid that if he comes out boldly to do this thing, he won't get votes.

Similarly, Titi intimated on the fear of losing votes during a focus group discussion with Persons with Disabilities. He reported on the issue in the following manner:

**Titi:** The second thing was that I told you earlier, Mahama, hmm, he did everything, it was just left with, let me put it this way, maybe one meter to the goalpost. But his party people and the other supporters told him to back out because they thought that if they performed the funeral like it was done during this man's regime, during the current regime, the Andanis wouldn't have voted him because they threatened that they would

not vote him. Do you get it? So, he had to back out because he didn't have that will, he feared losing his votes.

For most of these participants, the then-ruling NDC government could not implement the Roadmap to peace between 2009 to 2016 because of the support the government was perceived as receiving from the Andani Gate. Implementing the Roadmap to peace to the latter would have implied going against the desires of the Gate that constitutes its support base; a factor which would have had the potential of affecting the party's fortunes in the coming election. As a result, the government, it was believed, considered it safe and politically expedient not to push for the implementation of the Roadmap.

Moreover, some participants noted that the political dilemma on the part of the state between 2006 to 2016 weakened the state's ability to enforce the implementation of the Roadmap to peace. Some participants recounted that between 2006 to 2008, the NPP government could not fully enforce the Roadmap because it was implicated in the murder of the King and therefore felt culpable in the entire process. Eliasu, a youth activist, noted the following in his story:

**Eliasu:** It was just the same, people say Roadmap 1, Roadmap 2, it's the same just that it got truncated along the line because there wasn't any political will to push it through. The conflict happened during Kufuor's time, and Kufuor was tainted. One of the factions tainted him as being part of the problem so he found it very difficult to push through to get the solution because he has already been branded.

So, he initiated the peace process, but the way one faction branded him, you know, probably made him to draw back from using some sort of pressure to get the process through, you get it.

For Eliasu, the failure of the then government, from the national to the local level, was its complicity in the murder of the Ya-Na and as such it did not have the moral temerity and political will to enforce the implementation of the first Dagbon Peace Roadmap.

From 2009 to 2016, the government of the NDC was also in a similar political dilemma which, however, did not stem from direct complicity in the murder of the Overlord. Some participants highlighted that the party in opposition made political gains from the conflict especially through tracking down, arresting, and jailing the main suspects in the murder of the Ya-Na. Finding the killers of the Ya-Na featured prominently in their manifesto and campaign

promises right until the elections. The expectations of the Andani Gate were thus piqued, and they believed that upon winning the elections and assuming office, the NDC would make good their promise and nothing else. A UNDP representative had this to say regarding the political promise to find the killers of the Ya-Na:

**Tergeret-K:** The thing about that conflict was that you had the government making a promise of finding the killers of the Ya-Na and then also resolving the issue, which I mean, for me was a very big mistake from the beginning which they shouldn't have made. Like I said earlier that, these are cultural things that people need to be satisfied before they can agree to the terms.

Now they come into power and they are not able to find these killers and so the side is saying that until you find the killers, we are not willing to go back for any discussion. And the people you have arrested the other side is saying that if you do not release them, we will not participate in the discussion. So, during that era, it felt like government was taking a very, hmmm, they wanted to be in the process, it is like they were part of the process, they wanted to influence the process and that was not helping.

Because you cannot go in as the state to try to, hmmm, you can provide the financial resources and then the conducive environment for the eminent chiefs to do their work. But you cannot keep coming up with statements and saying, "ok we have arrested these people, and this is what we are doing." Because that didn't help, because they kept arresting people, and they kept saying they were not the people that were part of the process. So, it was bringing about this whole distraction so the other side. The Abudus felt that they are arresting our people and claiming they are those that have killed the King and for them they are not the people.

Now the other side is saying that "you are not doing as you said, you said that when you come to power you will arrest the people, you are not also doing so." So, none of them were interested, because everybody is asking for justice. We want justice because we want to know those who killed the King so that they could also be killed, or some punishment meted out to them. We are not being treated fairly because you are arresting our people claiming that they are those who killed the King, but it was a war.

And because of the statement that was made that "when we come into power, we will arrest the killers," it sounded like ok we belong to or we supported the Andanis and so who are the Abudus going to? So, these were some of the things, the political characterization that also came in, that didn't help.

Also, the statement that the politicians made which they shouldn't have made at that time looking at the groups of people that they were dealing with and looking at the fact that they had already identified eminent chiefs to support with the process. So, why don't you allow them to have these negotiations and mediations process, then you just be at the back just to support them with the process.

From the narrative above, it appears that the political promise made on political platforms and in the manifesto of the party to find and prosecute the killers of the Ya-Na raised expectations of

the Andani Gate. It also raised mistrust of the Abudu Gate towards the government. Consequently, the government was caught in a dilemma between fulfilling the political promise they made especially to the Andani Gate and enforcing the implementation of the peace accord. Meanwhile, the Abudu Gate viewed every genuine effort by the government as a way of fulfilling its promise to their rivals. This weakened the government's resolve to enforce the Roadmap.

Notably, a few participants however disagreed with the idea that the state lacked political will to enforce implementation. Ayatullah, a religious leader in the community intimated the following in his story:

**Ayatullah:** Aha, the truth is that those of us who are at the peace center or who are part and parcel of the process, you know peace moves at a, chameleon's pace, because you don't rush it. So, that is why, that is why without mincing words we could say that all the governments did marvellously well so long as the Dagbon case is concerned, marvellously well.

They did their part according to the time. I give you an example, it was during His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor's time that the murder happened. But he was able to make the burial and enskinment of the Regent take place and also formed the Committee of Eminent Chiefs.

When Mills came, people were saying that these people did this, these people did that. And then the court aspect, he caused the arrest of the suspects, that these were the people who were behind that. They used a kangaroo way to arrest them to Accra and said, "okay let us put them to trial." They put them on trial, and at the end of the day, there was lack of correct evidence to fine them or to convict them.

So, he did his part because that was what was needed because people were saying that we can point out this and that, so the then government could have not ended it like that apart from going to, hmm. But Atta Mills did his best by coming out to do this (what do you call it), bringing them to book to send them to court and then the court finally did its job and defended them, that was what President Atta Mills did.

John Mahama also when he took over, you know there was some traditional houses and other things that were to be done before the performance of the funeral. So, he was able...of course we must commend them because anybody who comes in power, they supported the Otumfuo or the Eminent Chiefs to continue. None of the government came and say no I will reverse it where he ends up; they will also continue.

So, the suggestion was that you know, before you perform the funeral, the funeral of Ya-Na or the Ya-Nas, you know Zeng, where they err, when they catch Ya-Na, where they will spend one week or so. You have to build that place, because as soon as they perform the funeral, you have to get Ya-Na and he must go there. Then they have to build that palace, we have other traditional houses that were burnt down. So, he made sure that he raised all the houses, all the houses were raised. So, now after all houses were raised then it was the time for the funeral.

Now, the hidden block, then when Nana also came, the problem was now we will perform it here, we will not perform it there. He was able to put his feet down and support the eminent chiefs. Once they had decided that all the funerals must be performed there, the current president supported that and then gave them the security, give them the power, whatever they could do to make sure that the funerals are performed, they did that.

So, I say that gradually, they were building up so that came, where to perform the funeral at the old Gbewa Palace. So, Nana also gave the power to raise some small structures that they will be able to accommodate the Abudus to perform the funeral. That is why I say they all did their best and without these things in place, the funerals will not have been performed.

For Ayatullah, the process required patience, time, and for the various stakeholders to be meticulous. It was not possible to implement the last stage of the Roadmap without undertaking some important activities. Each government since March 2002 has supported the process and committed itself politically in ensuring that the right framework, structures, and foundations are laid for the implementation of the final stages of the Roadmap to peace.

### ***5.2.2. Failure to provide guarantees for the implementation of the Roadmap***

The second main consideration suggested by some of participants was that the state did not provide the necessary guarantees for implementing the Roadmap. Participants identified two forms of guarantees lacking from 2006 to 2016: the so-called security and political guarantees.

As regards security, participants argued that the peace process lacked security guarantees to ensure each of the parties followed the process to the letter. A peace activist, Gabriella, made the following comments with respect to security guarantees:

**Gabriella:** Hmmm, there was no security guarantee. So, the party that initially benefitted from the process saw that loop and decided to thwart the process. And that also hmm, the trust that existed eroded in the process. So, the parties then saw that, hmmm, the two parties saw that yes, there was no security guarantee.

Who is going to monitor compliance? There was nobody to monitor compliance. Even though the Roadmap was a useful one, it was able to chalk come dividends, but there was no one to ensure compliance, hmmm, to guarantee the process; to ensure that the process worked fairly as agreed, even though the parties signed to it.

From this narrative, the parties (especially Andani Gate) did not comply because the state failed to provide the necessary security guarantees to monitor compliance and ensure fairness for the

smooth implementation of the process, a loophole was created that was taken advantage of by the parties especially the party that initially benefited from the process.

In addition to the absence of security guarantees to monitor and ensure compliance, participants also highlighted the lack of clear political guarantees. Redeemer, a woman peace activist, during a focus group discussion disclosed the following in her narrative:

**Redeemer:** If you look at the issue from the beginning, the concern of the Abudus was performing the funeral in the old palace, but there were no guarantees that they would perform the funeral in the old palace, do you get it? The funeral will be performed at the old palace, that was what they were looking for.

Their interest actually was not in occupying the skin after the funeral, their interest was performing Yaa-Naa Mahamadu's funeral at the old palace so that the sons will also become princes, that was their main concern. They never thought at any time of becoming Ya-Na, taking the chieftaincy after the funeral.

I remember in one of the interactions with the young man, he told me that he was not interested in chieftaincy, he was interested in the father's funeral, and that after the father's funeral whatever was decided for him, that nobody can stop that one, but for the final funeral rites he was not going to compromise over it. So, there was no assurance that the funeral will be performed at the old palace.

You see, the Andanis gave a condition for the settlement of the matter and their condition was that, at the end of the day, the chieftaincy should come back to them. Do you get it? And the mediation team couldn't decide that. They will need the support of the ruling government.

However, there were no assurances or political guarantees that the chieftaincy will be given to them. So, the political guarantees that the objectives of both factions will be met, that is the Abudus will perform the funeral at the old palace, the Andanis will take back the chieftaincy after the funeral.

Drawing from the above, both parties had expectations that they wanted to be met in the process. However, the failure of the state to provide the necessary political guarantees resulted in the parties not trusting the process as well as each other, the Mediation Committee, and the state. The consequence was that the implementation of the Roadmap came to a standstill and eventually a deadlocked zero-sum situation set in.

### 5.3. The mediation team

The first Dagbon Roadmap's deadlock has also been attributed to the structure, composition, and functions of the mediation committee - the Committee of Eminent Chiefs (CEC). Participants identified three issues with the CEC that contributed to the failure of the first Roadmap. These

included: (1) the composition/structure of the Committee, (2) the perceptions about the Committee and (3) the Committee's understanding of the Dagbon's culture. This section provides a summary of participants' narratives on the three issues mentioned above.

### ***5.3.1. The composition and structure of the mediation committee***

In a conflict environment, the structure and composition of a mediation team should be acceptable to the disputants and the general populace. This will not only stimulate trust in the mediation team but also augment confidence in the mediation processes and outcomes. Where a mediation team is not acceptable to the parties in conflict as well as the general populace, it creates problems in the mediation process and can lead to its collapse. With respect to the Dagbon Peace Processes, the participants expressed that in the initial stages, the composition and structure of the Mediation Committee was not favourably received by the disputants and the general public of Dagbon. Some participants noted that the composition and structure of the mediation committee did not follow appropriate established structures for resolving chieftaincy conflicts in Dagbon. A young peace activist, Kaderi commented the following on the composition of the Mediation Committee:

**Kaderi:** At that time, I could hear some elders say that if Dagbon is having a conflict then they should sit and then they will be able to solve it. That a third person shouldn't come in; for some of them, that was what they agreed. They said if the government of Ghana or maybe another paramount chief is coming to, that, it won't work because they know the problem, they know the root of the problem. They are the very people who have to, like, sit together and then solve that same problem, so that was their mind.

The elders, those who were grown and really knew how the thing started. They had that mind that they should be the very same people who should again resolve the problem, and that was one of the reasons why they did not cooperate with the Committee at the initial stages.

Kaderi argued that failing to explore the existing structures within Dagbon for the resolution of the conflict and resorting to a different structure was problematic for the Dagbon people. Consequently, the parties and people of Dagbon were unwilling in the initial stages to cooperate with the CEC, which contributed to the deadlock.

Some participants believed that the selection of the Asantehene to lead the Committee was problematic and did not reflect the traditional and historical conflict resolution structure of

Dagbon. Ayishetu is young female peace activist. Ayishetu narrated that some sections of Dagbon had problems with the composition of the mediation team because it did not reflect the tradition and culture of Dagbon. She argued the following:

**Ayishetu:** And then the second thing that I have seen is that, already, there is, traditionally, there is a way that conflict in chieftaincy issues especially at the highest level, as such, will be resolved. There is a way. I mean because what we know, what has been handed down to some of us is that, if there is any, I mean, conflict with regards to our chieftaincy especially the Ya-Na, this thing, it is the Mamprugu chief, Nayiri, who I mean, has to supersede I mean, everything.

So, people were saying that if that is the case, if traditionally we have what we have to do then why has it been Asantehene? So, a lot of people had problems with Asantehene leading the process during the Roadmap because they know there was already a laid down, I mean, procedure on how it should be resolved.

So, they believed that because the government, or political party of the day were not committed to doing the right thing that's why instead of them consulting the traditional authorities to do the normal thing, they wanted to change the tradition or the culture of the people. So, one thing was that they were trying to destroy the culture of the people and that was lack of respect.

In addition to the foregoing, Zonaa provided a brief historical account to suggest that traditionally, the CEC was an alien structure for the resolution of the Dagbon conflicts. He reported on this issue as follows:

**Zonaa:** When you look at the history of Dagbon, from the Tohazie era to this time, you realise that Asantehene and then Yagbonwura have no hands in Dagbon Chieftaincy issues. And so, people were saying that why should we send our challenges to Asantehene and Yagbonwura for them to solve it for us? Aside that as for Mamprugu lana or Mamprugu Naa, for him and Dagombas, they are brothers.

I have learnt that he is the elder one. And Mamprugu and Dagbon I mean, Dagombas going to Mamprugu Naa to enskin them stopped at the era of Naa Zanjina. That was the era that they stopped. And so, I think they would have found a better solution to it. If it were like Mamprugu and Dagombas sit down to resolve that case.

So, one of the challenges was that why should they send that issue to Asantehene and that of Yagbonwura? They have no hands in those things. I think that was the reason.

Ayishetu and Zonaa divulged that the CEC did not comprise the most appropriate and traditionally sanctioned mediators. Their narrative suggests that the Nayiri was considered the only legitimate person on the Committee qualified to mediate the conflict. This fact is couched in

the history of Dagbon which considers the Nayiri as the elder brother of the Ya-Na and, historically, as the person most responsible for resolving chieftaincy matters.

Moreover, some participants noted that submitting the Dagbon Chieftaincy problem to the CEC was an indication of disrespect to the identity of Dagbon and the people of Dagbon in general. David, a young peace activist, commented that there were no laws or customs governing the resolution of the dispute. This is what he had to say on the issue:

**David:** Is about them not allowing the third parties involved. Me myself I heard it, later on they were complaining; we northerners were complaining that we disrespected our own selves because how can we be in our own kingdom and somebody coming from a different kingdom to resolve your own problem for you whiles there are elders who are supposed to resolve it. And to me I also think that because there was no any custom or any law governing the resolving of the problem that was why it was very difficult for them, and it didn't work yes.

David was of the opinion then that the parties and the people of Dagbon considered the Committee as an alien structure, which did not represent the culture and customs of Dagbon (and were disrespectful). The consequence was that the parties and populace did not fully cooperate with the Committee and this contributed to the deadlock.

Irrespective of the foregoing, some participants did not consider the structure and composition of the CEC as a major issue. A peace activist within the community, Mende-Sulley, noted that an immediate resolution to the Dagbon Chieftaincy conflict was needed:

**Mende-Sulley:** These were not normal times to talk about culture and traditions. Yes, it is important we do not gloss over our culture and traditions of Dagbon, but considering the situation in which we found ourselves, using the Committee of Eminent Chiefs was the appropriate approach.

The situation required an approach that will bring us results and conclusiveness to the Dagbon Chieftaincy conflict. Definitely people will have such concerns. But by and large, the people of Dagbon recognized the need to move the process forward and so it was prudent that we went that way.

From Mende-Sulley's perspective, using the culture and tradition of Dagbon as a yardstick to assess the Committee's commitment to the resolution of the conflict was not very relevant. What is most relevant for the peace activist is whether such a Committee can help the parties emerge from the deadlock in which they find themselves.

### **5.3.2. Perceptions about the committee**

A view was also expressed that the two Gates held two particular perceptions about the CEC that contributed to the implementation of the deadlock:

- 1) The CEC was biased and would favour one side, and
- 2) The CEC was not committed to resolving/implementing the Roadmap.

Accordingly, some participants argued that the two parties perceived the CEC as having their own biases in the mediation processes, which would eventually favour one or the other side in the conflict. As a result, the parties boycotted the mediation processes at certain stages. For instance, on January 28, 2016, the Abudu Gate boycotted the mediation efforts on the grounds that the CEC was biased. In a letter to the CEC that was picked up by Citinews, the Abudu Gate noted that the CEC abandoned the Roadmap and were under the influence of the Andani family:

**Citinews:** We have served notice to the Committee of Eminent Chiefs (CEC) on our inability to avail ourselves for the Committee's sittings for lack of consistency until certain decisions of the body are implemented. We have noticed, regrettably that the Committee has abandoned their own Roadmap to the peace document, and now operate under the sole direction of a so-called 'Kuga-Naa' who is, with the support of the Andani Family, usurping the powers of the Gushei-Naa.

The Abudu Gate believed that the Committee supported the Andani Gate because it was ostensibly, under the direction of the Kuga-Naa who the Abudus accused of supporting the Andani Gate.

Other participants expressed knowledge that the CEC was believed to be biased in its dealings with the two parties at conflict. An opinion leader within the Dagbon Kingdom, Mubarak, noted that the Asantehene was biased in his dealings with one family over the other:

**Mubarak:** And then the third was that the Asantehene to me had a personal problem. He had a problem, and his problem was that after the mediation process, after the chiefs have met and gone, he will meet the Abudus and whatever he discusses with them will be different. He will meet the Andanis again and whatever he will discuss with them will be different, when they meet, whatever decision he took with the Abudus, when they meet, and they raise it up, he will say he was not aware of it.

Because there were times when the Andanis will raise such an issue and the Abudus will refuse. They will say "no, no, no, no, no." They won't compromise and they will persuade them to compromise but when it came to the time for the Andanis to

compromise and they refuse, the Andanis will not do that, you understand. So, he was perceived to be biased, he was perceived to be biased.

Mubarak expressed that the actions of the Mediation Committee did not engender trust in the mediation process. Instead, it created the impression within the minds of some of the parties that the Committee was actually prejudiced to mediate in favour of one party over the other.

Another participant, a member of the Regional Peace Council (RPC), Jacob, had the following to say with regard to the perception that the Mediation Committee was partisan:

**Jacob:** Because the Abudu side felt that it was, like, the Eminent Kings led by Otumfuo were, like, not giving in to some of the things that they were suggesting and that they were more or less, like, favouring the Andani side. So, I think on two occasions they held press conferences announcing their walk out in the mediation. And I can tell you that just beyond the press conference some comments were made to the effect that they felt the eminent Kings were biased in the process.

So, that stalled the process but before we got to that stage, I must say the process was quite open, it was recorded, it was transparent at the palace. And then the factions were all there, at that time it was just presentation like we call it in mediation, storytelling. Each one was given ample opportunity to tell a story.

Then before the pull out, it was like “ok, enough story has been told. Now we need to go to the ground to see how to begin to implement the rest of the Roadmap” because at this stage already, the Yaa-Naa had been buried ok, and then the Regent installed.

Jacob averred that the Abudu Gate perceived the Committee as giving more favours to the Andani Gate because they did not consider some of the suggestions that they made during the mediation processes. The consequence of these perceptions was that the parties did not trust the efforts of the Mediation Committee and the mediation processes. This contributed largely to the deadlock in the implementation of the first Roadmap to peace. A representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also noted that the parties did not fully trust the Eminent Chiefs:

**Tergeret-K:** For me one of the things I felt that probably did not help that much was the fact that from the beginning you will also realise that even though the different factions had accepted to work with the Eminent Chiefs, they did not trust them completely. Because you know they were also holding back to know who supports me and who does not support me. Because you know this is an issue that everyone is trying to find the

person that will support them, and they will be able to lean towards that to probably achieve their own interests. Yes, so we had those bits as well.

The perception of partiality among the CEC resulted in a deadlock in the Roadmap in 2016. Therefore, when parties develop perceptions that a third-party mediator is biased, it becomes a recipe for mistrust not only for the process but also for the efforts of the mediator, irrespective of the level of transparency the mediator appears to exhibit.

In a contrary view, some participants disclosed that there was a general feeling among the Gates and the people of Dagbon that the CEC was not committed to ensuring that the Roadmap was implemented to the latter. A community opinion leader, Alhassan, commented that there was a general feeling within the Dagbon Kingdom that the CEC was not committed to the implementation of the Roadmap:

**Alhassan:** Because when we went to Otumfuo, let me tell you, we went to Otumfuo, we met and took a decision it was supposed to be 5th December or what was the date. We went and later we heard that the Andanis were going to see Otumfuo and later he called us to a meeting was on the 5th, yeah, and on the 12th we were called back.

We went and he said the Andanis had come saying this in a petition, they wrote with Kuga-Naa saying they wouldn't agree so, what he wanted to do was to get back to us, for us to really convince him and to tell him all the things we needed to do in the palace such that it needed to be built.

We had discussed these countless times, so that was uncalled for! And that after that he will meet with the three parties from Andanis side, and after meeting then he will meet the Regent, and after that he will consult the president, and know the next level. The Otumfuo said so and I looked at him and laughed. You have been given the mandate to resolve the issue and at a point in time you are saying you will be consulting these people to get their respective positions you will go back to the president. Together you will decide.

He didn't say together they will decide but he said he will go back to him and know the next line of action to take. Who to decide he didn't say but that was the president that was mindset that was it so that still answers the question whether there was external influence? So, the committee lost its bearings.

The committee is supposed to implement the Roadmap and they created room for the Roadmap itself to be debated again. We were debating the Roadmap. If the Roadmap had said this is a king that is a king, and then the funerals will be done in this sequence. And then we were now discussing the status of any one of them then we were simply reagitating the adduced material exactly that was what happened.

Alhassan made it known that the Committee's failure to adhere to what was agreed on and signed up to as the Roadmap and to ensure that the parties strictly follow the provisions therein, was a sign that the Committee did not commit itself to ensuring that the Roadmap was implemented to the letter.

Further, the Abudu Family, in the letter announcing its withdrawal from the mediation processes, stated that the CEC was not committed to ensuring that the Roadmap was fully implemented. In the letter, they expressed their frustration about the rehabilitation of the Gbewaa Palace to set up the final funeral rites of the Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV:

**Citnews:** The Committee has failed to give true meaning to clause 'i' of their Road-map to peace document which states that: ...the old Gbewaa Palace should remain free of occupation or any activity until a date is set for the performance of the funeral rites of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV. The intent of the Committee expressed in the Final Peace Agreement that '...we therefore conclude that the funeral should take place at the Gbewaa Palace...' has not come to fruition.

This clause was made in reference to Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV. A visit by Mr. Owusu Boateng, Asantehene's Secretary, to the Bolin-Lana Palace with a contractor who was introduced as the one engaged by the Committee to rehabilitate the old Gbewaa Palace has not yielded any results.

Their most recent promise on December 5, 2015 that the Abudus...will take occupation of the Gbewaa Palace to perform the final funeral rites of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV between January 8 and 15, 2016 has not been fulfilled. We have also noted, with regrets, that the Committee has failed to follow the letter and spirit of clause '10' of a 'Reconciliation Agreement' reached by the two feuding royal families in 1987 which states that 'On the death of ex Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai, he should be accorded the full funeral rites of a Yaa-Naa in the light of the Supreme Court ruling of 17th December, 1986.'

Given these reasons amongst other things, the family has been compelled to temporally suspend appearance before the Committee pending commencement of rehabilitation works at the old Gbewaa Palace as contemplated in the above submissions. We are convinced beyond reasonable doubt that the Committee has preponderance of evidence before it to take the giant step of rehabilitating the old Gbewaa Palace for the funerals to take place there. There is absolutely nothing to negotiate about as far as this already settled matter is concerned.

The Abudu family believed that the CEC was not forthright in implementing the Roadmap. For the Gate, the Committee had access to a lot of information on what was needed to be done, yet it failed to ensure that the appropriate steps were taken. This resulted in their withdrawal from the mediation processes and the consequence was the failure of the first Roadmap to peace.

### ***5.3.3. Understanding the culture and traditions of Dagbon***

Some participants also believed that the CEC had an incomplete understanding of the culture and traditions regarding the chieftaincy institution of Dagbon, which created a lacuna for the parties to manipulate the mediation processes. In turn this created difficulty for moving the processes forward, and made the work of the Committee more strenuous. My participants believed that understanding the culture and traditions of Dagbon formed an underlying aspect of the impasse, and this knowledge would have been of tremendous help to the Committee in carrying out their mandate. This was, however, not the case, as many of the members of the Committee did not fully appreciate the culture and traditions of Dagbon. A female participant, Sadiatu, noted that the CEC did not have the information to fully comprehend the underlying cultural dynamics and were ineffective as mediators:

**Sadiatu:** And also, the fact that, hmmm, the kind of information that was being shared, they were not sharing all the information, because for the mediators or the eminent to be able to help in the process, they needed to also understand all of the cultural processes in Dagbon, because it meant that some burials needed to be done, some processes also needed to be initiated to enskin a new Ya-Na.

So, if you do not understand the dynamics, if you do not understand all the people that are involved who are supposed to play these roles, how do you help with the process? Because then you will take a step or say something and they say “no, we will not agree to this particular item in the Roadmap because it goes against our tradition, it goes against our culture.” So, if you are not getting all of the information that you require to be able to take a process, then definitely you will not be able to move forward because the parties will not agree.

Sadiatu articulated that the lack of understanding of the culture and traditions of Dagbon on the part of the Committee made it difficult for them to thoroughly guide the process. As such, the parties took advantage of this gap to manipulate the process by disagreeing with the Committee on some of the decisions that were taken.

Other participants also emphasised that the Committee’s deficient knowledge on the culture and traditions of the Dagbon Chieftaincy institution led to the adoption and implementation of some strategies that were not culturally sensitive or appropriate. A CSO member, Raymond, put it in the following manner:

**Raymond:** Again, I should say that there were times that some of us sitting back you know and also be on the ground and implementing a lot of strategies realised that somehow the process did not understand the nitty-gritties of the culture of Dagbon. And I understand that they were also consulting you know to understand you know, even especially the Nayiri is very close to the Dagombas you know.

So, what I am saying is that it will seem that the process did not understand the nitty-gritties of the customs and traditions of Dagbon, you know. And so, even if and I am aware they might have been doing some consultations because I remember also, hmm. And the technical facilitation because to be honest despite eminence, despite whatever some people can rely on clouds and respect for the skin, or the stool position or whatever position they are occupying title, you know, that is very important and plays a key significant role, you know.

Now we will always require people with insight you know, and they will always require people who can advise, give guidance you know to be able to navigate the process. That is also very important, and I remember my former boss, Mr. X at the beginning was playing a role. I don't know how far or official it might have been you know. But that is what probably may or the inadequacy of that probably created some of the challenges that they went through, because despite whatever it is at the beginning don't forget two elements could play.

Here, we learn the Committee did not have, as part of the team, a technical sub-group that could advise it on matters relating to the culture and customs of Dagbon and its relation to the chieftaincy institution.

Understanding the culture and traditions of Dagbon would have been very relevant in navigating the mediation processes especially with regard to how to communicate with the various parties. This was however not the case with the CEC. A member of one of the Gates, Dramani, noted the following in her story:

**Dramani:** The other thing is, when they just took over, hmm. They needed to understand the culture and traditions to be able to employ that in their own processes, in terms of bilateral communications, you know, with individuals, with groups you know. And being able to have let me say to be well informed in terms of, hmm, navigating the process.

Because when you are doing mediation, you are armed with a lot of information. Someone is talking you are just sitting down you know and with all the information you have if the person is telling lies you will just say "well, but you cannot say the person is telling lies you know." Based on the information you have; you will find a way of navigating the process you know.

Sometimes that is why you go into caucus or you can ask a question, critical question and you see that the person will sit back you know because the person knows that you have hit you know the truth.

From the above, it becomes apparent that understanding the culture and traditions of the conflict setting is important in mediation processes. A mediation team must therefore appreciate the culture of the conflict context to navigate the mediation and communication processes, as well as identify the best strategies for implementing a peace accord.

#### **5.4. National party politics**

The Dagbon Conflict is a chieftaincy conflict between two Gates over traditional political power, yet it is also viewed as a proxy for national party politics. As a result, it has often metamorphosed into the battleground of the two main political parties in the fourth (since 1992) Republican dispensation of Ghana, i.e., the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP). My participants believed that national party politics has tremendously shaped the dynamics of the conflict including the peace processes including the outcome of the first Roadmap to peace. My participants suggested that since independence, national party politics has taken a huge toll on the dynamics of the conflict and has accordingly influenced the behaviour of both Gates directly and indirectly, and the outcome of the mediation processes.

##### **5.4.1. Political interest**

My participants characterized both political parties as having a vested interest in the conflict and its outcomes, leading to political interference in the conflict from the national level. This was considered a major factor that dealt a blow to conflict transformation and contributed to the deadlock in the peace processes and Roadmap. A peace activist, Mohammed, reported on this issue in the following way:

**Mohammed:** I think also the politicization of the conflict was a major thing and it is not by coincidence. Hmm, you know the conflict occurred when an NPP government was in power. And if you look at the reports, if you look at the circumstances, sometimes some of the literature that have been written by some very hmm, you know, objective personalities, you know. And then the historical background to the conflict, you cannot rule out political interference in what led or political involvement in what led to the death of the Ya-Na.

Well, we are short of evidence but at least we can speculate that based on what has happened previously and with the way things happened that led to the death of the Ya-Na. Those who claimed that there was a bit of political underhand in those particular actions cannot be overruled entirely although they might not have the hardcore evidence

to prove so. So, I think ever since the conflict also became a political battleground and the opposition party which subsequently won, you know, finding the killers of the Ya-Na was a major political campaign you know.

So, in that particular sense, it is difficult, the two parties in this particular sense became entrenched. This one says, once you belong here, I also belong here and we all know as a matter of fact that the two royal Gates have somehow aligned themselves politically, you see. So, for me, it is one of the things that played a role. So, when the NPP lost power and the NDC took power in 2009, it is now the turn of this people to say “well, we will not cooperate with you.” So, that for me was one of the factors that has always militated against the first Roadmap.

But with an NPP government coming into power subsequently in 2016 or forming government in 2017, to some extent, someone will say they created a mess and then the NDC say we are coming to fix the mess. So, for the very first time in the conversation around you know the conflict, you have both parties are like, “ok, we are coming to fix the mess together,” you see.

So, there was that kind of political convergence. Maybe even if the NDC did not explicitly show that they were, you know they were in favour of that particular dialogue. But they did not show or say they were against it as they did in the period leading to 2004 and 2008 when the conflict was still very fresh. So, I think politics or political interference was one of the major factors that also dealt a blow to the conflict that we had.

From this perspective, the interference of both major political parties created an acrimonious situation that made it difficult for the state, irrespective of which political party was in power, to act as a neutral body in the resolution of the conflict. It also resulted in the parties taking entrenched positions in the mediation processes.

Contributing to the subject of political interference in the Dagbon conflict and its effect on the outcome of the peace processes, Casimiro, a civil society activist had this to say:

**Casimiro:** Well, to some extent, but what I can say is that for the political parties, they were looking at votes that they would get from the existence of the conflict. But like I said, if you sat with the royals, then they also see that it is because of their entrenched positions that they were listening to politicians who will use that to make votes for themselves. So, maybe to some extent yes, but I will not say it came from political parties.

The royals also had their side of the entrenched positions, but as long as it was not being resolved and the politician will come and make votes out of it, so be it. But as to how much they pushed to get them entrenched, I may not be able to speak to that. I think it was one of the key issues we saw among the parties and the other part had to do with the interference of partisan politicians.

I think that was key because Hmmm, either a perception or a reality, the factions were aligned with political parties and that didn’t help. It was also delaying the process

and once it was going to take place in the political regime and each of the factions perceived that this regime will favour another faction, whatever was going to take place, there was some kind of mistrust. So, you didn't see them committing to the process and if not for the commitment of the current government, the whole process would have been stopped.

In effect, the interest of the political parties was to maximize votes from the conflict zone. As a result, they interfered in the conflict through both implicit and explicit actions intended to influence the outcome of the conflict and peace processes in favour of their allies, in return for an expected political support from these allies.

#### ***5.4.2. Political support***

Moreover, as a result of their political interests, participants believed, the two major political parties in Ghana - the NDC and the NPP – specifically provided political support for both Gates. Specifically, the NDC was perceived as allied with and providing many forms of support to the Andani Gate, whereas the NPP is seen as an ally of, and supporting the Abudu Gate. These forms of political support influenced the behaviour of the parties in the conflict, and contributed to the mediation deadlock. An opinion leader in the community, Bashir, had this to say on the support the two political parties provide to the two Gates:

**Bashir:** And then one other problem was that politicians also used that one as political campaign messages. It was a huge political capital to the politicians. So, the way to do your political campaign during an election was to ensure that they will get the killers of Ya-Na and your message is clear, you understand. And the Abudus too, they were also using it, “when you vote for me and I get power, we will perform Yaa-Naa Mahamadu’s funeral.”

So, it was a campaign issue for politicians from both sides and they didn't want the matter to end, they didn't want the matter to end. For the politicians it was a way of manipulating the people. So, they actually didn't want it to end.

Bashir suggests that the two political parties supported their allies through political campaign promises, which played to the whims and caprices of their allies in the conflict. The two Gates therefore felt the need to support their political allies in order to see the realisation of their goals. Another peace activist, Mo-Sallah, had this say on political party support for the two Gates in the conflict:

**Mo-Sallah:** And you see, politics, whether we like it or not plays a critical role in our national lives. Now, some people also thought that the political regime we are in doesn't favor our side, maybe let's wait until our sympathisers in politics come to power then we will also put in our bargain. So, these were some of the things that accounted for it. You see, the political class was interested because they have supporters in both Gates.

I know you are not too naive, or a stranger to the fact that the Abudus are NPP and the Andanis are NDC. Now let me tell you something: the promises that they give to their supporters behind the scenes, you and I are not privy to it. They will not come on the platform to say it, but they tell them: "This will be this or that will be that or we are dead." Now let me be frank with you: But for the election of Nana Akuffo Addo, these funerals would not have been performed. Yes.

You see, the NDC could not have gotten the Andanis to stick to the terms of the agreement, because they are their sympathisers. The Andanis are the sympathisers of the NDC. They are the supporters of the NDC, and they have their support base there. And the terms of the agreement said that, fine, the funerals should be performed this way. And you know, we needed some pressure from somewhere to get these things done. And even to a point we were helpless. Do you understand?

Following from the fact that both political parties had their support bases in the respective Gates, it made it difficult for them to put the necessary pressure on the Gates to adhere to the peace processes and Roadmaps.

These facts are corroborated by a female peace activist, Akanawie, who intimated that the political support and promises made to both Gates placed the two political parties in a dilemma when it comes to the implementation of the Roadmap. She reported on this issue as follows:

**Akanawie:** I mean, mind you, it was this same NDC as a political party having an interest in Dagbon and let me say to amass votes, promising the Andani family that when they come into power, the Kufuor government that murdered, that helped the Abudu family to murder the late Ya-Na, they were going to ensure that the murderers were brought to book. You will realise that it was found in the 2008 manifesto of the NDC that this was what they were coming to do and Andanis as I said earlier, 80 percent of Andanis are NDC. So, most of the votes, let me say a chunk of the votes that the NDC is making in the north was related to the death of the Ya-Na.

So, they were promising to come and find the killers. So, could they have turned around instead of finding the killers to follow the Roadmap to peace? To ensure that instead of finding the killers, you are rather going for the second stage of the Roadmap to perform funerals in which case the first funeral to be performed was the Regent of the Abudus, that is Yaa-Naa Mahamadu.

So, in that difficulty, NDC as a political party will also find it very difficult to actually push for the continuation of the Roadmap to peace because they were making a promise that they were coming to find the killers of the Ya-Na. So, every year the Andani family will hold a press conference and go especially during every anniversary to remind

Ghanaians of the death of the Ya-Na. So, it is like their friends, the Andanis have their friends in government, it was going to be difficult for the NDC to actually push for the continuation of the Roadmap to peace. So, I think that is how I see the difficulty.

And one thing, let us be frank with the reality, you see, when they were making the promise, little did some of them, some of the politicians know that what happened was really not how they knew it to be. You know, this is a case that you are interested in a matter of a murder. So, coming to unravel the murder was going to be something that is easy for you. Only coming into power and realise that it wasn't what you thought it would be. And mind you, the Wuaku Commission had been formed earlier by the NPP government to look into that matter because it was a serious issue that was bringing down the government, the name of the government in terms of conflict in the North. So, the government put Justice Wuaku and his commission into force to bring the two parties to, hmm, because at that time, the evidence was very fresh.

So, all evidences make them available. If there are eyewitnesses that they are coming to give us, come and bring all the witnesses. So, Andanis and Abudus were in a sort of dockets or just trying to narrate all that happened. So, at the end of the day what the Wuaku Commission saw was that both factions were narrating issues that were related to war, warfare and both factions particularly if you look at those accusing the Abudus, the Andanis, they were more or less, some of them had to even. They had to open up sort of confess how Lawyer Ibrahim Mahama and Co. had hands in bringing them together and all that.

So, at the end of the day what the Wuaku Commission saw was that the two factions are all guilty of that same issue that we are looking at. At the end of the day charged the two factions those who had hands in causing that mayhem and then expecting that the government was going to prosecute those people who were charged by the Wuaku Commission. So, the NDC government coming into power and realizing that all these things had gone already, it was going to be very difficult for them to accept that they could not proceed with the murder charge.

However, they finally arrested some members of the Abudu family, and then tried them in court, but at the end of the day were vindicated. I mean they were (what do you call it) acquitted and discharged. So, one thing that, you will realise that the NDC government was in this dicey situation, their friends want them to prosecute their sort of their enemies (enemies in quote here) and unfortunately, they are not able to prosecute them.

Akanawie clearly emphasizes the difficulties that political support brought to bear in the implementation of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace. The promises made by the NDC as a political party while in opposition created a difficulty for the party as a government to enforce the Roadmap to peace. The party more or less found itself in a certain debacle in view of the promises they had made and the realities on the ground and as such they could not implement the Roadmap when they took over the reins of government from 2009 to 2016.

## **5.5. Findings**

The preceding sections of this chapter present the perspectives of study participants with regards to actions of third parties that contributed to the deadlock of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace. Grounded in the participants' perspectives, five significant findings emerged inductively from the data and are identified in this regard: (1) enforcement matters, (2) high levels of uncertainty, (3) culture and traditional customs matter, (4) trust issues with the mediation committee, and (5) the role of allies. I synthesize each of these factors in the next few sections as I seek to respect the participants' perspectives yet analyze them to complement my own experiences and knowledge.

First, participants suggest that the unwillingness of the state to enforce the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace contributed to the failure of the peace processes and the Roadmap. They note that state enforcement was a critical factor for successful implementation. The state had the capacity and muscle to enforce the Roadmap yet did not bring that to bear in the implementation of the first Roadmap, creating a major lapse in the implementation process.

This lapse was duly exploited by the parties and especially by those who were directly and indirectly benefiting from the conflict and wished to see the peace process prolonged. Participants also explained that the failure of the state to enforce the Roadmap stemmed from fear of the unknown as the state did not know how the parties would react to it in view of the historical outcomes of similar efforts. As a result, the state was not willing to gamble with the enforcement and implementation of the first Roadmap to peace.

In addition, between 2009 to 2016, the ruling party directly benefited from one of the parties, the Andani Gate, and was considered an ally of that Gate. For political expediency, therefore, it was unwise for the state to implement the Roadmap because that was not the immediate desire of the Andani Gate. As a result, between 2009 to 2016, the state had no interest in jeopardising political gains from the Gate. Prior to this, i.e., between 2006 to 2008, the state could equally not enforce the Roadmap to peace because the ruling party at the time - an ally of the Abudu Gate - was considered by the Andani Gate as being complicit in the murder of the King in March 2002. Naturally, the Andani Gate also did not view the state as a neutral entity in the implementation of the Roadmap. This dicey state of political affairs created a situation where either of the Gates had cause to not trust whichever political party was in power to be a neutral entity in their dispute.

In the implementation of the peace accords and Roadmaps to peace, enforcement is necessary to ensure that the accords or Roadmaps are implemented to the letter of the negotiated agreement. Otherwise, the parties are not committed to the processes, and they will constantly violate them. A credible third party must be identified to bring that enforcement to bear on the peace process.

Second, it emerged from the participants that the failure of the state to provide the necessary political and security guarantees resulted in uncertainty among the parties. The participants explained that the parties did not see a clear future regarding their primary goals. Although the Dagbon Roadmap to peace provided a clear path to addressing the issues or concerns of the parties, the parties were not certain of the outcomes because the necessary guarantees to facilitate a successful outcome were not forthcoming from the state.

The participants stressed that each of the parties had goals that they wanted to achieve through the first Roadmap to peace. The ultimate goal of the Abudu Gate was the performance of the funeral of their father, Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV. The implication of the performance of the funeral of their late father was a sacrosanct step which would indicate that, traditionally, he is now recognised as a former Ya-Na, and consequently that his descendants are once more qualified to contest the Namship (Kingship) of Dagbon.

In contrast, the Andani Gate considered that because their father, Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II, had been murdered and had not died a natural death, they were not obliged to relinquish their hold on the skin to the rival Gate, and as such that they were entitled to continue with the Namship (Kingship) and produce its next King. Although the Andanis' demand for justice for their father had always been trumpeted in their communication and narrative, what was of prime importance to them was to continue with the Namship. In essence, all other goals espoused by the parties were not at the core of the conflict but were secondary.

In light of the above, the lack of political assurances or guarantees from either the state or the CEC to the parties that their respective goals would be achieved created room for anxiety and uncertainty. For example, although the first Roadmap to peace clearly stated that the funeral of Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai IV would be performed, it was not made explicit which Gate would occupy the Skin after the performance of the funerals of both deceased Ya-Nas. This uncertainty especially made the Andani Gate unwilling to compromise and contributed to the deadlock of the first Roadmap to peace, and the peace processes in general.

Moreover, the participants cited a lack of security guarantees from the state to enhance both Gates' confidence in the peace processes, especially in the implementation of the first Roadmap. The Dagbon conflict, according to my participants, is characterised by historical betrayals by both Gates. The historical relationship between the parties regarding the signing and implementation of peace agreements is defined by constant betrayals with the Gates not adhering to provisions that they have signed on to. These relationships and experiences were transferred to the peace processes under the auspices of the CEC, and underscored the actions and responses of both Gates with respect to the first Roadmap to peace.

Among other things, it became apparent that the Andani Gate was not willing to allow the Abudu Gate to enter the Palace for the performance of the funeral of their father because they did not trust that the Abudu Gate would subsequently leave the Palace. Similarly, the Abudu Gate feared that the actions of the Andani Gate were geared towards extinguishing their Gate. Cognizant of the historical relationship between the two Gates which bred betrayal and mistrust, it would have been more appropriate for the state to provide some security guarantees to ensure that each of the parties adhered to the provisions of the first Roadmap. In addition, the absence of security guarantees for the implementation of the first Roadmap resulted in the parties stalling the peace process.

In peace processes such as the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace, political and security guarantees ensure that the parties trust and have confidence in the process, and are certain that their goals or some of their goals can be achieved; as such, they will support the process. Yet uncertainty about the future in the absence of political and security guarantees best describes the case of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace.

Third, culture and traditional customs matter so that it can be inferred from the data that the culture and traditions of Dagbon were not fully considered in the composition of the CEC. My participants noted there were established structures for resolving chieftaincy disputes in Dagbon, based on the culture and traditions of Dagbon. My participants indicated that in the past, the Nayiri was responsible for resolving chieftaincy disputes and this would have been the appropriate forum for the mediation of the dispute. Disputes in Dagbon were sent to the Nayiri, who is the Overlord of the Mamprugu Traditional Area and historically an elder brother of the Ya-Na for resolution. The mediation committee, being comprised of the Asantehene and the Yagbon-Wura together with the Nayiri, was not considered the most appropriate forum for the

mediation of the conflict. My participants articulated that taking the chieftaincy conflict to a third party that was not sanctioned by the culture and traditions of Dagbon was an indictment on the status and identity of the Kingdom as a whole.

Some participants did not, however, share this perspective. In contrast, they explained that the conflict was protracted to the extent that the traditional structures for conflict resolution had become part of the conflict web and could not be considered neutral arbiters in the mediation process. The times, they indicated, were not normal, and a mediation committee was the best option for peacefully resolving the conflict. Moreover, these participants indicated that the Nayiri was included in the committee in part to address cultural concerns, because, according to the culture and traditions of Dagbon, he is the main arbiter of Dagbon Chieftaincy conflicts.

Most participants observed however that the Committee did not have a complete appreciation of the culture and traditions of Dagbon; a situation which made their work very difficult at the initial stages of the negotiation processes. Except the Nayiri (considered an elder brother of the Ya-Na because they share ancestry, and have some cultural semblance with the Kingdom of Dagbon), the other members of the Committee had no cultural semblance with the people of Dagbon. Moreover, even the Nayiri was considered by one of the Gates as being biased at some stages of the negotiation. This, they believed, impacted his input and negative contribution to some extent.

Moreover, my participants emphasised that because the Committee lacked complete understanding of the culture and traditions of the chieftaincy institution of Dagbon, the parties took advantage of this loophole to manipulate the processes. For instance, the Gates provided different interpretations when it came to aspects of the chieftaincy institution as encapsulated in the culture and traditions of Dagbon. The Committee did not, however, counter most of these narratives because they did not fully understand and appreciate the culture and traditions of Dagbon. My participants explained that this did not only create difficulties in moving the processes forward but it affected the entire work of the committee, and contributed to the deadlock of the first Roadmap.

One can therefore conclude that culture is important for shaping the processes and outcomes of peace processes and peace accords. When the culture of the conflict context is not considered in forming a mediation team (especially in high-context cultures such as the Dagbon Kingdom), the mediation team may encounter hurdles in getting support from the parties and the

general public. Similarly, when the mediation team does not understand and appreciate the culture and traditions of the conflict context, it becomes difficult to navigate the mediation processes.

Fourth, there were trust issues with the mediation committee. My participants' responses help us to understand that the parties' trust in the mediation committee is critical in determining the success or failure of a peace process. The participants explained that at the initial stages of the peace processes, issues with the mediation team largely contributed to mistrust towards the Mediation Committee and triggered the non-cooperative attitudes of the parties. They indicated that the Gates did not trust the CEC during the mediation processes, instead believing the Committee to be biased and as not committed to actually resolving or enforcing the Roadmap to peace. Such mistrust, it was believed, made the parties question the capability and tenacity of the mediation team to lead the processes.

Participants explained that both parties perceived the Committee as biased in the mediation processes, in different ways. Specifically, the Abudu Gate accused the Committee of favouring the Andani Gate because the Andani Gate appeared to be benefiting more from the peace processes and usually appeared to have its way in the negotiation processes. Likewise, the Andani Gate accused the Committee of bias, because in their view, it often sidestepped and did not adhere to the culture and customs of Dagbon.

Participants also characterized the parties' mistrust of the CEC as emanating from perceptions that the Committee was not willing to enforce the Roadmap to the letter of the agreement. The failure of the Committee for the Abudu Gate to follow through with its own Roadmap and implement it accordingly was enough justification for the Gate not to trust the Committee. The case in point here is that the first Roadmap had certain provisions requiring implementation before the peace processes could proceed, yet the Abudu Gate believed the Committee was not actively enforcing these provisions. As such, the Abudu Gate withdrew from the mediation processes in 2016 resulting in the collapse of the first Roadmap to peace.

In every mediation process, mediation teams must gain the trust and support of the parties; the committee must be seen as transparent to avoid perceptions of bias towards the Committee. Similarly, mediation committees must engender confidence in peace processes by ensuring that all stakeholders adhere, as much as possible, to Roadmaps designed to bring peace.

Fifth, the role of allies is significant as it is deduced from participants' comments that the alignment of the Gates to the two major political parties - the NDC and the NPP - contributed to the deadlock in the peace processes. Participants explained that each of the Gates was allied to either of the two major Ghanaian political parties that had vested interests in the conflict and as such, provided support for the Gates. The Gates, therefore, intentionally delayed the implementation of the peace processes with the hope that when their allies assumed the reigns of political power, they would access the necessary security and political support to win the conflict. As a result, they did not have confidence in the peace processes as the way out for resolving the conflict but instead they regarded political party support as the means to advance their respective causes and win the conflict. This state of affairs further energised the Gates to continue with the conflict, and to take entrenched positions in the mediation processes.

Moreover, participants' responses suggest that political interest in the conflict as well as political support of the Gates, eroded the Gates' own trust in the state and its institutions as neutral entities in the conflict resolution and the peace process implementation. For instance, when the NPP was in power, the Andani Gate did not trust the state as a neutral entity because they considered the governing party to be an ally of their rival. Every state action relating to the peace processes was thus viewed with suspicion. Similarly, when the NDC was in power, the Abudu Gate did not trust the state as a neutral body to implement the Roadmap, for similar reasons. These conditions made it difficult for the state to actually enforce the first Roadmap to peace, and negatively impacted the behaviour and attitude of the Gates towards the Roadmap, the mediators, and the peace processes. Specifically, their confidence was eroded.

In sum, the presence of allies in a conflict, therefore, can have both positive and negative influences on the outcome of peace processes and peace accords.

## **5.6. Conclusion**

This chapter focused on emerging themes from participants and to a lesser extent other secondary sources about the actions of third parties and party politics that contributed to the deadlock of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace. Data highlight the lack of political will on the part of the state, the failure to provide security and political guarantees, and the Gates' perceptions of the Committee as culturally inadequate, biased, and unwilling to implement the Roadmap. Moreover, political interest in the conflict and political support provided by both

major political parties, the NDC and NPP, appeared to influence the perceptions and behaviour of the parties in the mediation processes.

Grounded in the responses and narratives of the participants with respect to third parties and political actors, five key major issues were identified in particular: enforcement matters, high levels of uncertainty, distrust in the mediation committee, culture and traditional customs, and the role of allies.

What can be gleaned from these perspectives is that third parties such as the state and the mediation team had an influence on the outcome of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace. That is, certain actions of these third parties influenced the parties' trust and confidence in the peace processes. Political allies that had an interest in the conflict also provided political support for the two Gates, which the Gates relied on to derail the peace processes. Third parties and secondary parties must recognise that they have a critical role to play in peace processes and as such must guide their actions, because such actions can foster conflict or detract the parties' interests away from a peace process.

## Chapter 6

### Deadlock of Dagbon Roadmap 1: An unsupportive context

#### **6.1. Introduction**

The context within which conflicts occur can influence the outcome of peace processes initiated to resolve the conflict. Chapter six explores the various facets of the context of the Dagbon conflict that impeded the successful implementation of the Roadmap, drawing on the perspectives and experiences of the study participants. Specifically, the chapter explores the behaviour patterns of the primary actors/parties (such as mistrust, unwillingness to compromise, and selective cultural interpretation) and how these patterns influenced the outcome of Roadmap I.

In addition, the chapter explores the influence of socio-psychological dimensions of the conflict context including emotions such as fear on the outcome of Roadmap I. The chapter further explores the influence of the conflict setting including energized youth and youth groups, the role of chieftaincy contractors and conflict entrepreneurs, the outbreak of violence and the polarization of the society around the Roadmap. Finally, the chapter discusses emerging issues from the data and presents a conclusion.

#### **6.2. Behaviour of parties**

Participants argued that the behavioural patterns of the primary parties in the conflict contributed to the deadlock in the first peace process (Roadmap I). Specifically, the participants discussed behaviours connected to an unwillingness to compromise, mistrust, and selective interpretation of the culture and traditions of Dagbon; each is elaborated on further below.

##### ***6.2.1. Unwillingness to compromise***

Some participants expressed the view that the primary actors in the conflict were unwilling to compromise in the design and implementation of the Roadmap, which resulted in the inability of the mediation team and negotiators to develop key provisions in the Roadmap. Participants differed, however, as to what constituted the unwillingness to compromise; that is, the specific points of entrenchment and their implications.

For the young people, one important dimension of the primary actors' entrenchment or unwillingness to compromise was with regard to peace and justice. According to the participants, one of the actors (the Andani Gate) placed priority on justice (prosecution of the killers of their father) at the negotiation stages; the other party (the Abudu Gate) placed equal priority on the performance of the funeral of their father (a symbolic form of justice). Meanwhile, for the mediation team, the primary, contrasting, objective was to restore peace to Dagbon. A young person by the name of Abdul intimated that there were disagreements on certain terms and conditions that were necessary for the implementation of the Roadmap to peace. She reported on the issue in the following manner:

**Abdul:** I think both parties, they found it very difficult to agree on certain terms and conditions. That made the first Roadmap not to succeed. The first condition was that they should find justice for the King and the forty elders. They were killed in the Yendi war. And the second one was Naa Mahamadu should be recognized as a former Yaa-Naa or former King. That was another issue. You see, because if they didn't perform Naa Mahamadu's funeral, then it means the Abudu Gate is going to be closed. So, and they didn't want it that way.

That was another reason why the first one failed. Because the Andani people were, they were not ready to accept that Yaa-Naa Mahamadu as a former Yaa-Naa, because he was deskinned. But the court said they should treat him as former Yaa-Naa. And then his children can also be qualified to be Yaa-Naa.

So, that was the main reason why the first one failed. Because the Andanis did not agree. So, that was the reason why the first one failed. And then they found it difficult to find the murderers of the late Yaa-Naa Yakubu Andani. Because the perpetrators were still in Yendi. And some of them did not regret. They were still making some pronouncements. It was hurting. So, that was the reason why the first one failed.

From the perspective of Abdul, the failure of both parties to agree on some terms and conditions that were required for the actualization of the Roadmap created a barrier in the implementation of the Roadmap to peace.

A similar perspective about the unwillingness of the parties to compromise with the mediation team's perspective (in this case, to shift from a justice towards peace focus) was also shared by peace activists. Mende-Sulley, a peace activist, had this to say on the disagreements among the key stakeholders with respect to the objective of the Roadmap:

**Mende-Sulley:** Yeah, you know you've touched on a very salient point in the issues of conflict, whether the issue of pursuing justice or just allowing what...the milk has already been spilt, let us look at what is ahead. You know there is no conclusive argument in this particular regard. Both schools of thought are right. Some will say well, we have to pursue justices in order to be able to deter people that will commit such things in the future.

But the overarching question is whose justice, because if you look at the Wuaku Commission's report although the NDC did not or does not agree to the Wuaku Commission report, they said it was a conflict situation or a war situation and once it was a war situation, it is not an individual that is engaged. That means that both parties had to play a role for there to be war, you see. But if you look at the kind of people that were prosecuted, which of course the court ended up acquitting almost all of them for want of evidence. You could see it was skewed towards one particular direction which the most authoritative document that we have till date in the Wuaku Commission's report which is not something that the Commission's report recommends at the end of the day.

So, the issue of justice for me, is always a very dicey issue. And the case of the Dagbon conflict seems to have rather given more impetus to the group that thinks that often when we are talking justice it is about whoever that is this case, being the victor, because the victor means the NDC is in power so they are against, they are not aligned to the Abudus so it is rather the victor's justice in that particular sense.

So, to some extent, it might have also have even affected the peace processes because if you are trying to criminalize or if you are criminalizing the whole situation, the people have wait until such a time that the justice process is complete for them to be able to accept if they were wrong or right. And then it might even...maybe the outcome would even go further to polarize the communities because the court will either acquit the people or convict them. If they acquit them the court says we are right, we are coming to take what belongs to us. If they convict them the people will say well your people are criminals, we cannot allow you in.

You know so the point is great where you ...at the end of the day, the justice process itself, maybe the route the NDC then decided to go to prosecute these people. You know, those people that were arrested and subsequently acquitted by the court could have played a role in terms of trying to polarize the people further and because those who were arrested were not...it wasn't...I am not saying well, if you arrest three Abudus, arrest three Andanis, no but you know.

It is clear from the story of Mende-Sulley that the difficulty in addressing the justice-peace objective made it difficult to proceed with the implementation of the Roadmap to peace and the entire peace processes.

For the religious leaders interviewed, entrenched positions between both parties were the focus, and centred around whose turn it was to occupy the Dagbon 'skin.' The Andanis believed that since their father did not die a natural death, his reign must be continued by one of his descendants. The Abudus believed it was their turn, since the Andani Gate had occupied the skin

for a long time. A religious leader, Rudrigue, expressed the following view on the rightful occupant of the skin:

**Rudrigue:** Yeah of course, you know, there were other factors. Some of the factors were that as soon as you perform the funeral of Ya-Na, who will become the next Ya-Na, the Abudus think that the Andanis exhausted their time. Andanis also thought that their time was not up and they actually cut it short so they are to continue, that was one of the factors.

Number two, the Abudus thought that their funeral must be performed first before the Andanis, the Andanis also thought that their funeral has to perform. Number three, where to perform the late Ya-Na Mahamadu's funeral, where to perform the funeral because he died out of office, so where to perform the funeral? So, these were all factors that were holding it.

For Rudrigue, the two Gates did not agree on which provisions to implement first, which invariably caused a delay in the implementation of the Roadmap and peace processes.

From the perspective of civil society, the unwillingness of the parties to compromise emanated from disagreements about whether Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai was a legitimate King (in which case his funeral would be performed according to the culture and traditions of the chieftaincy institution of Dagbon). For the Andani Gate, Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai was not properly enskinned, and therefore could not be regarded as a Ya-Na to be accorded such rights. The Abudu Gate on the other hand, believed he was a legitimate Ya-Na, and should be accorded all such rights (including his funeral and the succession of his descendants to the skin). A youth activist, Stephen, had this to say on the disagreements of both parties on the legitimacy of Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulai:

**Stephen:** Yeah there was a deadlock, the reason for the deadlock. Hmm, there were several reasons: The first was this broader underlined reluctance by sections of the Andani family to recognize Naa Mahamadu as Ya-Na. That Naa Mahamadu wasn't a Ya-Na, and that you cannot perform his funeral therefore as a funeral of a Ya-Na. So, you can't even begin to think about performing his funeral as Ya-Na.

And then number two, that, I think it was a vindictive position, because the Ya-Na had been killed. The way it was, they were doing everything possible to frustrate the Abudu family who were accused largely of being accountable for the death of the Ya-Na. And I think in so doing, they created a lot of challenges because the communities and the towns that were occupied by the Abudus also were adamant that any Andani could remain chief to come and settle in those places, so like Tolon, Diari, places like that. If you appointed someone to come there, they would die outside of those communities, they

wouldn't be able to move in. But some of these groups too were key to the success of the peace processes.

In the view of Stephen, the failure on the part of the Andani Gate to recognize Naa Mahamadu as Ya-Na, coupled with the perception that the Abudu Gate was responsible for murder of the Ya-Na Yakubu Andani IV, compounded the legitimacy disagreement that characterized the peace processes.

A young female participant, Fatima, during a focus group discussion, cited the following contributor to the legitimacy disagreement in this regard. She reported on the issue in the following way:

**Fatima:** Hmm, they, the Abudus were feeling that their late King is supposed to be buried as a King. But Andanis said that he wasn't a King when he died, so he would not be buried as a King; that was the confusion. Abudus said he was a King. Yes, he was a king so he must be buried as a King. Andanis said he wasn't a King and that's how we know it.

It is clear from the participants' responses that the entrenched positions from one perspective, can be seen as a difference relating to whether Roadmap I should focus on justice or peace; and from another perspective, a difference over the rightful occupant of the skin and the legitimacy of the late Ya-Na Mahamadu Abudulia IV. In addition to general mistrust, the factors above contributed to the deadlock in Roadmap I. The next section elaborates on how this occurred.

### ***6.2.2. High mistrust***

The second behavioural trend of the primary actors that was identified by participants was mistrust among the actors, between the actors and the state, and to some extent between the actors and the mediation committee. Some participants such as civil society activists highlighted that mistrust between the primary actors is attributable to the historical relations and experiences the parties encountered from each other. In addition, there is uncertainty that has shaped and continues to shape the actions and inactions of the various parties and ultimately the level of mistrust that has defined the relationship between the disputants. Raymond is a CSO activist. He noted that the historical relationships of unfulfilled compromises on the part of the two Gates

was the main factor that underpinned the mistrust both parties had for each other. He narrated the following in his story:

**Raymond:** Of course, if you look at the history of Dagbon over a hundred years ago, as they say you know, I mean the kingdom. There are historical antecedents you know that along the line some compromises were made, and those compromises were exploited you know. And so, people will think, “ok, it has ever happened you know and if we just compromise, how can we be sure that this time again it will not be exploited you know. So, let’s make sure we guide against that jealously and don’t give that opportunity you know.”

The excerpt above suggests that historical relations between the parties had an impact in defining the relationships between the parties. This, to a large extent, influences how they respond to each other in terms of compromises and the level of trust they have towards each other. A Peace researcher, Desire, described the mistrust between the Abudu and Andani Gates as a product of consistent and persistent betrayal that the two Gates have experienced from each other:

**Desire:** Yes, I think the consistent betrayal by both parties. Because when we agree on this and later on it comes out to be something else. An example is just this issue of the Regent not enskinning chiefs. They all agreed to it. But later on, the Regent went ahead enskinned. So, that mistrust came into the play where both parties feel that immediately we give a least opportunity to our opponent, they’re likely to do certain things that will not be reversible per the tradition.

This comment suggests that failure by some of the parties to adhere to the tenets and provisions of Roadmap I also accounted for mistrust between each other. Leonardo is another CSO participant. He had the following to say on mistrust among the parties:

**Leonardo:** So, I told you we conducted a survey and at the end, we attributed this stalemate or whatever we call it, to two things, trust and entrenched positions. I don’t know whether the two will even be one, because the trust wasn’t there. That look, if we allow these people to take this step, it is likely to backfire on us.

So, that little trust to say that go ahead, do what you want to do, let’s come forth, do what we want to do, was not there. And I think I don’t know why the prominent chiefs didn’t look at bringing that trust amongst them. Of course, signing a Roadmap meant that you agree to whatever steps that needed to be taken but there was that aspect of the trust which wasn’t dealt with.

This excerpt clarifies how uncertainty and fear based on past experiences contributed to mistrust between the parties, and raises the failure of the Committee to deal with this mistrust during the negotiation processes.

Other participants believed that high levels of mistrust did not exist only between the parties, but that the parties did not trust the state irrespective of which political party was in power. This situation according to my participants is a consequence of the many years of state interference in the conflict and the affiliation of the Abudu Gate to the NPP, and that of the Andani Gate to the NDC. A young peace activist, Sumaila, described mistrust between the parties and the state in the following manner:

**Sumaila:** You see the fact remains that largely the Abudus let me say about 80 percent of the Abudus are in support of the NPP. And let me say even though I haven't done proper research but then it is popular knowledge and we know so largely about 80 percent of the Andanis are in support of the NDC.

Now NPP came into power, there was earlier rumor that when NPP comes to power, they were going to remove the late Ya-Na and then perform the Abudu Ya-Na's funeral and then make sure an Abudu Regent is also made the Ya-Na, that rumour was there.

Now the NPP came into power, as soon as they came into power, what happened, there was that sort of struggle and it led to a three-day feud that led to the death of the Ya-Na. So, you would realize that the circumstance in which he died, and the media reportage and the fact that the NPP was in power when it happened made people make reference to the rumour that was there.

That if the NPP comes into power, that he (Ya-Na Yakubu Andani) was going to be removed whichever way. This provided a sort of belief to those who were having those suspicions. In the past before 2008, so as soon as I mean before 2002, as soon as 2000 NPP won power, 2001 there was a near clash between the two families, 2002, that clash actually took place.

So, NPP was in power and it was believed that...I mean knowing very well that or believing that Abudus are supporters of the NPP, so it will look like the NPP had come in power and they contributed in murdering the late Ya-Na to give way for the funeral. So, to me, I believe that the Committee of Eminent Chiefs found in this difficulty would struggle so hard however, but it will be difficult for them to push for the other terms in the Roadmap to peace.

So, you will realize that the NPP was in power, the Committee of Eminent Chief would find it difficult, people knowing very well that the Ya-Na was killed as a result of NPP coming into power, and the Abudus supporting NPP. So, how was it possible for the Committee of Eminent Chiefs to still continue to push for the funerals?

So that sort of sympathy for the Andani family and the sons and the wives of the late Ya-Na was going to be there. It was going to be difficult at that time to implement what the Roadmap to peace itself.

Sumaila's comment indicates that the history of state interference and political involvement has had a tremendous impact on the behaviour of the parties toward whatever initiative that the state undertakes to bring peace to Dagbon. State initiatives are often regarded with suspicion and mistrust as the parties often consider the actions of the state as inuring to the benefit of one or the other party. A member of the CEC, Naa, expressing his thoughts on the issue of mistrust among the two parties had this to say on the issue:

**Naa:** What happened is that the government was very serious; they gave the support for the burial. The installation of the Regent also came on. But the other things that had to be done were more at the local level. And they were not able to implement some of them because the thinking we have is that, there were people who didn't feel like, hmmm, there was still greater suspicion between the two parties.

There was no trust among the parties as to who will do what and what. And most of the time they will say things were not in line with Dagbon tradition, like to have a committee of six representatives from each of the two royal families. They didn't see it to be along Dagbon customs, even though they told them that the times were not normal times. And because they were abnormal times, they had to do things abnormally. But the main issue was the trust. There was no trust between the two families as at that time.

The response of the CEC also alludes to the factor of mistrust as a barrier to the implementation of Roadmap I. However, the Committee attributes the mistrust to cultural interpretations emanating from the parties in conflict regarding the composition of the negotiators and the Eminent Committee.

#### ***6.2.3. Selective interpretation and application of Dagbon culture and traditions***

The selective interpretation and application of the culture and traditions of Dagbon by the primary actors (Abudu and Andani Gates) was an emerging theme in the participants' responses. They observed that the two Gates, in an attempt to make a strong case or position for themselves, select and interpret particular aspects of the culture and traditions of Dagbon that suit their goals. Gabriella, a peace activist, commented that the two Gates were engaged in the selection of the aspects of Dagbon culture that favour their positions. She described this issue in the following way:

**Gabriella:** Depending on how you look at it. Because how it did not enhance the process is dependent on parties' tendency to do selective traditional, hmmm, I mean cultural

application. They select one culture that enhances their position, and to discredit the other side. You understand? So, it depends on where you are, and that is also part of the politics of the process.

They will select one culture and say that based on this culture my position is right, whilst ignoring another one, hmm, deliberately ignoring another one which can also, hmm, which makes their position not unlikely (unlikely). You understand? Or which also makes their opponent's position likely.

Through selective interpretation of the culture and traditions of Dagbon, the parties seek to strengthen their case. Some participants also believed that the selective interpretation of the cultures and traditions of Dagbon is, in part, due to the failure to properly document the history, traditions, and cultures of Dagbon. Rudrigue is a religious leader in the community. He intimated that both Gates did not have a common understanding and agreement of Dagbon's culture thereby making it difficult for the peace processes to proceed smoothly. This is what he had to say:

**Rudrigue:** Well, from my perspective, I go to this royal family, and talk to them, they will tell me how everything started and all those things. I finish with them. I go to the Andani family. They also tell me their own side of it, and then you will see that what they say is different from what these ones say.

So, where does the truth lie, you understand. And so, this, as I said, it goes back to the fact that there is no written document, no hmm, right of chieftaincy succession that this, this and that, okay. Now the tradition is not static, it is dynamic, okay, things keep on changing all the time.

So, you also have to adjust because at one time, there was this issue of, you have a chief there, he dies and the first born takes over. But then, and later on, the chief doesn't have only one wife, he has different wives, many wives and then all the first born then are entitled for the chieftaincy.

So of course, then they resort to soothsaying and which in fact they do that, but then there was a time when it was stopped, that, that is too primitive (to use the word primitive in quote) and for that reason, why not set a kind of committee to look into that.

The above narrative was buttressed by a young female participant, Adisa, during a focus group discussion. Adisa recounted that the non-availability of proper documentation on Dagbon's history, traditions, and culture of both Gates allowed them to engage in different interpretations of the cultures, traditions, and history. She noted the following in her story:

**Adisa:** About the Roadmap, something that we are all missing that I think whether the first Roadmap or the second Roadmap that even in the future, we should have so that we will not have that challenges is the proper documentation of Dagbon history. If we had that for the first Roadmap, if we were having proper documentation of our history we wouldn't be having like provisions for the Roadmap.

We just go to our documents, our archives, when this situation happened in the past, how did they solve it? How did they resolve it? Because we don't have the proper documentation, we are being peddled with falsehood. Even from our grandparents, because we were not there.

Probably most of them were not even there. So, everybody tries to give his own story. And we have conflicting stories. They don't match. So, who is telling the truth? But if we were having a documentation, proper one, a legal document, that even we have problems like this we could just go and look at that.

How did they resolve it during their era? Then we apply it. But someone will tell you if someone dies in the world, they don't do this. If someone, another old man will tell you a different story. And definitely you will believe your grandfather. You wouldn't tend to believe someone's grandfather, and wouldn't believe your father.

So, we should have a proper documentation for our history. Because orally we have good history. And it is the Lunga (drummer) who just tells you this is what happened. But I think we should have proper documentation.

The two comments above suggest that the lack of an acceptable document on the traditions and culture of Dagbon created a leeway for the parties to differ on opinions and matters relating to the chieftaincy institution. The consequence was the emergence of different and counter narratives regarding the traditions and cultures of Dagbon.

Some participants, when asked about this idea of the selective application of the culture, expressed the view that Dagbon's elders, the custodians of the culture and traditions, failed to disclose the truth regarding the tenets of Dagbon culture and traditions that were relevant to the proper resolution of the conflict. Ricardo, a person with disability, commented that the elders who were tasked with the responsibility of providing guidance on the culture and traditions of Dagbon were not forthcoming because of the interest they had in the conflict and its outcome. Ricardo communicated on this as follows:

**Ricardo:** It is the elders around the chiefs who are misleading everything because the elders know the culture more than the chiefs. If the elders tell the chief that maybe you under this King, you will know.

But if like my brother said if the Yendi chief steps down and there is a Mion-Lana to enskin him he will rather tell the other that King you too have the chance to try

because he knows when they enskin him maybe he the elder will benefit from it or maybe he will even enskin him somewhere.

So, they will not tell the Kings the truth just because they want something small from them. He will just tell them you have chance, so you try, you may get it.

Ricardo disclosed that the elders who understood the culture and traditions, and are the custodians of the culture of Dagbon failed to intervene in the negotiation processes. Their honesty would have facilitated the negotiation processes, and the implementation of the Roadmap. These elders are also competing with each other for power, and to advance their interests of being promoted by the King they support. Ricardo is intimating that these elders are corrupt and are distorting the culture, and their actions are harming local communities.

### **6.3. The socio-psychological space**

The socio-psychological spectrum of the Dagbon conflict was also identified by participants as a key obstacle to the design and successful implementation of Roadmap I. Participants identified two key socio-psychological elements in this regard: (i) anger and emotional pain, and (ii) threats of elimination/the unknown.

#### ***6.3.1. Anger and emotional pain/grief***

Some participants expressed the view that at the initial stages of the peace processes, tempers and emotions were high, especially within members of the Andani Gate. Bashir is an opinion leader from within the community. He articulated that one of the Gates (Andani Gate) was still in pain as result of the murder of its King, thereby making it difficult for them to engage the Abudu Gate in negotiations. He noted the following in his narrative:

**Bashir:** Hmm, the reason was that the other parties were angry, and that was the reason why they don't want to cooperate, even at the initial stage. When they went to the Eminent Chiefs first, the other party told them that they won't sit together with their brothers because of the problem. You know they have killed their Chief and so, because of that they don't want to meet together unless the Eminent Chiefs meet them separately.

They were saying that they should meet the Abudus and then after that meet the Andanis different. But they looked at it that if they don't meet all of them together, if they don't bring all of them together, they cannot solve the problem. But because of the pain that was inside them, they were still thinking that how can you kill my chief and say

we should come together and meet to discuss on that, and the Eminent Chiefs had to take time and then brought all of them together.

So, when it came to the implementation only two were implemented. The first one was the burial, the second one was the installment of the Regent and after that the other ones. However, the other party didn't want to cooperate. They don't want to participate. What it meant was that since they have buried and enskinned the Chief that is all. But the other party did not agree. They did agree because they were still in pain, that was the reason why they didn't want to cooperate.

Following the March 2002 incident which resulted in the killing of Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II and 40 other people and the failure of the state to find the killers of the Ya-Na, negotiators from the Andani Gate approached the peace process with pain and grief. They were not in a position to engage in any substantial talks with the Abudu Gate whom they accused of killing their King.

Some participants also expressed the view that the main reason for the intense emotions was the failure of the state to find the killers of the Ya-Na. A female participant, Queen, during a focus group had this to say on the issue:

**Queen:** Having lost our King that is in 2002, right? So, 2002 to 2006 if I heard you right then 2006 that they formed the Roadmap; 2002 to 2006 that is four years. At that time people were still angry. People were like it is still too short for us to be talking about Roadmap without looking for the killers, and the thing is you can't decouple justice from peace, they move together. So, when you are talking about peace, people need justice. So, at that time many young guys, also the older ones were complaining about that short period.

For the Andani Gate, what was key was for justice to be brought to bear on the conflict by finding the killers of the Ya-Na and prosecuting them as such. The failure of the state to find the killers of the Ya-Na and to prosecute them accordingly only culminated in further anger and pain. The consequence was the withdrawal of the Gate from the peace processes on a number of occasions.

The participants emphasized the point that the high levels of anger and emotional pain, especially in some sections of Dagbon, led to the Andani Gate's non-commitment to the peace process and the implementation of Roadmap I. A representative of one of the CSOs, Banzema, stated that the murder of the King resulted in the violent escalation of interethnic conflict in Dagbon with the destruction of property, and the killing of local people:

**Banzema:** First and foremost, you will realize that people picture it to be fresh, the killing, the criminal aspect, burning of properties, killing of human beings, and they saw it to be uncastrated by the sitting government. Even comments, commentary on the whole process could just irritate people at the time and when you realize, hmmm, even it happened in Yendi, Dagbon, most of the cities in Dagbon received some pockets of violence for instance in Tamale, there were a lot of burning of houses.

Over 23 houses were burnt down, just as a result of this. In 2003 we had houses burnt as a result of the chieftaincy disputes, then in 2004, we had houses also burnt down, then in 2009. So, you can look at the time, the conflict happened in 2002 but we had the effect of this conflict travelling as far as to 2009.

So, that alone will tell you that there would have been challenges if the first Roadmap was to be implemented. And looking at the Roadmap, the timing and emotions of the ethnic groups involved. They saw that this regime, they were in charge of security and everything and the conflict travelled up to three days and they couldn't do anything, and because there is some alignment of factions to a political regime.

They believed the factions which benefited from the conflict or which won was supported by the sitting government so you wouldn't have seen any commitment from the other faction in implementing the Roadmap.

From the excerpt above, high levels of emotional pain (grief) and anger that characterised Dagbon at the time was not a conducive environment for implementing the Roadmap. More problematic was the perception that the state had had a hand in the killing of the King.

### ***6.3.2. A threatening context***

Some participants identified a threatening context as contributing to the deadlock in the implementation of the first Roadmap. The participants categorised threats into two components: threats of elimination, and the threats of the unknown. Tergeret-K is a participant from the UNDP. He proclaimed that both Gates felt that its opponent was taking every step to ensure that the other did not have the opportunity to occupy the Skin in the future. Tergeret-K expressed this point in this story as follows:

**Tergeret-K:** And the fact that I mean there were also some of the, hmmm, if you look at the one of the groups, Abudus in particular. One of the things that kept coming up was that they wanted the opportunity too, so that their lineage is not closed completely because if they did not have the opportunity to have a family member or have someone being recognized as a chief, that means there was a likelihood that, that Gate would be closed.

So, those I mean, those were the entrenched positions that we saw during the whole process. Because it was mentioned that the person who died from the Abudu Gate

was destooled, was deskinned, forcefully removed. And so, if you do not have someone taking over because that person has been murdered and a successor from that same line was seated, and there was a likelihood that he could be enskinned, what does that mean for us?

That means if we do not fight to ensure that it comes to us or the people within our area are recognized and the funeral is performed that he is or he was a King of Dagbon, that means that our Gate will be closed, we will not have access to the kingdom. Because if he is not recognized, which of his descendants can take up the Skin? So, those were the things that they were also fighting for from their side.

And the other group also felt that we did not end our tenure because the man did not die a natural death. From their side, they were saying that “the man didn’t die a natural death, so we need to continue.” The others said “no, it was a war and then he died.” So, the beginning those were the very strong stance, whether it was a war or whether the man was murdered. So, those were some of the things that were coming up.

As noted previously, the ascension of the Abudu Gate to the throne depended on the official recognition of their father as Ya-Na and the performance of his funeral as such, signalling that his descendants could ascend to the “Namship.” This led to belief among the Abudu Gate that the Andani side was deliberately taking steps to estrange them from the line of succession to the throne.

The second aspect generating threat was that the primary actors in this case (the Abudu and Andani Gates) did not know the next line of action of each other. Ramatu is a peace activist. She narrated how the feelings of mistrust, and sense of betrayal was linked to the perception that the Gate held, that the opponent was capable of not complying with the Roadmap’s directives, taking advantage of the situation when an opportunity presented itself. This is what she had to say:

**Ramatu:** There were also fears. In fact, this was one very important factor that actually delayed the process. Because there were fears that when the Abudus enter into the sacred room to perform their father’s funeral, they won’t come out. Because the room is such that when you go in there you can easily be enskinned as a Yaa-Naa.

This is a great room. So, the Andanis did not want to give the chance to the Abudus entering in there. Because they could betray them by enskinning themselves immediately when they enter there as Yaa-Naa.

And so, they were like to allow them to enter into that sacred room for that, they are not in position to agree. But then you can also not perform Yaa-Naa funeral outside that room. So, it was, that fear also, I mean, delayed the process. Yes, I think the consistent betrayal on both parties. Because when we agree on this and later on it comes out to be something else. An example is just this issue of the Regent not enskinning.

They all agreed to it. But later on, the Regent went ahead enskinned. So, that mistrust came into the play where both parties feel that immediately we give a least opportunity to our opponent, they're likely to do certain things that will not be reversible per the tradition.

In light of this threat of the unknown (next actions of the other party), each party was unwilling to risk allowing the rival to start the process of performing the funeral of their respective Kings. The participants indicated that because of the feeling of threats that the parties had developed towards the peace processes, they adopted strategies focused on protecting their own interests. This according to some participants contributed to the deadlock.

Casimiro is a civil society activist. He stated that tension arose out of the fear that each Gate did not know the other's intentions, and therefore he considered it to be a risky endeavor to allow one's opponent to have an easy path during the process. This is what he had to say:

**Casimiro:** Again like I indicated they were fears and each of them felt that or will think that, "Ok we have to protect what is ours and we have to make sure that people pay for what they have done, and we have to make sure that people who don't get away you know or get their way through you know to be able to." Hmm, let me say their intends should not be completed. So, those were some of the things that could have played roles.

Then again, like I indicated once the thing happened there was still tension. The tension was still there and people needed to take time phenomenally to be able to say "ok, over time this is what has happened I mean its not worth it, that we continue to engage each other I mean in this violence you know and deny ourselves of many of the things you know."

From the excerpt above, there was an apparent uncertainty and uncooperativeness on the part of the disputants which detracted from a successful implementation of the Roadmap. All the strategies they adopted were geared towards the protection of their interests and to ward off potential threats.

#### **6.4. The conflict setting**

The conflict setting encompasses many forces which can derail or support any peacebuilding initiative. To a large extent these forces are not under the control or influence of the parties in the conflict, or the mediators. With respect to the Dagbon conflict, the participants identified three key components related to the conflict setting, which made it difficult to implement the

Roadmap: (1) an exuberant and energized youth, (2) a polarised society, and (3) the role of faceless but influential people

#### ***6.4.1. Energized and exuberant youth***

Some study participants believed that the activities of young people did not support the peace processes; specifically, the majority of the young people within the Kingdom affiliated themselves with either of the two Gates, forming the ‘Andani Youth’ and ‘Abudu Youth’ groups. Ayatullah is a religious leader in the community. He commented that the young people in the Kingdom were used by the elders to distract the peace processes. He noted the following in his narrative:

**Ayatullah:** Yes, you know the young people. I will say the youth they are the majority, so at times their behavior and their actions were dictating to how the thing should move. In the sense that if we say we are going to do this and they do not give you their support, their backing, they will distract it. How do they distract it, they make sure that you will not get peace, they will be throwing stones here and there. They will create ungovernable atmosphere for you so that you cannot move forward?

So, the youth, hmm, so as a result of that, we have to meet the youth several times, while the Eminent Chiefs were doing the negotiations. We had to call the youth, we had to call the market women, and the truck pushers, all these people. We had to invite them, one or the other, to make sure that we sensitize them to maintain peace.

So, I could say they are the majority, the chiefs are only one or two, the opinion leaders are only one or two, they are the majority. So, when they are throwing their weight, you have to convince them before they are able to follow the path that we want. The youth took entrenched positions.

There were also some elders behind them who also did not want the matter to settle. So, when you hear from their fathers they say no, as Dagomba say “tu kung saga, tu kung die,” if you say “tu kung saga, tu kung die,” to the young man and the young man is to execute “tu kung saga, tu kung die,” the elder will not come out to throw stones. So, there were some elders also behind these young men, so that was their challenge.

These two youth wings had a huge influence on the leaders of the two Gates and their negotiation decisions. Even though the youth wings did not participate in the negotiation, they implemented some of the decisions of the Gates’ elder negotiators. The youth wings were, therefore, the foundation and power structure of the Gates and are known to have, on a number of occasions, distracted peace processes through violent activities at press conferences and by committing violent crimes.

Some participants noted that the actions of the youth groups are largely because of their lack of understanding and appreciation of the culture and traditions of Dagbon. Mubarak is a Chief within the Kingdom. He stated that the youth did not really appreciate and understand Dagbon's culture and traditions. The consequence was that they were easily susceptible to manipulation by the Kingdom's elders and opinion leaders. He highlighted the following in his story:

**Mubarak :** Yeah, many people were just supporting ignorantly. They don't know the custom but since they grew up, they all follow, hmmm. They were following what their fathers and grandfathers told them, you know. Many people don't know the customs, but they pretend they know it. So, what their old men told them is what they also believe.

Even now many of them don't know the culture, they don't know the tradition. But because my father told me this, my mother told me this, my grandfather told me this, which is not true because culture doesn't flow like that. We were born and bred in the culture and if you talk they will say "oh, this man don't want to...he don't like."...If you say something that doesn't support what he wants, he will say "oh no, you don't want him or don't like him, \_ you understand.

So, many of them don't know the culture but they are pretending. They say that because my father is supporting this party, whether what he is saying is true or not, that is the party. I will also support and that is why the division came. They were supporting, hmmm. Some party were supporting blindly, and the other party was also following the customs, do you understand what I am saying?

So, the youth divided among themselves, and that was the reason why they were fighting every day. I ever told them, look, instead of them to, hmmm. I told them, the two parties, the problem is just simple, come to us the custodians, this is Abudu, this is Andanis, come to we the custodians, then these people will suffer some few problems. They should agree because we want the problem to be solved, we the custodians. We agreed, okay since this one is not involved in our culture let us agree on that, then the Abudus will also agree on this, the Andanis will also agree. Then we will just solve it amicably between ourselves instead of sending it to the court, and what and what.

Mubarak recounted that years of false socialization and conscientization on the cultures and traditions of Dagbon led the youth to take actions that were destructive to the peace processes. Most of the young people in Dagbon were born into a society that was highly polarized in terms of the narratives that accompany the conflict. As a result, most families sided with one narrative or the other and consciously passed on that narrative to the young people. Most young people were therefore born and socialized into the narratives that they supported.

#### ***6.4.2. The outbreak of violence***

The participants also highlighted that the outbreak of violence created a difficulty in the implementation of the peace processes and the Roadmap. The participants highlighted various forms of violence: physical, verbal, and spiritual. Violence within the conflict environment not only generated fear, it also deepened the differences between the parties. A member of the Yendi Municipal Security Committee, Hamed reported on the physical violence that enveloped the relationships between rival youth into a destructive engagement. He made it known to me that the sporadic outbreak of violence especially during the celebration of major events in Dagbon worsened its security situation that contributed to the deepening of mistrust in the peace processes. Hamid expressed this view in his narrative below:

**Hamid:** Yes, when you look at issues, in fact, these were just aside, the traditional issues that were hanging that had to result in a way that solutions had to be given to those issues and then also these are political issues. They were not really any other major ones. Those would have just been possibly the attacks. Because if today there is a program in traditional setup, who comes out to be the leader? It was a problem.

So, you have possibly something like a fire festival where Abudus will want to follow their Regent or the Andanis will also want to follow their Regent in the same town. And they were kind of clashes where you have the factions meeting on the roadside and then exchanges do occur. And we had people even losing their lives through this and this further delayed the process. Because it deepened the differences.

What happened is that, when you go to Yendi, the seat, you realize that the way they lived in the community was in fact a kind of a factor. The Andanis are found at one side of Yendi. And the Abudus are also at one side of Yendi.

From the excerpt above, it is clear that continuous clashes in the form of physical violence deepened the differences and mistrust that the parties had towards each other.

Also, a civil society activist, Leonardo, expressed his views about the outbreak of physical violence mostly led by the youth. He noted that politicians and elders use youth to commit violent acts in local communities to enhance and protect their own political interests:

**Leonardo:** Hmm, the youth, hmm. You know even in our Ghanaian politicking it is the youth they use to cause problem especially during election periods and you would have seen the emergence of vigilantism. So, I will say in Dagbon, that is not new and if you talk about the youth being the center of trouble, as long as this chieftaincy dispute was concerned, then I will say yes, the youth have been at the center of causing all the problems.

Because like I said anytime the politicians wanted to infiltrate and come in and cause trouble using the conflict, it was the youth groups they were using and before you know, you know in Dagbon, they like sitting in groups. They like sitting in groups. It is just about identifying one group and say look, this is what this other side is saying, refuse it, and that is it.

So, say in terms of causing trouble as far as the dispute is concerned, the youth had a central stage when it comes to refusing and visiting mayhem for poor women and children in the area.

It is noted from the above response that the youth played a lead role in the perpetuation of violence and are often influenced by the political class and the leaders of the two groups. He also indicated that the people who are most vulnerable are the women and children.

A participant from the UNDP named Tergeret-K expressed the following point of view on the use of violence within the conflict environment to escalate interethnic conflict. Tergeret-K averred that local authorities had to impose curfews in Yendi as a result of the violence:

**Tergeret-K:** And also, you know, we also kept having these small, small attacks in and out in Tamale and then in Yendi that affected the process as well. And people probably who had their own interest who were also influencing the factions from the back. You know a few times. I can't remember the exact year, but I think one of the cases I think in 2011 or 2012. I mean there were some attacks in Tamale and even in Yendi and I mean there were some of the cases that curfews were imposed, in Yendi in particular, you know. I mean tensions were high and people were holding onto their grounds that I am an Abudu, I am an Andani.

So, those interactions were a bit limited. And also, the fact that it made it difficult for even outsiders to interact with these groups of people. I mean, people were not interested in staying in Yendi, because you will go there to do your work, and I am going to buy meat. And I have no idea who the meat seller is, hmm, because I have gone there twice. Then they say 'oh, I am aligned to an Abudu or I am aligned to an Andani,' and then the next thing you are been attacked. So, those were some of the things that kept coming up. So, those were also some of the factors that really did not help with the achievement of the first Roadmap.

The occurrence of violence resulted in limited interaction and emboldened the parties to take entrenched positions. Moreover, it created fear among the non-indigenes of Dagbon, especially those who live in Yendi.

Some participants also indicated that the two Gates engaged in spiritual warfare, with each Gate seeking spiritual support from the traditional deities and gods to outdo the other.

Mohammed is a peace activist. He had this to say with respect to the rival Gates use of spiritual warfare:

**Mohammed:** Aside that, you know, spiritually, they were at war with each other, the two families. You know it is believed that you will often perform traditional, hmm. I mean you consult the gods and then curse one another, so you are asking the gods to curse. Let's say there the Andanis are asking the gods to curse the Abudus, the Abudus are asking the gods to curse the Andanis.

So, how are you able to still make a headway? So spiritually, I believe that the gods may have been angry with the two families. So, you will find it difficult even cooperating with the committee of Eminent Chiefs, you get me.

The above example highlights how spirituality is seen and can be used as a weapon of violence. It also elevates the role of traditional religious and cultural belief systems in conflict and peacebuilding. In other words, some participants believed that the continuity and inability of the parties to resolve the conflict was as a result of a curse from the gods of Dagbon.

In addition to physical and spiritual violence, participants also identified propaganda and verbal attacks as a strategy used during the course of the conflict to discredit both Gates. A peace activist named Mo-Sallah commented that rival Chiefs used propaganda to discredit the other side:

**Mo-Sallah:** The negative role is that they form propaganda within some Chiefs, and they are ready to demonize opponents. And as I told you, some of them even when the elders, hmm, the Chiefs are ready to make some concessions they will be resisting them. And they have also created certain rumors which also raises tensions within the system. So, those are the things I will say. They are in two sides.

Mo-Sallah's perspective suggests that propaganda and hate speech are weapons of violence in conflict situations. It further indicates the complicity of the media, especially the radio, in fueling propaganda and hate speech in conflict and polarized societies.

#### ***6.4.3. The role of “faceless but influential people” (economic interests)***

Some participants believed within the conflict milieu that there were people who profited from the conflict and, therefore, did not have the successful implementation of the peace process or Roadmap at heart. These people, according to my participants, created an economy from the

conflict and needed the continuity of the conflict to sustain this economy as well as their political power. Naa is a member of the CEC. Naa articulated that the agenda of these people was to frustrate the peace processes as much as possible:

**Naa:** There were some invisible people who were behind the scenes pulling strings, people who didn't want to see the conflict resolved. Such people were there. Some of these people felt if the resolution went in a certain direction it would lead to a closure of their Gate. For others, the existence of the conflict was a means of livelihood.

Apparently, some people were making gains from the conflict and as such they made every effort within their power to ensure that the conflict did not come to an end. Participants referred to these people as "faceless but influential people" and as "chieftaincy and conflict contractors," and included chiefs, politicians, lawyers, the two Regents, suppliers of arms, amongst others. Alhassan is an opinion leader in the community. He narrated that the professional class, cultural and indigenous leaders were manipulating the parties to ensure the continuation of the conflict so that they could accrue certain benefits such as money, ceremonial posts, and of positions of power:

**Alhassan:** They were part of the Chiefs; they were also part of the politicians. People got political positions because of the dispute. And there were also, hmm, some businessmen also got jobs. Contractors got contracts from the government; or the fact that they know influential persons. So, they were part of the process. Some of the spoilers were also lawyers who would forever promise their clients that they had a good case.

So, they were ready to go far with them if their clients were ready to remain loyal and to pay for their services. Some of the spoilers were also traditional "gong gong" beaters and "mallams." Because the society was seemingly divided into two, if a mallam was seen to belong to one Gate, he would be doing the naming ceremonies, the weddings, the funerals and other social occasions which attract some benefits.

The "gong gong" beaters, or what is the name? Who were entertaining mourners, entertaining Chiefs during festivals, hmm, so they were benefitting? Chiefs were also travelling with them, and they were busily happy with whatever they were doing. And so, these are some of the spoilers, and even up to now they are not happy. And they still want to play the cards of division.

Alhassan's excerpt suggests that multiple people (at family, community, regional and national levels) benefited from the conflict in the form of cash, power, and recognition.

Similarly, some participants argued that some of the Chiefs and king makers were profiting from the conflict. A civil society activist named Casimiro expressed his thoughts on this issue as follows:

**Casimiro:** Some of the Chiefs were using this thing as a livelihood, and you know how, when they go for the meetings, they were given per diems, travel, transport refunds and some of them were using this thing as a livelihood, yes. So, if you called them to come for a meeting, they will come in their numbers, even more than you want.

And for some, if you care to sit with the Bishop that we interacted with so much, who had been involved, some of them will even come when they hear there is a meeting, write their names, go away from the meeting, when the meeting is about to close, those sitting down will call them that the meeting is about to arise, come and sign for your T and T. So, individuals actually wanted this to be there for them to profit from it.

I also do know that some youth, some individuals have used this to travel outside Ghana, yes, because they say my home is not good. So, I have to get out of here and some of them I know are even in various parts of the world out of this. So, it is not only the politicians who benefitted from this. There are other sides, other individuals who also got some benefits from it, otherwise, this thing wouldn't have continued for so long. The same people, the same brothers, so why should this continue for so long.

The Chiefs used their position and influence in the community to maximize some benefits from the conflict. They had key roles to play as key decisionmakers in the resolution of the conflict. However, the benefits that they stood to gain from the continuation of the conflict blinded their objectivity in the discussions to forge authentic the peace processes.

Some participants communicated that both Regents also profited from the conflict, and did not want the process to end. Hippolite is a peace activist and a youth leader in Dagbon. He recounted that the Regent had stayed in power for a long time on the Skin and he had enjoyed some of the benefits that come with political control of the Skin. Hippolite contended that, that experience alone was enticing to the Regent, and as such it was difficult for him to vacate the Skin for another person:

**Hippolite:** Hmmm, one of the major reasons that accounted for the way this issue was prolonged was because of the actors, the actors in the conflict. You had people who were directly or indirectly beneficiaries of the conflict and so it was difficult for those people to let go. For instance, hmmm, the Regent for instance had that power, hmmm. The Regent became a Regent after this whole thing and was on it for over 15 years and so it made, it gave him some power.

And a lot of people who were around him or the other Regent saw how nice it was to be close to power and letting it go would have been difficult. So, the actors, those who benefitted directly or indirectly were much responsible for the unsuccessful implementation of the first Roadmap because it meant that if it was successful, they were going to lose, hmmm, certain things that they were hitherto enjoying. So, those were the most, hmmm, major reasons, the major reason I must say that accounted for that.

The participant's perspective illustrates how the key actors of the conflict, both Regents, also benefitted from the conflict. The power that they wielded coupled with the support they received from within and outside the conflict made it difficult for them to allow these benefits and opportunities to pass with a simple resolution of the conflict.

My participants identified another group of conflict entrepreneurs who were engaged in the supply of arms and the sale of land to the rival parties. Sandra is a peace activist. She noted that some people within the Kingdom used the continuity of the conflict to sell lands and arms to other third parties:

**Sandra:** You know, I mean when it comes to conflict, you will always have spoilers who feel that this is an opportunity for us to sell our arms and then to have the place destabilized so that we can be able to do the things that we want to do. And sometimes some of these spoilers definitely are also people from the same area but they feel that these weaknesses give them the opportunity to do things or to have access to certain resources because some of the things that kept coming up were the sale of land.

And definitely if you do not have a Ya-Na, who is in charge of the sale of land? Because there is supposed to be someone who has to finally endorse whatever documents. Yes, so people felt that, I mean, if there is no substantive person, I can use that as an opportunity to be able to gain some of these things. So, it had different groups of people who had interest and they were using it to their advantage as well.

Outsiders who considered the situation as a market for the sale of arms to the rival disputants also advanced their interests from the existence of the conflict. In addition, the leadership vacuum during the conflict created an avenue for people to engage in the illegal sale of land. The Dagbon conflict became a conduit for different people to make illicit gains from it; for these people the sustenance of their gains was dependent on the continuity of the conflict. As such, they made certain that difficulties arose in the quest for a successful resolution of the conflict.

#### **6.4.4. A polarised society**

The participants identified a polarised society/a polarised Dagbon (closely associated with the presence of violence) as further contributing to the deadlock in the peace processes/Roadmap. They revealed that the Roadmap's success depended on the general support of the Dagbon people; however, this was missing as there were sharp divisions in the populace along the two Gates. These divisions took two forms: dominant narratives/interpretive frameworks, and apparent geographical divisions. With respect to the narratives, my participants indicated that a vast majority of the people held narratives that supported either of the Gates. Some participants proclaimed that these narratives were carved into propaganda, and the media became the medium for propagandist activism within Dagbon. Jacob is a member of the peace council within Dagbon. He avowed that the media was manipulated by unscrupulous politicians to continue to magnify the conflict, which it was happy to do to sell papers:

**Jacob:** You see, I talked about the media already, the media was negative and both factions are to be blamed here. They have left the real war and they are now playing some media war; you understand that. So, the Andani family often would pay the media to continue to hype that issue, instead of that issue to die down and people getting back to their seats, and then brainstorming the solutions to this, they are still throwing that issue into the media. So, the media was negative here. Are you with me, the media was negative. So, the media you know, contributed to the deadlock.

Then number two, you will realize that the two families were also intransigent. The Abudu family would continue to insist that the late Ya-Na Mahamadu's funeral must be performed in the Gbewaa Palace, that was their contention. So, they would often also hire the media to still request or make it a case, so that Ghanaians will contribute to their position. Then the Andanis would also do theirs using the same media.

So, the media was sort of, hmm, every day you will hear Abudu spokesperson, Andani spokesperson in a media war, throwing a lot of words at each other. So, how was the Committee going to be able to function when every day you get up, you Dagbon, Dagbon, Dagbon, in the media. Also, the media was a factor.

Jacobs's comment suggests that the media became the medium through which the disputants propagated their narratives and counter narratives. Instead of the media helping to project the true story, it was rather used to sharply divide the kingdom and its people.

The second main consideration was the apparent geographical divisions along the two Gates. For example, Tamale, the modern political city of Dagbon is predominantly Andani, while Yendi, where the traditional seat is held, is predominantly Abudu. However, even within

Yendi, some sections are occupied mainly by Abudus while others are occupied by Andanis. Kathleen is a young peace activist. She recognized that Dagbon to some extent is geographically polarized along the Abudu and Andani Gates, which does not help in the socialization and interactive processes among the people of Dagbon. She highlighted the following in her story:

**Kathleen:** The geographical setup played a very serious role though it was not looked at like that. But in Yendi town, just particularly Yendi. You know, the Abudus and the Andanis are found in all other parts of the Dagbon traditional area. Tamale, Savelugu and elsewhere. But when you come to the traditional seat itself, that is Yendi, in fact, the geographical settlement of these people was in itself very different. Or, I mean it was very distinct that there were portions or a complete area where you feel that this is an Andani area with possibly very few Abudu houses.

And they were even living there with careful way of associating themselves with this Andanis. And they could count you this house is an Andani house or this house is an Abudu house. And so, it was very clear. And getting kids to play with the other side's kids is a problem. And so, they grow up having that belief that these are people we don't have anything to do with. And you know, it has taken from 2002 to 2018. You come to realize that there were people that would have been very young, that are very young, enlightened.

When you look where they call the Kumlan Fong area, that is when you are entering into Yendi. This area is full of Abudus. But then we go to the area where the palace is located, that area covering up to the ministries, that place looks more like Andanis settlers. And so, you would find it difficult possibly Andani kids, associating themselves with Abudu kids because of the segregation or the way they were living. And so even though this did not play much of a role, but there were schools up there and schools down there.

And so, they wished that or in one way or the other the Abudus schools were attended by the I mean, or the schools that were located at the Abudus area were attended by the Abudus kids. And also, the same way with the Andanis. And so, you would not find these two-younger generation of people coming into contact. And so, they held the views of what their parents were holding. And so, you will find it even very deepened with the youth that they have those extreme kinds of positions, when it comes to the families. And this deepened their situation.

The geographical division of Dagbon between both Gates further heightened tension and extreme positions especially among the youth. These divisions did not create an opportunity for the young people to learn about each other; it did not create the space for interaction, contact, and integration. The extent to which the society was polarised made it difficult to mobilize the public in support of the peace processes.

## **6.5. Failed community leadership**

The participants also identified the failure of leadership as contributing to the deadlock of the Dagbon Peace Processes. My participants described two components that contributed to their failure in this regard:

1. The absence of community-level leadership (and related qualities of such leadership)
2. The segmented and porous leadership structures of the Kingdom.

### ***6.5.1. Absence of community leadership***

My participants argued that there was no leadership in Dagbon to mobilize the people and necessary support to drive the implementation of the Roadmap to peace. Danladi, during a one-on-one interview, reported on the absence of community leadership noting that:

**Danladi:** “Yes, I think leadership was an issue because from the community level as I stated earlier, the Regent was not willing to support the process.”

Danladi recognized that the principal leader of the Kingdom then was not willing to provide the necessary support for the implementation of the peace processes.

Tachie is a peace activist in Yendi. Similarly, he made the following observation that conflict initially ensued because the quality of community leadership was poor:

**Tachie:** Community leadership was lacking, because the leader that was there was not trusted by all the parties. Some did not have confidence in the leader then. But now that we have a leader who the parties have confidence in, both sides are ready to pay their allegiance now, and they will come out and lobby.

Tachie directly equates a lack of confidence and trust in the leadership of the Kingdom to a lack of leadership itself, and when that changed the parties were ready to deal with a new leader that they respected and trusted.

In addition, some participants' accounts indicated that community leadership lacked the desired leadership qualities to facilitate the peace processes. Kamara, a woman peace activist, recognized that local community leaders lacked the understanding of the root causes of the conflict, and they did not possess the determination to take the necessary steps to work through

the process to bring about a just resolution. Kamara, explained this issue to me in the following manner:

**Kamara:** The community lacked a leader who was understanding, a leader who was willing to take the necessary steps to ensure that we had peace. So, our leaders were not determined, and I will add that they were not having the mindset to take the necessary decisions to lead the peace processes, to make a change in the community.

The leadership of the Kingdom was been influenced by many people as such they could not work. Because if you want to do something and the external forces tell you not to do it, you can't do it. So, for me, we lacked the leadership at the community level to help bring the peace that we wanted. So, I think our leaders were lacking understanding and determination to make things work for us.

Similarly, Nonso summarised the absence of community leadership in these words:

**Nonso:** About the leadership of Dagbon, I think we lacked confident leaders and leaders who could also make strong decisions for peace to prevail in the Kingdom. That is something we cannot let it go. We did not have a leader to take strong decisions that will bring peace to Dagbon.

Kamara and Nonso's comments also tie local community leadership to skills of pragmatism, resilience, and independence of mind, qualities seen as important to mobilize the necessary resources and support to ensure the implementation of the first Roadmap to peace.

#### ***6.5.2. Segmented and porous leadership***

In addition to the absence of leadership at the community level that was needed to drive the peace processes forward, my participants also explained that the leadership structure within the community was segmented and porous. Gadafi is a local opinion leader. During a one-on-one interview with me, he observed that the Kingdom's existing leadership structure did not agree on several issues that underpinned the conflict and the peace processes. This is what he had to say on the issue:

**Gadafi:** You see, the national level showed some kind of concern and they were working to get this conflict resolved. Because they know the effect it had, had on the people over there. So, in one way or the other, all the leaders, both NDC and NPP, one way or the

other I mean took steps to address this issue. But then traditionally, when you come down to the area it was then that we seemed to have lost some kind of leadership.

You know, leadership that is segmented or leadership that people did not go their way then it ceases to be leadership. Because you will make rules and say things that people will not follow. If you are a leader that you have just a few following orders or whatever I mean, you are doing then your leadership ceases to function well. So, we had a society where I mean a faction felt we will not regard this person as our leader. Also, another faction feels this other person, we will not also regard him as our leader. And so, when you have regulations coming from this side, it will be disobeyed by the other side. Feeling that it is not affecting them. Because they are not part of whatever they are doing.

And so, that kind of made the society more porous. And then people use that as an advantage to do certain things and run in the name of being under faction when they do wrong and you get them. They ran into the other side and then they have favours there to support. In fact, you would not believe that there were issues where people would even do something wrong, they arrest them to the police station, and they tag themselves as being these people and their people will come to get him out of the police station. Because they feel it is a way of getting back to their people. And so, it made the society very porous down there.

From Gadaffi's perspective, divisions within the leadership structure of Dagbon made it difficult to garner the needed leadership qualities to ensure the implementation quality of the first Roadmap to peace and the entire peace processes of Dagbon.

Contributing to the segmented and porous nature of the leadership, Titi, during a focus group discussion with persons with disabilities, characterized the leadership as disorganized and not properly adhered to by the chiefs of Dagbon. Titi explained this issue in the following way:

**Titi:** In Dagbong, leadership is structured this way; for example, the Tolon Chief has his jurisdiction or province and so villages and Chiefs within pay allegiance to him. Among the Tolon Chief's subjects, there are some sub-Chiefs and their lineage is to the Andani Gate. However, the Tolon Chief is a strong pillar in the Abudu family. The problem is the sub-Chiefs who have lineage with the Andani Gate and are under his province refuse to honour the Tolon Chief as they are supposed to do. The sub-Chief or a Regent might even travel far to honour a different Chief asking that chief to install him as Chief under the Tolon Chief province.

Another example is that we can say that the Savelugu Chief is a strong pillar of the Andani family. There may be amongst some of his villages, sub-rulers may come from the Abudu family. Then when there is a vacant position under the Savelugu Chief, and the sub-ruler or Regent is vying for it through Diari Chief instead of respecting and honouring the Savelugu Chief for the position. But rather asking the Diari Chief to give him the post which is under Savelugu Chief. With this challenge, how can things go well? This looks as if we dug holes on the road and now turn to say that our cars should not fall in the pits we dug. So that is where the leadership got it wrong.

Titi's comment suggests that the established leadership structure of Dagbon was abused and not respected by some of the Chiefs and the Dagbon people. The leadership structure that was supposed to serve the larger interest of Dagbon rather became the conduit for the propagation of the conflict.

Moreover, some participants argued that people who were tasked with the responsibility of interpreting the culture and traditions of Dagbon did not rise to the occasion. A representative of the Andani Gate, Bornah, had this to say on the issue:

**Bornah:** What I have to add to what others have said concerns the people who practice the culture and traditions. Elders who knew what to say and warn people against the odds did not draw the attention of all concerned. When a situation arises like in this case, and the people sit together and focus on the laydown customs and eliminate lies from the discussion and propaganda, then the matter could have been solved easily. This is the way I see it.

Bornah's explanation illustrates the failure of established leaders to live up to their responsibilities - individuals who were assigned roles and responsibilities within the Dagbon chieftaincy structure and were therefore required to bring these to bear in the resolution of the conflict and implementation of the peace processes. Rather these individuals used their positions to their own benefit and to the disadvantage of Dagbon.

## 6.6. Findings

In Chapter six, I summarized feedback from participants with respect to the contextual factors that made it difficult to successfully implement Dagbon Roadmap I. The data draw our attention to six key findings as follows: (1) The parties to the conflict are the major drivers of the peace processes, (2) societal support was absent, (3) the parties did not trust each other, (4) the people and their leaders had a selective interpretation of the culture and traditions of Dagbon, (5) the role of "faceless but influential people" (economic interests) prevented a resolution of the conflict, and (6) the leaders failed the local people by not resolving the conflict. In this section, I discuss these thematic findings in turn.

First, the parties to the conflict are the major drivers of the peace processes. It can be deduced from the data that the primary conflict actors are the key drivers of the peace processes

and the success or failure of mediation efforts lies with them. As such, the main responsibility lies with these parties, in this case, to implement the Roadmap. In that regard, the parties must identify a conflict transformation motivation to arrive at a compromise. The willingness of the primary actors to commit themselves to a peace process was therefore fundamental in determining the outcome of the Dagbon peace processes.

In the case of Dagbon, the two main Gates - the Abudu and the Andani - did not allow Roadmap I to be implemented successfully because they lacked the motivation to do so. Instead, several conditions in fact propelled the actors to stick to their ground and become intransigent during the negotiation and early stages of the implementation. For instance, each of the Gates believed their narratives were sacrosanct, and that they were more likely to become victors through the use of means including court action or violent force. In addition, each Gate had an external political-guarantor (NDC or NPP) that they relied upon. At each stage of the political processes, either Gate had its ally in power, and with that the backing of the state. With the ascension of the ally of one Gate into power, the other Gate has had to take a step back and hope that its ally would regain power sometime in the near future.

Motivation to maintain entrenched positions also arose in the form of public support in Dagbon's general populace. The polarization of Dagbon's population along both Gates constituted a broad base of support for each of the Gates. The consequence was that the two actors based on this support concluded that they were capable of winning the conflict and outdoing the other party. Other motivational factors, such as the Regent of Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II - Kamkpakuya-Naa, sitting on the skin for up to 15 years, complicated matters for the other party and even for the Regent himself. These incentives instilled in the parties some amount of exuberance and desire to see to the continuity of the conflict at all costs.

The primary actors of the Dagbon conflict who were in a position to facilitate the success of the first Roadmap did not do so because their desires incentivized them to either propel or hamper them from properly engaging with the first Roadmap. This obviously resulted in its failure.

Second, public support was absent in supporting the first Roadmap. The data suggest that the public support needed for the Roadmap to be successful was lacking. The success of every peace process or peace agreement requires the endorsement and support of the society. This could be achieved through the mobilization of the society to support the peace processes, and this

can only be undertaken within a unified society. My participants reveal that within Dagbon, public support and endorsement of the Roadmap process was not available because Dagbon was sharply divided and polarised along the two Gates. Both Gates viewed any threat to the Gate that they identified with as a threat to their own being. The mental images of “WE versus THEM” or “US against THEM” were invoked and impacted significantly on several spheres of the lives of the people and their relationships including their marriages and friendships.

The polarised nature of Dagbon and the failure of the CEC to actively and directly inform and involve the public in the negotiation processes resulted in the inability of the general public to develop a consensus and to mobilise the necessary support for the peace processes when it was signed by both Gates. Also, the public did not put popular pressure on the state, the mediation committee, and the two actors to ensure that the peace processes were implemented successfully. Generally, there was no public will and motivation to provide the necessary space, endorsement, and support for the success of the Roadmap.

Third, the parties did not trust each other. It emerged from the data that at the heart of the challenge to forge peace was mistrust between both Gates in the conflict on the one hand, and mistrust of the parties towards the state and the Mediation Committee on the other hand. Mistrust between the parties is derived from the historical experiences and relationships that have defined the confrontations/struggles between the two Gates, including numerous violent attacks and counter attacks since the inception of the conflict. In addition, the fact that each of the parties have failed to follow the terms and conditions of previous agreements, and implement them accordingly, further enhanced the mistrust that already existed among them. Mistrust resulted in the parties viewing each other as threats to their goals, interests, and ambitions as well as their identity. They were unwilling to take risks when they believed that their rival could behave negatively in the future. The existing mistrust between the two Gates made it difficult for them to communicate meaningfully during the peace processes, and this derailed the sustainable resolution of the conflict.

Also, the parties’ mistrust of the state is attributable to how the state had involved itself in the conflict in the past. The trajectory of the conflict since its outset has been characterised by the impression that the prevailing state agencies have often taken sides and supported one of the Gates over the other. State involvement (evicting parties from the palaces; sending security

forces to support one Gate or the other) eroded both parties' trust in the state and the decisions that the state has taken in enforcing the Roadmap.

Fourth, there is a selective interpretation of Dagbon's culture and traditions. The culture and tradition of Dagbon was a cardinal point of reference for the mediation team and the primary actors during the negotiation processes. As a result of the guidelines issued to the Mediation Committee by the State and the UNDP to facilitate their work, they were tasked to find a lasting solution to the Dagbon crisis (conflict) based on Dagbon's culture and traditions. In that regard, a common understanding, interpretation, and appreciation of the culture and tradition of Dagbon by all the actors was critical for the success of the negotiation processes. However, it emerged from the participants that the two Gates had different understandings and interpretations of the culture and tradition of Dagbon. Two situations accounted for this failure:

- 1). Lack of documentation of the history, traditions, and cultures of Dagbon and,
- 2). The deliberate attempt by the parties to make their position appear stronger within the public space.

The history, culture, and traditions of Dagbon are held and preserved mostly through oral means or stories. Despite ongoing efforts to properly document Dagbon's history, culture and traditions, a lot of these exertions have come a little too late. One of the most significant attempts was the 1930 Dagbon Constitution which lived a short life and became redundant after the formation of the Selection Committee; a product of the first generation of Dagbon's educated elite (see MacGaffey, 2006). In all of Dagbon therefore, there is, to my knowledge, no agreed upon document that clearly defines the traditions and customs especially with regard to the chieftaincy. Stories or oral sources thus accounted for many of the kingmakers' decisions and the people on Dagbon's traditions and cultures including the selection and enskinment of Chiefs and Kings.

Moreover, the parties exploited this lack of documentation particularly in relation to the chieftaincy, as a strategy to make their positions on the conflict look credible. The parties "cherry-picked" the traditions and culture of the people which fit into their individual whims and caprices. For example, they provided conflicting perspectives on who the leader of the kingmakers in Dagbon was to be (Gushie-Naa or Kuga-Naa). The kingmakers of Dagbon are tasked with the responsibility of selecting a Ya-Na. It is an important institution in the governance structure of the Dagbon Chieftaincy system.

To compound matters, the first generation of Dagbon's educated elite embarked on what has been described as the reform of Dagbon's culture and traditions, and notably on the selection and enskinment of the Ya-Na. During the course of this reform process, however, some individuals placed personal interests above those of Dagbon, and this has proved to be one of the historical explanations and antecedents of the conflict. The reform of the chieftaincy institution to reflect contemporary democratic tenets did not achieve what it was intended to do. Instead, it served as an avenue for the manipulation of the culture and traditions of Dagbon with particular regard to the chieftaincy institution. The consequence was the apparent lack of an agreed upon document about the customs and traditions of the chieftaincy institution, and its by-product; the selective interpretation of Dagbon's culture and traditions.

The success of the peace processes and the implementation of the Roadmap was conditioned on how well Dagbon's culture and tradition with regards to the chieftaincy is appreciated and understood. On the contrary, the parties embarked on a selective interpretation and understanding of the culture, traditions and values that underpinned the chieftaincy institution for the obvious reason of establishing credibility within the public. The immediate consequence was that it became difficult to implement the Roadmap.

Fifth, the role of "faceless but influential people" escalated the conflict. Conflict environments serve as conduits for some unscrupulous people to maximize their benefits and interests. When the conflict comes to an end for these people, their source of livelihood is destroyed and so, they would engage in activities to ensure that the conflict perpetuates itself. My participants noted certain "faceless but influential people" did not wish to see the conflict resolved. The conflict served as a source of power and livelihood for some chieftaincy and conflict contractors such as Chiefs, politicians, lawyers, traditional cultural practitioners, people engaged in the sale of small and large arms as well as the educated elite of Dagbon.

The Regent, for instance, was seen as the major beneficiary of the conflict. As Regent of Dagbon, he controlled the land and served as the first point of contact when any political figure was in the Kingdom. He remained on the throne for up to 15 years, which exposed him to a number of benefits so that implementing the Roadmap and performing his father's funeral implied that he had to vacate the throne and invariably forfeit the benefits that came with it. By not creating a conducive milieu for the implementation of the Roadmap, he was courting more

time within which he could continue to entrench, endear, and enrich himself through such activities as the installation of sub-Chiefs.

Aside from the Regent, sub-Chiefs from both sides of the divide also benefitted from the conflict from such things as honoraria, travelling allowances, and “per diems” received from their membership at the negotiation table. They also benefited similarly when they attended training workshops that were organized by bilateral and multilateral organizations. In addition, they used the conflict as valid reasons to mobilise resources from their supporters in the name of seeking peace or to attain better and preferred results from the negotiations.

The continuity of the conflict created a conduit for the political class to embark on political expediency with the conflict serving as a major political campaign platform particularly for both main political parties in the country. These political parties mount political platforms and make promises to either of the Gates, which further exacerbates their entrenched positions. The resolution of the conflict would imply the closure of the political space, which would invariably hurt the fortunes of the politicians. The resolution of the conflict also implied that the lawyers would lose opportunities to charge legal fees for services they offered the Gates. Similarly, the educated elite from both Gates are revered, respected and consulted by the elders, so that the resolution of the conflict would equally signal the apparent dwindling of their power and influence. This was all not desirable.

The Dagbon conflict became a source of livelihood for some groups of people and the very sustenance of their subsistence depended on the continuity of the conflict. In that regard, these faceless<sup>17</sup> and influential people provided the necessary support and motivation which incentivized the Gates to take entrenched positions that eventually created difficulties in the implementation of the Roadmap.

Sixth, the leaders failed the local people. It also emerged from the data that there was no effective leadership and leadership structure at the community level to garner the needed support of the local people for the implementation of the Roadmap to peace. My participants explained this situation along three dimensions. In the first place, the acting leader of Dagbon (from 2006

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<sup>17</sup> Faceless characters in conflict are individuals who have an interest in the conflict, provide support for the continuity of the conflict, but their identity is not known. The concept faceless is used because their identity is not known as they pull the invisible strings outside of the public’s view.

to 2018), the Regent, was a key stakeholder in the conflict and the leader of the Andani Gate. He did not mobilize the needed resources and support for the implementation of the Roadmap to peace because he had an interest in the conflict and he was a major beneficiary of the failed peace processes. The status quo was beneficial to him and it was in his favour.

In addition, the Abudu Gate did not have the trust and confidence that the Regent would implement the Roadmap impartially because he was a major actor in the conflict and the leader of the Andani Gate. During some stages of the implementation of the Roadmap, the Regent violated some of its provisions. For instance, he was not mandated to enskin Chiefs, yet he behaved contrary to that by enskinning them. The Regent's endeavours made the Abudu Gate have doubts about his desire to support the implementation of the peace processes.

Moreover, my participants indicated that the existing leadership did not bring to bear the required leadership qualities and skills that were necessary for the implementation of a quality Roadmap. The implementation of the Roadmap depended to a large extent on the Dagbon's leadership's pragmatism, trust, confidence, resilience, and independence of mind. These qualities and skills were absent throughout the leadership structure of Dagbon.

Further, my participants argued that the leadership structure of the Kingdom was divided among both Gates. For example, the Kuga-Na and the Gushie-Na, two important leadership institutions in Dagbon, played a critical role in the governance of Dagbon including peacebuilding, and were divided along the Andani and Abudu Gates. Likewise, the sub-Chiefs who could have played a leading role in the implementation of the Roadmap were also divided as were the Kingmakers and traditional institutions mandated to guide Dagbon's culture and traditions.

As such, the internal leadership both at the individual and structural levels that was required to mobilize the necessary resources and support for the implementation of the Roadmap to peace did not exist in the kingdom.

## **6.7. Conclusion**

Chapter six focused on the participants' experiences and perceptions in relation to contextual forces that hindered the successful implementation of the Dagbon Roadmap I. The participants identified three major contextual forces in particular leading to its failure: the behaviour of the parties, the socio-psychological space, and the conflict management environment. The

respondents identified and discussed six emerging contextual issues in more depth, including the lack of motivation for peace, lack of public support, mistrust between parties, selective interpretation of Dagbon's culture and tradition, and the role of those who sought to continue benefitting from the conflict.

With respect to the Dagbon Chieftaincy conflict, the conflict context presented some challenges that impeded the implementation of the peace processes and the peace agreement. In recognizing the value of the conflict context in shaping the outcomes of peace processes, it is imperative to always consider an analysis of the context to identify some of the variables that can impede the implementation of the peace processes, and to design appropriate measures to address them.

## Chapter 7

### **Deadlock of Dagbon Roadmap 1: The management of the peace process**

#### **7.1. Introduction**

The management of a peace process (objectives, procedures, structure and implementation of the peace agreement) has a key bearing on whether it will succeed or fail. Chapter seven discusses the participants' perspectives with respect to how the management of the first Dagbon peace processes contributed to its deadlock.

Chapter seven specifically focuses on the participants' comments about how the mediation procedures, the negotiators' actions, and the timing of the negotiation contributed to the deadlock of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace. In addition, Chapter seven explores the participants' perspectives with regards to how different arrangements and interpretations of the provisions contributed to the deadlock. Further, it presents the interviewees' images of the challenges encountered when implementing the first Roadmap including disagreements about the implementation procedures, the absence of concrete timelines, and the monitoring of compliance which contributed to the deadlock.

Moreover, Chapter seven explores the participants' feedback about the level of participation of women, young people, and civil society groups in the peace processes, and how this contributed to the deadlock. Consequently, Chapter seven presents some key findings that elucidate how the management of the Dagbon peace processes contributed to its stalemate.

#### **7.2. Negotiation process variables**

Three issues specific to the negotiation processes were identified by participants as contributing to the deadlock in the Dagbon peace processes: (1) mediation procedures, (2) actions of the negotiators, and (3) the timing of the negotiation. This section of Chapter seven summarizes participant perspectives with regards to these three sub-themes.

##### **7.2.1. Mediation procedures**

In the first place, the interviewees highlighted certain circumstances during the mediation processes that contributed to the deadlock of the Dagbon peace processes and the first Roadmap to peace. Some interviewees expressed the concern that the mediation processes did not consider

Dagbon's culture and traditions. For instance, Banzema is a civil society activist. He noted that the mediators needed to have a full understanding of the culture and traditions of Dagbon to be able to navigate the process:

**Banzema:** Again, I should say that they were times that some of us sitting back, you know, and also being on the ground and implementing a lot of strategies realized that somehow the process did not understand the nitty-gritties of the culture of Dagbon. And I understand that they were also consulting, you know, to understand, you know, even especially the Nayiri is very close to the Dagombas you know.

What I am saying is that it will seem that the process did not understand the nitty-gritties of the customs and traditions of Dagbon, you know. And so, even if and I am aware they might have been doing some consultations because I remember also the technical facilitation. Because to be honest, despite eminence, despite whatever, some people can rely on crowds and respect for the skin, or the stool position or whatever position they are occupying title, you know, that is very important and plays a key significant role, you know.

Now we will always require people with the insight you know, and they will always require people who can advise, give the guidance you know, to be able to navigate the process. Based on the information you have; you will find a way of navigating the process you know. Sometimes that is why you go into caucus or you can ask a question, critical question and you see that the person will sit back you know, because the person knows that you have hit, you know the truth.

What Banzema means is that the Committee needed to understand the appropriate culture and traditions of Dagbon to bring the right perspectives to bear in the negotiation processes as well as to facilitate communication between both Gates. Instead, there was a porous appreciation of the culture and traditions of Dagbon and the Dagbon Chieftaincy.

Commenting on the technical preparedness of the Committee, another civil society activist, Leonardo, noted that the Mediation Committee did not have a technical sub-committee to provide necessary support during the mediation processes. This is what he had to say on the issue:

**Leonardo:** The Committee had a lot of problems; the committee had a lot of problems. Number one, they did not have, hmm, you know every mediation should have a mediation support team. The support team does the research for them, objective report or research. The support team should be people who cannot be influenced by anybody such that when they are going to, hmm, anybody who is going to peddle a lie there. They will be able to expose the person. The committee didn't have it. They didn't have that mediation support team, and you will realize that anytime they went there, people will be.

People were propagating lies, equating things that were not to be equated, things that were not similar. They brought them there to advance their arguments.

But because they did not have that support team to tell the Eminent Chiefs the right information, because there was no Dagomba man among them, there were the Mamprusi, the Gonja and then the Asantehene. It is only the Mamprusi at least who should know the culture of the Dagomba because we almost have the same culture, but our chieftaincy system is a little different. As for them, the Regent never becomes a King there, it is not possible. It is between families. But here, until the implementation of the Supreme Court, any Regent could, once he was strong and could bulldoze his way through, he could succeed the father and become a Chief.

So, there was a little difference between the Dagomba and the Mamprusis. As for the Gonjas, it was completely different. As for the Asantes, even far away. You understand, let me put it that way, very, very, very far from our tradition. We are different altogether. So, they should have had this team to give them real information on the ground, they didn't have it. So, people were dribbling one another in front of the committee. They didn't know what was happening, they didn't know the truth.

Leonardo was of the opinion that a technical support committee with the relevant knowledge of Dagbon's history and traditions would have provided the CEC with the right information during the mediation stages. The absence of such a technical team was exploited by both Gates to peddle falsehoods on Dagbon's history and traditions especially with regard to the customs underpinning the institution of chieftaincy.

Some interviewees likewise expressed the view that the two Gates did not understand the objective of the CEC's work and the mediation processes. Bashir is an opinion leader within the Dagbon Kingdom. He noted that the Abudu Gate took the work of the Committee to be an arbitration effort. He narrated on this issue as follows:

**Bashir:** The Abudus had a problem. They didn't know the difference between mediation and then maybe arbitration, they didn't know. They thought the Asantehene was an arbiter, and that at the end of the day He could impose whatever decision he had on this thing. But the Andanis they are smart, they have lawyers and anytime they had, hmm. They took the service of lawyers to advise them before they went there.

So, while the Abudus were there fumbling here and there thinking that maybe the Asantehene will know the truth, the Andanis were dribbling them around. And you know, as I told you earlier, the last point. The Abudus were upset with the rejection of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu's funeral. So, there was a point in time when the Asantehene, the Chiefs even stated that they could perform Yaa-Naa Mahamadu's funeral but not in the palace and the Abudus rejected this. They said no they won't accept that, and that was why the thing had to be prolonged. So, these were some of the challenges that the committee had.

Bashir suggests that the Abudu Gate took the work of the Committee to be arbitration and were therefore expecting the Committee to decide directly on the matter brought before them.

In a similar vein, a civil society activist, Raymond, expressing his views on the Gates' expectations of the Committee, noted that the parties considered the Committee to be an avenue to demand justice, and the prosecution of people who in their view, had committed crimes:

**Raymond:** Three issues needed to be dealt with. The traditional aspect, the criminal aspect, and the reconciliation. These three issues should have been separated and handled in isolation of each other. So, the tradition is there, and you want a King for Dagbon, use the tradition to deal with that one and don't bring in the issue of reconciliation and then whatever, hmmm, criminality. If you bring them together, three together, you will not have a solution.

So, what we advocated for is how to separate these three. Let the traditional people have their way, go and get what they are supposed to do, get the King, the funerals would have been performed through that, they get a king for Dagbon. If it had been handled in that way, for a long time they would have gotten a King for Dagbon. But because they were mixing, the criminality with the tradition; that is where the mistrust came in and reconciliation wasn't forthcoming. How will tradition work?

So, these rather created stumbling blocks for the process to move on and that even led to the Roadmap not moving on after one or two steps. So, we were now advocating for the need to separate but not to leave them hanging, so even today we can see some are hanging. The tradition we can say it has gone through, what about the criminal aspect, what about the justice aspect, can we say in entirety they are handled, has anyone come forward to apologize and say "I committed any crime so forgive me so that we can reconcile," it has not happened.

Raymond equated certain demands to justice, which bordered on criminality (e.g., the request for the prosecution of the killers of Yaa-Naa Yakubu Andani II) that contributed to the deadlock of the peace processes because these demands did not fall within the remit of the Committee. Demands of this nature made the process difficult and complicated. Raymond's perspective illustrates that the Gates did not understand the CEC's mandate.

### ***7.2.2. The negotiators' actions***

Furthermore, some interviewees noted that certain actions and behaviours by the negotiators of both Gates during the negotiation processes were inimical to the success of the Dagbon peace processes and the first Roadmap to peace. The interviewees explained that during the negotiation processes, the negotiators kept changing their positions because they could not arrive at firm

decisions at the Committee level, which posed a difficulty to the Committee and the entire peace processes. Newton is a young peace activist. He argued that the chiefs selected to represent both Gates as negotiators did not have the ultimate power to take some decisions at the negotiation table. He narrated this issue as follows:

**Newton:** Another aspect was those Chiefs within Dagbon who were representing Dagbon or Dagbon Chiefs, at the conference there, or the Eminent Chiefs Council, most of them didn't categorically have the power to take decisions. And so, there were some things that when they discuss and then perhaps, they have to take a certain decision, then there will be an excuse like, "we have to go home and consult, before coming back or to give you feedback."

And so, perhaps they move to 98 percent, hoping for the last 2 percent, then when they come back home to consult, they consult and it is like "no, it can't move in that direction." So, for the time they have spent working towards that 98 percent, that remaining 2 percent has come to cause them to start again. They come home and they say "no, it can't move in that direction. It has to be this." Meanwhile, that wasn't already agreed on. So, they have to start the same process again. Moving in that direction and so categorically, they didn't have that power, or they were not brave enough to stand on their thoughts on how to settle the matter.

They needed to come back home and consult. Because it is like they were representing some people at home. Meanwhile, those people were not those taken to facilitate that process. And so at least to me, I felt that those who were sent there, some were not supposed to be there. And rather others were supposed to be there, especially those that they needed to come home to consult. They should have just been taken there to rather lead, instead of sending their representatives and having to come back to solicit information again and then take it back.

Similarly, a peace activist in Dagbon, Tachie, noted that sometimes, the decisions agreed upon by all the parties in the negotiation processes did not favour the entire group or the decisionmakers of the group, and as such, they asked the negotiators to reject such decisions. This is what he had to say on the issue:

**Tachie:** The right people not being selected was also an issue. But you know, funny enough, it was not that the right people were not selected, it was that the decisions they took didn't favour those who were not represented there. So, at any time in point when decisions are taken and it doesn't favour any side, then they come out to say they are not the right people. They were the right people; they were the right people. But when they make decisions and come out to announce those decisions to their followers and they don't like that decision, then they will come back and say they are not the right people.

So, at any time in point, they had the right people representing them and at all the committees. So maybe, I mean what is expected of a representative in a committee is to say that “okay, when I am going for a meeting I take your views there; when I come back from the meeting, I give you feedback as to what transpired and what decisions were raised. But hmm, I will not attribute the lack of consultation to causing this mistrust and hmm whatever.” The issue is like, I said they will consult them alright and go, but because of the entrenched positions, whatever decisions that you take, that is contrary to the entrenched position, then you have done nothing, you would have consulted us alright, but the decision you are bringing is not ours. We don't like it. So, we will either say you did not consult us, or you didn't even give us feedback altogether.

It was not that they were not consulting them. It was that when decisions were taken and it is not in favour of any side, then they will backtrack. They will refuse it. And so, they were attributing it to either they not consulting them, or they are not the right people, or they are not giving them the right feedback. And we also went down to see why it was so, and what we came across is that, the moment the decision is taken, and it is announced, then the politicians come in because they didn't want to see an end to the conflict. Because at that time, politicians were not prepared to make peace because they wanted to make political capital out of the issue.

So, you will hear the youth burning tyres and rebelling immediately a decision is made or an announcement is made that this decision has been taken. A politician somewhere will pick a phone and call the groups, the youth groups who are seated and idling and doing nothing and say that “jack, this is what they have said, we don't want it, we refuse it.” They will do that, then they will all get up, then the conflict starts, it ignites, it was not from any side, it was from the political side of the issue. They wanted this to continue to be there and they will be making political gains from it.

In these excerpts provided by Newton and Tachie, we see the negotiators did not have the absolute power to take decisions at the Committee level; they needed the blessing of certain Kingmakers. However, the Kingmakers at times did not provide this blessing (when the decisions taken were not favourable to them). The rejection of decisions and the changing of positions by the negotiators during the processes made it difficult for the Committee to reach a compromised solution, and this contributed to the deadlock of the peace processes.

Other participants expressed the view that the negotiators were engaged in selective interpretation of the issues that underpinned the conflict. Flowing from such behaviour, the Committee found it difficult to identify a common ground to make appropriate decisions. Mende-Sulley is a peace activist. He noted that the two Gates had different perspectives on the conflict. He reported on this issue in the following manner:

**Mende-Sulley:** Yeah, certainly, and for every conflict to fester, the parties must have different perspectives on the same issue, and it was the same in the case of the Dagbon conflict. That, these are a group of criminals who did this because they wanted to get this particular act, or they wanted to get a particular end. The other group is saying “no, we won’t agree, this is how we see it, your term is passed. It was just violence that erupted, we were trying to defend ourselves and that is why this thing happened. So, you cannot blame us for that.” So, definitely at the end of the day the two groups at every point in time, unless in much more recent times they have been made to at least see things from a common perspective.

Of course, people are still, the jury is still out there. But I think currently it is much better. The parties are seeing things from much more the same perspective and that is why we are having what we have now in terms of. At least for now we cannot say there is definite peace because we haven’t even gone a year into it. So, we still have some time to be able to judge to see how things will go. But definitely, I think it was one of the points that one was accusing the other of wrongdoing. The other was like “I have not done anything, if anything at all, we need to be compensated for what has happened.” Yeah so, I think I do agree with the point.

It is clear from Mende-Sulley that both Gates viewed the conflict and the entire peace processes from radically different perspectives.

Likewise, Desire, who is a peace researcher, argued that both Gates provided different narratives during the negotiation processes and the objective of such behaviour was to make their case legitimate. He noted the following in his interview:

**Desire:** Yes, when you look at this, most of these narratives existed. However, they choose the ones that favoured them to present, and so to make a point out of it. But when you look at them, the histories that both sides narrated were to suit their interest. So, in a way, the real facts of history were maligned in such a way that it favoured their interest or their position. So, it was therefore kind of a situation where the committee will have to take all these narratives into considerations. To come to a level where it will satisfy both sides. If not, all those references they made to, in fact, both factions made to, were really in existence.

But they choose the ones that would suit their interest per the situation. And then those that did not go in line with them, I mean they tend to kind of I mean push it back and then talk about those that favoured them. So, in a way, I could say that the history or the narratives were presented in such a way that it favoured their interest. When you look at the reference that was made to the Supreme Court ruling by the Abudus, it was more like it was clear that if an Andani is a Chief and is no more, an Abudu should be next. And this they capitalized on to make their cases that it was now their turn. But then failed to recognize the other references also being made by the Andanis with regards to some resolution that were made concerning. I mean, how the Gate, the entering point, that is Karaga, Mion and Savelugu should alternate. You know it so happened that if you are a

sitting Yaa-Naa and you are an Andani, two of these entry points should be occupied by Abudu. Do you understand?

So, there was a situation where they felt that the Yaa-Naa at that time, the one that was murdered, the two of the entry points should have been occupied by Abudus. But this wasn't the case. Do you understand? Because the one that was there died and there was a halt on the enskinment because they were waiting for the substantive Yaa-Naa to come. Also, Mion died and then they were also waiting. It was empty. Savelugu died and they were waiting. But then, the Regent enskinned somebody.

From Desire's point of view, the negotiators presented stories that both suited their interests as well as the interest of finding a lasting solution to the Dagbon chieftaincy crisis.

It appears from Mende-Sulley and Desire's comments that the Gates, in an attempt to present a strong case during the negotiation processes and to gain public sympathy, selectively interpreted the issues and advanced differing narratives that propped up the conflict. The Gates' failure to share a common vision made it difficult for the Committee to progress during the negotiation stages.

### ***7.2.3. The timing of the negotiation***

Some participants explained that the Roadmap was mooted in a period that was not conducive for its implementation. These participants divulged that the circumstances that led to the March 2002 incident coupled with the killing of the King and his elders (and the failure of the state to bring the perpetrators to justice) were bad timing for the Roadmap to be successfully implemented. Ayatullah, a religious leader within Dagbon, highlighted that the Roadmap document was very clear cut and straight forward, and that the local people were not ready to accept it due to the other events that were taking place during the same time:

**Ayatullah:** Confusion in the Roadmap, hmm, not that much for me, except what I just told you. Otherwise the Roadmap gave a clear-cut solution to the whole thing and don't forget, all the conflict experts were, you know, they were embracing the Roadmap to peace and all that. And these are people that have some knowledge in conflict resolution and all that.

So, reading the Roadmap to peace, you wouldn't see much of confusion. It was a very straight forward solution to the crisis but a solution that was rather in bad times. It was a solution in a time that the people themselves would not allow it to operate. They were not ready, they were not, otherwise, it didn't provide much of crisis because this is a document that you made available. You have specified that you are going to install Regents, you are going to do ABCD and all that so not much of a crisis.

Arising from Ayatullah's foregoing story is the fact that the timeframe within which the Roadmap was introduced did not allow for it to receive the public's needed support and especially the backing of the parties embroiled in the conflict. Its introduction came at a period that was characterized by pain and high emotions (as noted earlier), which hindered its implementation.

Other participants expressed the view that at that stage, the primary actors still had some energy and motivation to engage in the conflict instead of in the Peace Process. Considering that the predisposition of the parties to continue the conflict was high, the right frame was not created for the implementation of the Roadmap. According to a civil society activist named Raymond, "The parties themselves were still exuberant you know, there was still some energy you know, in fighting this you know and if you look at the opposite of it is now the fatigue that I talked about." Obviously, at the material moment when the Roadmap was being promoted, the parties were in a different frame of mind and they did not feel the need to stop the conflict. They had the motivation and energy to continue the conflict, and as such did not support the implementation of the Roadmap that they had appended their signatures to.

Some participants also argued that the period required the "cooling off of tempers" and that nothing much could have been done concerning the implementation of the Roadmap. Alhassan is an opinion leader within the Dagbon Kingdom. He communicated that the delay in the implementation of the Roadmap was strategic, in that it was done to assist in lowering the tensions and emotions that existed because of the Ya-Na's killing. This is what he had to say on the issue:

**Alhassan:** It is true. What I can say without mincing words is that the Eminent Chiefs knew what they were doing because believe me or not, all those things they were writing on paper, some of them knew that they had to take some time and by taking the time, some wounds may be healed. So, the delay comes as a result of that, to heal some wounds. Of course, those who suffered the casualty, you need to heal their wounds and also to let them know that you are behind them. You never liked what happened. You are also against what happened. So, that was the reason why they had to first and foremost, they had to bury the person who died and also install the Regent.

After the Regent was installed, it means they had to do some, hmmm, naturally, we don't rush in performing a Yaa-Naa's funeral. At least six months to one year but this particular one was meant to study the ground and to test the waters and to make sure that things calm down so that when they start it, nobody will have the chance to argue that this didn't happen. And also don't forget to allow the court process and other things to go

on because during this time after all there were some criminal aspects that was in the court.

So, after they had exhausted all these things and everybody had seen that all concerning (what do you call it) because there were accusations here, that this person did this, that person did that, they couldn't have implemented the Roadmap fully without cleaning these messes. As they allow the court, the government who is handling the (what do you call it) the legal aspect.

So, they went to court, arrests were made, and then everybody exhausted whatever he had so that nobody after bringing them on the table. Nobody will have the chance to accuse that I needed that chance, that that I couldn't get it. That was the reason why they allowed that time to move on because if you are going to put medicine on the sore, you must wash it. So, it was a washing time, that was why they were buying that time. Some of us that was our thinking. So, that everybody will exhaust whatever it is he has to do so that after doing it. Nobody will have the chance to go and revisit anything as it has happened now.

The thing went to court, the Andanis were there, the Abudus were there, even the time of the judgment they had to send it forward to allow everybody to exhaust whatever evidence or whatever you have, that happened.

It can, therefore, be surmised that the Mediation Committee was cognizant of the disputants' emotions and anger (particularly the Andani Gate), and therefore they had to strategize to allow for closure on all sides through an extended mediation time, which would culminate in an easier and better healing process.

### **7.3. Provisions of the roadmap**

Some of the participants articulated that the content and provisions of the Roadmap, specifically (1) unclear provisions and (2) structure of the provisions, contributed to the deadlock.

#### ***7.3.1. Unclear provisions***

Some participants expressed the view that certain provisions of the first Roadmap to peace were not very lucid or clear. This opened the floodgates for the parties in the conflict to provide different interpretations and meanings to these provisions. A civil society activist, Casimiro, during an interview noted the following in his story:

**Casimiro:** You know, the first Roadmap was more of a framework. Yes, when I say more of a framework, I mean let me say it was kind of very broad in a way, broader without the nitty-gritties like I indicated. They are both Roadmaps but you, hmmm, you know the framework nature is kind of like, this is the frame that we want to work with.

Now also the wording you know enabled people to give varied interpretations. And so, that is why they had different interpretations and that is why they had to argue on some of them. Yes, they had to argue on some of them.

When you say this, what does it mean? You know but the second one you know and of course it will not be surprising based on the challenges and lessons learnt in the first one. Will say, “ok, this one we will have to reframe it this way, so that no one now can give a different interpretation to what we agreed on.”

Casimiro noted that some of the Roadmap’s provisions were not clear, thereby creating the opportunity for both parties to provide different interpretations to their meanings.

Correspondingly, a peace activist named Dramani expressed concern about the wording of some of the provisions of the Roadmap to peace. Dramani narrated that the way some of the provisions were worded was problematic. Dramani expressed his concern in the following way:

**Dramani:** And some of the provisions as in the wordings in the Roadmap were also fluid in the sense that it was open to different, varying interpretations. So, the parties could interpret it variously. So, because of the varied interpretations, the parties were able to say that “this is what it means” and the other one says that “this is not what it means.” There was one which said that the temporal, hmmm, the Gbewaa Palace will be closed until the funerals of the Yaa-Naa or the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu is to be performed.

So, one of the parties said that it meant that we agreed that the funeral should be performed at the Gbewaa Palace. The other party said that “no, it meant that you will be coming there to perform certain customary things but the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulia IV) will be performed at where he died.” So, it could have just been that the Old Gbewaa Palace would be closed until the funeral of the late Yaa-Naa will be performed, and then add that it will be performed, hmmm. The funeral of the Yaa-Naa would be performed at this (place), and then with a specific time frame.

Dramini’s story suggests that the wording of some of the Roadmap’s provisions was also a conduit through which the parties gave them different meanings.

In these excerpts, Casimiro and Dramani stressed that some of the provisions’ text of the first Roadmap to peace allowed for people, especially the parties in conflict, to aspire to different understandings and interpretations and created a lacuna for mischief and side-tracking.

In relation to the wording of some of the provisions, a few participants articulated the view that although initially the parties agreed to the provisions in the Roadmap, in the course of implementation, disagreements set in. Yaro is a member of the Yendi Municipal Security Committee. He observed the following during our interview:

**Yaro:** Yes initially, I think the Roadmap, the issues in the Roadmap were agreed upon by all parties. The third party I mean presented the issues in a way that both parties, will have some 50/50 benefit for both parties. Now upon agreeing and then the process started the parties seem to realize that “no, it is like we did not check this well before we agreed to it.”

Because the way it is going, I mean, that wasn't what we were thinking. An example is, there was an agreement that we make the murdered Yaa-Naa son a Regent. However, He will not have the room to enskin Chiefs. They agreed all right. But when the process started, that wasn't the case. It was manipulated.

Yaro makes the point that the parties initially agreed to the provisions of the Roadmap; however, they had a change of mind in respect of some of the provisions when it came to its actual implementation. It can be surmised that the parties' expectations of the provisions of the Roadmap drastically differed from their initial stances.

There were other participants, however, who believed the provisions in the Roadmap were quite clear and well thought-through. They characterized the problem as being that the parties were not truthful to the issues discussed and agreed to at the Committee level. Ayatullah is a religious leader in the Dagbon Kingdom. He noted that the problem was not with the provisions' wording, rather it was the parties' constant changing of their positions on issues agreed upon at the Committee level. This is what he had to say:

**Ayatullah:** No, for that one I don't think it created any problem, because definitely when there is a problem, you must have a Roadmap and the Roadmap. You can't agree and disagree, and one thing I want to bring also is that, after the Roadmap, both sides, whenever they go thereafter, they come, they have reservations. What we have seen is that both sides when they go, whatever prevailed there, they don't bring the same thing to their people. They come and give different explanations, and you know whatever you are doing is meant for implementation.

Then the people on the ground will say no, we will not agree on this, we shall not agree on that, so that was also the problem. Severally, they will go and agree on something, but when they come back before they go to the next point, they will say “no, on this one we didn't agree because people on the ground, they didn't agree.” And you know you are going, you are standing in for people so whatever you heard, whatever is mentioned there, you have to go and tell the people, if they agree.

So, these were some of the things. Most parts of the Roadmap when they come back, even though it has been read out but they were finding it difficult, these people will say “no, these people will say we will not agree.” And we know it is part of hmmm, in a conflict situation, these things are there.

For participants like Ayatullah, the difficulty was with the understanding that the parties brought to the Roadmap and the provisions contained in it. Although the provisions were clear, the parties resorted to different interpretations when they realized that certain arrangements were not in their interest. Also, there was usually a clear difference between what was discussed at the Committee level, and what the negotiators reported to their people.

Other participants also raised the concern that the Roadmap's provisions were limited to only one area and that is satisfying the interest of the two Gates. A religious leader, Rodrigue, had reported on this issue in the following manner:

**Rodrigue:** If you look at the whole Roadmap, what was put there was just for the parties. Nothing in the Roadmap concerns the whole community. The conflict is not only about the Abudus and Andanis. We have women, children, men, and young people who have been affected by the conflict. So, it would have been good for the mediation team to also consider issues that affect these people.

Rodrigue suggests that the provisions in the Roadmap were basically designed in the interest of the Abudus and Andani Gates and not the various local diverse groups in the entire Kingdom.

Some female participants described the provisions captured in the roadmap as “male” centric issues. For example, during a focus group discussion with women, Abibatu noted the following in her story:

**Abibatu:** When I look at the Roadmap, I get worried. The issues there are about the burial of chiefs and the performance of funerals. I am not saying these things are not important for our community, they are. But what about we the women, those whose husbands and children have died, those who are in pain, those whose marriages have broken up because of the Andani and Abudu division? What have they done for us? Nothing, and I mean nothing in the Roadmap talks about that. This Roadmap is just about the Chiefs and the men, and not about Dagbon.

Consequently, Abibatu revealed that the Roadmap did not pay attention to issues that affected women. The Roadmap was basically about sharing power among the Gates, and nothing else.

Adisa is another female participant who was engaged in the same focus group. Adisa recognized that the Roadmap omitted women because the male Elders who formulated the peace agreement did so to preserve male privilege while excluding other diverse groups including women and youth in the community:

**Adisa:** What my sister said is true. I support her and I agree with her. The NGOs come here to organize training for us on peacebuilding and the need for us to live together. That is good. But when you look at the Roadmap to peace, it is just about the males. The issues there are male issues and not about all of us. I mean, men, women, children, young people. This is because the elders who went there to negotiate were all men. There was no woman there. And so the focus was on the men and the Chiefs.

It is clear from Abibatu and Adisa's narratives that the Roadmap to peace's provisions neglected the concerns of women and other segments of the society. It is also clear that the failure to involve women in the peace process was a missed opportunity to identify and include the concerns and knowledge of women and other diverse interest groups in the society in the Roadmap to peace process.

### ***7.3.2. Structure of the Roadmap's provisions***

Several participants highlighted the structure of some of the Roadmap's provisions as contributing to the Dagbon peace processes deadlock. The participants explained that the way some of the provisions were structured created the opportunity for parties to take entrenched positions. One of the concerns identified by the participants regarding the structure of the provisions was with the scheduling of certain activities (for e.g., the installation of Regents and the performance of the funerals of the two Yaa-Naas). Saddique is a young peace activist who provided some critical feedback regarding the arrangements of some of the provisions of the Roadmap. He reported on this issue as follows:

**Saddique:** Then the two families, you see, you had, the Committee had entered into a dilemma, dilemma because you have set yourself a target, you want to bury the late Yaa-Naa and then after the burial install the Regent. After the installation of the Regent, perform the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu. Now before the performance of the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu they had not installed the Regent for Yaa-Naa Mahamadu. So, now if you bury and you knew that you were not going to perform the funeral of Yaa-Naa Yakubu first.

After the burial, you could have left the Regent of Yaa-Naa Yakubu not properly installed because once you install the Regent, he becomes a *de facto* Yaa-Naa. He acts like the Yaa-Naa, and he has the power available to himself. So, it was going to be very difficult. I mean to get out of that difficulty that the Committee had put itself in. You have installed a Regent yet that Regent, are you going to move him out before you perform the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu or you install the other Regent.

And perform the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu because the Regent you installed was not the Regent of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu. And for the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu to be performed, they must install the Regent of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu and then they will move out, then Yaa-Naa Yakubu's Regent will be installed. That is how I was thinking they were going to do it, and then Yaa-Naa Yakubu's funeral would be performed as well. But once it wasn't done that way, the Committee contributed to its deadlock, hmmm, I mean to that deadlock you have asked for.

Saddique suggests that some activities should have taken place before others. There are age-old customs regarding the performance of the funeral of a Yaa-Naa. The eldest son of the deceased Yaa-Naa is installed as Regent to oversee the performance of the funeral of his late father. Therefore, to perform the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV after his burial requires installing his Regent to oversee the performance of the funeral of his late father. This could not, however, happen because the Regent of Yaa-Naa Yakubu Andani II was the one in possession of the skin. As a result, when it was time to perform the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV, several problems arose because the Regent was not of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV's lineage, and obviously did not fully support such a move, since it portended several other consequences including that he would have to relinquish the skin thereafter.

In addition to the scheduling of the Roadmap's provisions, some participants also referred to the vagueness of some of the provisions as a structural deficiency. The interviewees noted that the plan for the installation of a Regent was vague and created the opportunity for the Kamkpakuya-Na to entrench his power and stay on the Skin. The Regent's powers were not defined nor was the time frame within which he could become Regent properly delineated.

Jacob is a member of the Regional Peace Council. He commented that the failure to clearly define the rights and limits of the Kamkpakuya-Na in the Roadmap was a recipe for it to be abused:

**Jacob:** Then the other thing was also, the Roadmap has been given and they are all aware. And then the understanding was that they have to abide by the Roadmap. But what you see after that, was not what was enshrined in the Roadmap. A practical example, hmmm, for me. It is another issue which needs to be talked about, hmmm. For me what I describe as perennial issues that need to be tackled when you are talking about these chieftaincy issues and all that. Once you don't talk about that thing, you create a problem.

The first thing, for instance, is the right of chieftaincy succession which, I mean. It is not properly documented and so time and again, it keeps on coming back. What are

the rights of the Regents, and how long should the Regent be there? Act as a Regent before anyone is appointed? For me these are critical issues that need to be looked at because the last issues, Kamkpakuya-Naa was there, I think for thirteen years, okay. Now what is happening is also the fact that what are his limits? What can he do or what can he not do? These are the issues.

I was talking because hmmm at another workshop or so, I was talking to Regents or so. One told me that well before his father died, the father breathed into him. So, what the father did, that was what he was doing, selling the land, enskinning Chiefs and doing all sorts of things. And this then brings about provocations from the other side that you have no right to do this, you have no right to do that, and all that.

I mean, there is no clear documentation regarding what the limits of the Regents are and for me, it is an issue, if that is not worked on, time and again it will come up again. I mean the issue will emerge again. Unless there is something documented, and everybody goes by it and then that is that. So, the allegation was that both Regents, they were selling lands. They were enskinning Chiefs and all that. That was the allegations. But in the Roadmap, it wasn't supposed to be like that, and I was challenged one day.

Jacob recognized that it was imperative for Kamkpakuya-Na's rights and limits to be clearly stated in terms of what he can do and cannot do, and how long he can stay on the Skin. These issues needed to be addressed in the Roadmap.

Mumuni is a member of one of the Royal Gates. He had this to say on the installation of Regents within Dagbon:

**Mumuni:** The mistake that the Roadmap did was that it didn't specify the number of years the Regent should stay. The Roadmap should have been clear that when we enskin the Regent he should stay in the palace or on the stool for two years and within these two years or one year the funeral should be performed. And so, funerals or funeral was used as a blockage against any incoming Yaa Naa. Do you understand what I am saying?

The position of Mumuni is that, the Roadmap failed to indicate the number of years the Regent can stay on the Skin. The above gap was taken advantage of by the Regent and the Andani Gate.

Both Jacob and Mumuni recognized that the vagueness of that provision on the installation of a Regent was problematic because it did not specify the number of years that the Regent was supposed to stay in office.

A representative of the National Peace Council named Ryerson also contended that the vagueness of the provision created room for the Regent to stay too long on the throne. He noted the following in his story:

**Ryerson:** You see, I don't want to be too some way about this but, hmmm. I mean we have recommended, let me say it this way. We have recommended and we did that together with the National House of Chiefs, their committee, hmmm. They have a Committee. We met them. We agreed that it is not in the interest of any tradition to keep a Regent for more than 6 months. If I have sat on a throne for some number of years the assumption is, I am the substantive person. And it creates a lot of conflicts when you decide that now somebody must come to you, so that is one. I think it was one of the problems. They kept the Regent for far too long in the process. So, now if you say leave the scene, if people support me, they will rise and say "no, way I also deserve it, after all, I'm there."

You see, so, I think it also compounded the problem in my opinion. So hmmm, you don't have to keep a Regent who is supposed to be a caretaker for over a decade. What are you saying, the person might have created you know a caucus around himself, an empire. If you now say tradition says the right person is here, or we didn't agree that you should be substantive, so now get out and let, hmmm, there will be resistance and that is what happened.

Ryerson believed that allowing the Regent to stay for such a long time in the Skin exposed him to many associated benefits. Having enjoyed these benefits for so long, it became difficult to ask him to step down from the Skin for another person to ascend to it. This impracticability stalled the peace process and entrenched the positions of the respective Gates even deeper.

#### **7.4. Implementation of the Roadmap**

The participants also intimated that several implementation challenges also contributed to the Roadmap deadlock including: (1) Disagreements among the parties on the implementation of some provisions, (2) the skewed implementation tactics, (3) undefined timelines, and (4) the lack of a stakeholder to monitor both parties' compliance with the peace agreement.

##### ***7.4.1. Disagreements on the implementation of some provisions***

Several participants expressed the view that when all was set for the Roadmap's provisions to be implemented, several disagreements arose between the two Gates. The interviewees explained that these disputes were over the "how and when" of some of the provisions. One of these antagonisms was with "Provision K" of the first Roadmap to peace; the selection of a new Yaa-Naa. Desire is a peace researcher. She revealed that the controversy between the Gates was with regards to which Gate was to occupy the Skin after the performance of the funerals of both Yaa-Naas. Desire puts this perspective in the following words:

**Desire:** Now it came to a point where I mean, both sides had even agreed to perform the funerals but the fact that what happens after the performance of the funerals? Would we have the opportunity to also enskin? I mean, our persons as the Yaa-Naa, the next Yaa-Naa? Because the argument was that when you trace back the documents, there was a ruling of this same Dagbon issue. That in all cases if an Andani should be a Yaa-Naa, after his demise an Abudu should be the next Yaa-Naa. So, it should alternate in that manner.

But here was the case that the Andanis were making, a case that our father did not die a natural death and for that matter, we had to continue. The Abudus also feel that it has been on three successions that it has always been the Andani including the recent murdered one. And for that matter, it was our turn. I mean, the court did not state clearly whether it is through natural death or by murder or whatever. The point was that immediately he's no longer there, then the next should be their turn. So, it is their turn. And so, that was one of the deadlocks because deciding who next to become the Yaa-Naa was a problem.

And then again, when you look at the entry points to the Yendi Skin, you come to realize that they are three: Karaga, Mion, and then Savelugu. Unfortunately, Both Karaga and Mion did not have occupants, during the time of this conflict. And it was only Savelugu that had an occupant. And so, this Savelugu occupant was also Andani. He is currently the Yaa-Naa. But then the Abudus' case was that he can still not. I mean, he is not qualified to become the Yaa-Naa because he is an Andani. And like I made the point earlier, we can't have an Andani and Andani in the same line, succeeding each other. So, it should come to our side. And so, the question was who was next? ...

And so, they wanted the Regent of the Abudus you know. They had a Regent who stood as, because their father's funeral hadn't been performed. He was also Regent for that Gate. So, they felt that he should immediately be enskinned as Mion Chief. And then also, he could move as somebody who has qualified to be a Yaa-Naa. And so, there were so many complications. There were also stories around the enskinment of the Savelugu Chief then. In fact, who is now on the Yaa-Naa? What happened was that the Regent who after the performance of the funeral of the murdered Chief, the one who became the Regent, he enskinned the Savelugu Chief. And the Abudus feel that you could not enskin any Chief per the Roadmap. Because the Roadmap was that you are becoming a Regent but then, you are not to enskin any chief. But then he went on and enskinned the Savelugu Chief. Do you understand? So, to make him qualify to become the Yaa-Naa.

So, they argued that, per that time, there was no qualified person to be a Yaa-Naa. Because even the one that was enskinned was wrongly or wrongfully enskinned by that Regent. Now there was also another one. I mean, it was within the Gate, that there was an agreement between that Regent then, and this Savelugu Chief that when he makes him the Savelugu chief, he will not one day be interested in the Yendi Skin. So, that he will continue to be Chief and the Regent will continue to be the Yaa-Naa. Because immediately he makes him the Savelugu Chief, it means he is qualified to vie for the Yaa-Naa. And that also sound, within the same Gate of Andani some people were kind of, "no, the Savelugu Chief will never go in for it because this was the agreement." Some were saying that, so far as he is now the Savelugu Chief, he is qualified to go in.

Desire's narrative illustrates that it appears that both Gates espoused justifications as to why they were the rightful Gate to occupy the Skin after the performance of the Yaa-Naa funerals. The Abudu Gate articulated that it was their turn based on the principle of rotation. However, the Andani Gate insisted that it was still their turn because their father did not die a natural death.

In addition, most participants highlighted that the two Gates did not agree on who should be the head of the selection committee (the Council of Elders) charged with the responsibility of selecting a Yaa-Naa, and in performing other traditional roles. While the Andani Gate insisted that it was the Kuga-Na, the Abudu Gate said it was the Gushie-Na. For instance, Chairman, during a focus group discussion with persons with disabilities explained the following in her story:

**Chairman:** You see, the two families did not just agree on who is the leader of the Council elders in the Dagbon Kingdom. The Abudu Royal Family says that Gushie-Na, that is the Chief of Gushiegu is elder and therefore he is the leader of the Council. But the Andani Gate said no, it is the Kuga-Na. So, for me, the two families did not agree on this and so it contributed to the delay of the Roadmap for peace.

Apparently, the disagreement between both families with regards to the headship of the Council of Elders created complications for the peace processes and the way forward. Another aspect of disagreement regarding the implementation of the first Roadmap was on "Provision J" of the Roadmap, which was whether the Yaa-Naa Mahamadu IV should be accorded the rights and recognition of a former Yaa-Naa and thereafter the appropriate place for the performance of his funeral.

Gadafi is an opinion leader in the Kingdom. He argued that per Dagbon's enskinment processes, the Yaa-Naa Mahamadu IV was not properly enskinned and therefore should not be recognized as a Yaa-Naa:

**Gadafi:** You know customarily, we are the custodians and they were saying that the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV should be performed at the old Gbewaa Palace which the other party disagreed and we the custodians also disagreed. One, because Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV was not enskinned by the custodians. But the Roadmap says that the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu IV, hmmm. They should agree that he was a former Yaa-Naa, which we the custodians didn't want to agree because we didn't enskin him as Yaa-Naa, you understand.

So, we said no, no, no since we didn't, hmm, it was my father, my biological father who was there, the time they enskinned Yaa-Naa Mahamadu IV as Yaa-Naa and my father said he is not qualified, so he won't agree. So, they refused and it was the soldiers and the police, the government forces that enskinned him as Yaa-Naa. And so when the Roadmap was tasking them to perform the funeral in the palace, they said "no, we won't involve ourselves because we didn't enSkin him as Yaa-Naa." And they were saying that they should enSkin him, hmm. No, they should go inside the palace, old palace and then perform the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV. And they were saying that since the Roadmap said they should do that, they will not have us in it, you understand, and so that was it.

Thus, Gadafi avowed that the Yaa-Naa Mahamadu was not qualified to be enskinned as a Yaa-Naa because the processes used to enSkin him were not in accordance with the Dagbon tradition. Consequently, the Yaa-Naa Mahamadu cannot be recognized as a Yaa-Naa and accorded the rights and privileges of a Yaa-Naa.

Another participant named Rabiatu explicated a similar observation during a focus group with women in the Kingdom with regards to the fitting place for the performance of the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu IV. She noted the following in her narrative:

**Rabiatu:** One of the reasons for the delay was disagreement as to where to perform the funeral (of the late Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV). Whereas they (Andani) said the funeral should be performed at Shikariga, the Abudu side rejected this suggestion and insisted that the funeral be performed as a Yaa-Naa, hence in the Gbewaa Palace. And a Yaa-Naa's funeral cannot be performed at any other place than in the Gbewaa Palace. That was a key issue that brought about the deadlock.

Similarly, a young peace activist called Gibson recalled during a focus group with young people the disagreement that evolved between both families:

**Gibson:** Aside from the fact that, hmm, you see, you will realize the two families themselves were also. I already talked about their intransigence even though I didn't elaborate much, the two families, Andanis would insist that Yaa-Naa Mahamadu died out of the palace and therefore his funeral cannot be performed in the Gbewaa Palace. So, Abudus too, instead of them to also listen for the sake of peace, also perform the funeral out of the Gbewaa Palace, they also insisted the funeral must be performed in the Gbewaa Palace.

Rabiatu and Gibson's comments suggest that the Abudu and Andani Gates did not achieve a common ground on the implementation of the provisions especially in relation to the performance of the funeral of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV. However, successful implementation of these provisions was required in order for the process to move forward.

#### ***7.4.2. Skewed implementation***

Most participants expressed the view that the implementation of the Roadmap was skewed in the initial stages to the benefit of one of the Gates, in this case, the Andani Gate. They explained that this created a situation where members of the rival Gate believed it was being selectively excluded from the processes. According to Gabriella, a peace activist in the Kingdom, both Gates began to compete with each other, and refused to hold the King's funeral as the Regent became embroiled in the conflict:

**Gabriella:** And you see, one faction thought that amid all this confusion, the other side was gaining. You see, the Abudos thought that you see, for a very long time we have been deprived of the kingship and what goes with it, hmm, the pleasures, and all that; the wealth. The Andanis on the other side thought that "this is our time to perpetuate our reign." So, you see, hmm, having agreed that we need this team to work; and having agreed that fine, let us install a Regent. The Regent also came and what he thought was different. And what they advised him was also different on the way forward. So, there was a set of demands from both factions.

So, this faction will say "this must be done or else" or "this must be done else we will not do this." Because the Roadmap agreed for the performance of the funerals and having agreed, one would have thought that the deadlines would have been followed. But that was not the case. And so, the issue became complicated. You see, in our tradition, you don't force someone to perform the father's funeral. So, the government could not have done anything in these circumstances. So, this accounted for that problem. Do you understand?

Gabriella expressed the point of view that the delay in the implementation of the Roadmap's other provisions after the first two were implemented led the Abudu Gate to conclude that the Roadmap was developed to favour the Andani Gate.

Mubarack, who is an opinion leader in Dagbon, expressed the concern that during implementation of the Roadmap, the Regent of Yaa-Naa Yakubu Andani II was allowed to stay on the throne for too long, making him assume the role of a substantive King. Certainly, after

enjoying the position for such a long time, it became difficult for him to leave the scene for another person to take over when asked to do so. Mubarack noted the following in his story:

**Mubarack:** In our tradition, the Regent is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that the funeral of his father is performed which will then create the way for a new King to be enskinned. The Regent is not to stay on the Skin for a long time and his responsibilities are also limited. In this case, what we witnessed was that the Kamkpakuya-Na stayed on the skin for a long time.

His enskinment was part of the processes of getting a Yaa-Naa. He was to lead the peace processes and serve as a father to the Kingdom. Instead, it delayed the peace processes. He even begun undertaking some activities that are exclusively that of a Yaa-Naa. This created a problem for us, because that was not what we agreed in the Roadmap, you see. The other Abudu Gate became angry with the activities of the Kamkpakuya-Na. That was the problem.

Mubarack point out that it was not in the Kingdom's interest for the success of the peace processes to have allowed the Regent to stay on the throne for more than ten years. Exposed to the benefits of the position, it became difficult for the Regent, who at that material moment was the leader of the Kingdom, to allow for a smooth implementation of the Roadmap.

Other participants, however, tried to disabuse the notion that the implementation of the Roadmap was skewed to benefit one of the Gates. For instance, while admitting that in the initial stages of the implementation of the Roadmap, one Gate benefited more than the other, Mustafa expounds that these stages were required to ensure that a new King was selected:

**Mustafa:** Yes, hmm, the implementation, hmm, the initial implementation favoured one side. If the implementation was to continue, then both sides would have benefitted. But I am not saying that it was also political. I am just saying that it could have been as a result of circumstances. They needed Dagbon to get a leader. Dagbon could not have been like that. They needed somebody to bury the Yaa-Naa, to enskin a Regent, and that kind of thing. And so, one side benefitted from the process whilst the other was left out.

What is surmised from Mustafa's comment is that the way the Roadmap's provisions were structured resulted in one party benefiting more than the other, although completing these steps was a prerequisite to initiating a successful implementation of the entire processes.

### **7.4.3. Timelines**

Another position expressed by the participants on the deadlock of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace was that it did not espouse concrete and smart timelines. Moreover, in situations where some timelines were provided, these were not respected by the Gates. Jacob, a member of Northern Regional Peace Council, explained that the failure to provide timelines delayed the implementation of the Roadmap and eventually contributed to the deadlock. Jacob explained the issue in the following manner:

**Jacob:** There were no time frames. Specific time frames were not there. That was the weakness of the Roadmap. Yeah, you will say ok. Perform funeral. It was not enough. Maybe when you go through it then you will be able to tell whether what you are stating is the case, but I think it is. Because we all observed that weakness. There were no timelines bound to the items on the Roadmap because it was just opened.

In addition, Tachie, a member of the Yendi Peace Centre, expressed a similar view regarding the timelines of the first Roadmap to peace. He reported on the issue as follows:

**Tachie:** Because you know, why the deadlock of the first Roadmap? They never gave timelines. They said, bury the Chief, install the Regent, perform the funeral, but at what times? So, he was sitting there for years.

Consequently, Jacob and Tachie made it known that outlining activities in the Roadmap was not enough as these activities should have been tied to timelines. Therefore, the failure to provide clear and concrete timelines for the Roadmap's provisions made it open to abuse. What is more, the parties did not commit themselves to the full implementation of the Roadmap.

Other participants argued that, although the Roadmap contained provisions that were relevant in restoring peace to Dagbon, this would only have been made possible based on the implementation of the provisions outlined in the Roadmap in line with considerations of time and space. According to Nehaad, a civil society and peace activist in Dagbon, the failure to provide timelines for these provisions, however, made the Roadmap appear broad and vague. Nehaad reported the issue as follows:

**Nehaad:** If the timelines, if there are items to be delivered in the Roadmap you know and we agreed together that if we implement this, we implement that, in terms of the

sequence. So, along the line, some of them were being delayed and others were not implemented the way they expected. And so, they had reason to say they were withdrawing from the process you know.

The Roadmap was kind of broad and so after the performance, the people begin to drag their feet. “Ok, it’s like we have gotten what we wanted you to know so the next one is not for us, it will go against the other group so let’s drag our feet you know.” And the other thing is, once we have gotten this if we drag our feet then it will, or time will allow us to enjoy it before this one too is implemented. Once that one is implemented it means we have lost what we have been enjoying. So those were some of the things.

Nehaad contends that the failure to assign tangible timelines to each of the provisions led to the Roadmap’s abuse. The consequence was that some of the parties became adamant in the implementation processes because they had profited, whilst those who did not benefit lost confidence in the process and decided to withdraw from it completely.

As already stated, other participants noted that even where timelines were provided, one or the other party had a reason to simply disregard these timelines. For example, Ryerson is a member of the NPC. He explained that at various points in time during the implementation of the Roadmap, the parties did not respect the timelines that were provided for some of the provisions of the Roadmap. Ryerson narrated that, “The Roadmap will surely provide timelines, but whether or not the timelines will be followed is another. I think the timelines were not respected and that can be attributed to so many things.”

It follows that both Gates did not respect the timelines that were provided for the successful implementation of the Roadmap to peace. Some interviewees conceded, however, that it was not possible to provide timelines for the first Roadmap because of the prevailing circumstances. For instance, Ayatullah, a religious leader in the Kingdom, explained that at the time the first Roadmap was drawn up, people’s emotions and expectations were high, and as such it would have constituted a big recipe for disaster to provide timelines under such conditions:

**Ayatullah:** Of course, the first one there was no timeline and you know the first time they couldn’t have given timelines because of the nature of the case but most people may not know. That time you couldn’t have given timelines like the whole thing could have become, hmm. Like we will not reach where we have reached now, you will finally end up getting more casualties or killing many of them.

So, you couldn’t have given timelines. Instead allow all of them to buy time and also to tell them that if this funeral is performed, this is what is happening. If this funeral

is performed, to start with, each one of them is thinking that Bolin-Lana, now the Mion-Lana, he thought after the funeral he would become the Yaa-Naa. Then the Regent Kamkpakuga-Naa also thought that after the funeral he would become the Yaa-Naa. Now also, all that fighting, the Abudus were doing it because of Bolin-Lana, and now there was Mion-Lana, over there, the old man who was the head of the Abudu family.

If they performed the funeral at that time, he would have become but although there was no way he would have become the Yaa-Naa and then let me tell you, whether we like it or not, some of the Abudus never like it that. So, you know there were so many reasons people had to buy time. So, after he is no more there and then that place is not there, that thing is not there, so some of these things happen.

Ayatullah puts the issue of timing succinctly, and makes it apparent that the conditions leading to the implementation of the first Roadmap to peace did not favour a rigid strategy backed by strict timelines. Leaving the Roadmap broad, open, and with no timelines provided an opportunity for the parties to adequately express their concerns, and heal from their pain and grievances.

Ayatullah noted that providing timelines at this point would have led to massive catastrophes.

#### ***7.4.4. Monitoring compliance***

A final angle that was brought to bear on the first Roadmap's deadlock was the fact that there was no third party or stakeholder to ensure compliance with what was outlined in the Roadmap. Some participants attributed this fact to a lapse to the failure to implement "Provision B" of the first Roadmap to peace, which stipulated the establishment of a Council of Elders (CoE) from both Gates vested with the responsibility of ensuring that the traditional components of the Roadmap were adequately implemented and adhered to by the Gates. Hawakulu is a peace activist in the Dagbon Kingdom. She explained this point as follows:

**Hawakulu:** And upon seeing it also, there was a committee that was supposed to help in the implementation. And because there was no security guarantee to ensure compliance, that committee never lived. So, part of the resolution was the need to share skins; equitable sharing of skins amongst them. And that committee was responsible for selecting and helping in the enskinment process.

So, the enskinment process could have helped in the reintegration or integration of Dagbon royals and the other Chiefs. Because that committee was not functional, enskinment was skewed, further deteriorating the process. And so, that was why it failed.

Hawakulu articulated that a Council of Elders would have injected fairness into the implementation of the Roadmap, and ensured that the parties adhered to its provisions including

the sharing of Skins and traditional spoils. The Council would have had the responsibility of ensuring compliance, more importantly, compliance with the culture; its absence meant that there was no such entity or body.

Other participants indicated that unbiased and esteemed state institutions could have been tasked with the responsibility of monitoring compliance, and in maintaining people's confidence in the process. A young peace activist named Napson explained that state institutions such as the National Peace Council (NPC) were not assigned any roles in the first Roadmap to peace, and as such they were completely sidestepped by the CEC. He reported on the issue in the following manner:

**Napson:** And the other reason why the earlier one failed was that the Peace Council was not part of the process to be able to know when compliance or non-compliance was there. The Peace Council could have served as a neutral party to know when a party is complying and when a party is not complying. A neutral party could have been a referee, and a referee does not know "when a foul is a catch" until the parties themselves "catches themselves," and that becomes a problem. So, that was it.

Similarly, Rashida argued that there was a need for the involvement of a third party such as the NPC to undertake preventive engagements with the two Gates. Rashida noted the following in his narrative:

**Rashida:** The missing factor in the earlier one was the non-existence of the National Peace Council because, with the current one, the Peace Council had had a lot of preventive engagements to be able to solve a lot of problems that helped the process. But in the earlier one, there was no such an institution to play that role. And so, everything was left into the hands of government and the parties. And the government also, apart from providing security using the security agencies could not do those kinds of negotiations.

The existence of the Peace Council now created an opportunity for the parties to confide, and also to bring out their problems for the Council to engage the parties to come together at a roundtable to negotiate, hmm, to discuss. Apart from that, the Peace Council had several nonviolent sensitizations, everything targeted at ensuring that Dagbon is reintegrated and then bring it back to normalcy.

Napson and Rashida narrated that the presence of a neutral third party such as the NPC would have ensured implementation compliance, and would have been critical in nurturing and sustaining the confidence of stakeholders in the peace processes.

Several participants buttressed this idea further. They also expressed the concern that the state or government itself was not assigned any responsibility in the Roadmap. Although the state ostensibly played a major role in its implementation, one participant, Yehuza, intimated a detailed reading of the Roadmap revealed that no specific responsibilities had been assigned to the state. He explains this issue in the following manner:

**Yehuza:** When I read through the Roadmap, I do not see any responsibility assigned to the various stakeholders especially the state. What I see in the Roadmap is a list of activities that are to be implemented. Who is to implement these activities was not clear? The state had a lot of things to undertake. For example, the state had to provide political and security guarantees.

The state was also to provide the needed resources and personnel for the implementation of the Roadmap. These were, however, not captured in the Roadmap. This for me made the state not to be committed to the processes. It also made the parties not to trust the state when the state is involved in undertaking some activities.

Consequently, Yehuza recounted that the failure to assign responsibilities to key stakeholders such as the state resulted in the state becoming non-committed to the process, and it also contributed to the distrust the parties had for the state and state actors. This jeopardized the smooth implementation of the Roadmap as well as the monitoring of compliance.

## 7.5. Participation

A cross-section of participants argued that the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace did not allow for the participation of some sections of Dagbon society, such as women, young people, religious groups, disability rights groups, and CSOs, and in their view, this partly contributed to the deadlock of the peace processes. The participants contended that these (marginalised) groups experience conflict differently but are also active front-liners in the conflict. Involving this category of people in the process not only engenders their fundamental human rights, it also places them in the right frame of mind to claim ownership of the processes and eventually accept the outcomes. In this section, I summarize the participants' standpoints on the participation of three types of groups in particular: (1) the participation of young people, (2) the participation of women, and (3) the participation of civil society groups and organizations.

### **7.5.1. Participation of young people**

First and foremost, most participants, especially the younger generation, noted that the non-involvement and poor engagement of young people in the first Roadmap to peace was directly or indirectly a contributory factor to the deadlock of the peace processes. The participants explained young people were those being recruited by the two Gates elders, politicians, and chieftaincy contractors to engage in violent actions and push forward their individual nefarious agendas.

However, when it came to the peace processes, only the two Gates elders were consulted, disregarding the views of young people. Dave articulated that those who were selected to participate in the negotiation processes were from the two Gates. Dave had the following to say on this issue:

**Dave:** The participation was very poor because the Committee, the Wuaku Committee, they were identifying people and they were calling them. If they identify you as someone who can give them information that they are looking for then they will invite you to meet them at the commission. The same way the Eminent Chiefs, I don't even know the work the Eminent Chiefs did then. I mean, the, what is it, the team led by Asantehene I don't know what work they did because they were tasked to design a Roadmap.

So, they were designing the Roadmap, I mean, all alone because they did not engage the people so much. Because they just identified one or two people from this Gate and then they will talk to them and that was all. And in reality, it was the youth because it was the youth that was taking arms against each other. It was the youth that was at the centre of everything. Although the elders were underground doing things, it was the youth. If they had engaged the youth to let them know I mean, that they were destroying themselves and in that kind of thing they could cease-fire.

But it was the youth. And this Commission, or what have you, did not engage the youth in any way. The youth were not involved in anything. And in this case, you cannot solve the problem without engaging the youth. Because they have youthful exuberance. They can do I mean; they can cause the damages. They can fight. They can wage war. The elderly can't do anything.

This comment expresses how young people, a key segment of the Kingdom of Dagbon, needed to be engaged in the peace processes. As key actors in the conflict, the direct involvement of young people was critical in ensuring the success in the peace process.

Similarly, a young female participant named Sharon noted during a focus group with young females that there were no efforts to include the Kingdom's young people in the negotiation processes. She explained it as follows:

**Sharon:** Yes, you know the young people, I will say the youth they are the majority so, at times, their behaviour and their actions were dictating to how the thing should move. In the sense that, if we say we are going to do this and they do not give you their support, their backing, they distract it. How do they distract it? They make sure that you will not get peace, stones will be throwing here and there, they will create an ungovernable atmosphere for you so that you cannot move forward.

When you look at the peace process, they did not engage them who are the majority in the Kingdom. So, the youth...they needed to engage the young people in the peace processes to make sure that we sensitize them to maintain peace.

Sharon noted that the sheer greater numbers/demographic composition of the young is a source of their power and means that their input and involvement in the peace processes were required. The non-involvement and engagement of young people in the peace processes was therefore identified as contributing to the deadlock of the peace processes.

#### ***7.5.2. Women's participation***

Some participants also indicated that the failure to actively engage women in the peace processes was also a contributory factor to their deadlock. These participants explained that although there are traditional women leaders, their participation ended at the observation level and did not extend to roles as lead negotiators. Generally, women, like youth, were seen as recipients and implementers of the decisions to be made by adult male negotiators at the Committee level.

During a focus group discussion with women, Nafisatu explained that the experiences of women during conflict are different, and as such it was important to actively engage women in the decisions made in peace processes. This was however not the case. She expressed her concern as follows:

**Nafisatu:** We the women here, experience the Dagbon conflict in different ways. When they start to fight, we the women and our children suffer a lot. Let us take the people that were killed in the conflict, they left behind their wives and children. Today most of them are struggling to take care of themselves and their children. The wives and children of the murdered Yaa Naa always organize press conferences to tell the world how they are suffering.

Our marriages are affected, and it is bad for us. If there is a curfew or a problem here, definitely we cannot go to market. With all these, the women do not get the opportunity to tell how we want peace. Many NGOs come to organize workshops for us on peacebuilding, but at the committee level, women are not involved. So, we cannot do

much, we just pray. Sometimes if something is happening and your husband comes out to go, yours is to plead with him not to go. Because for us as women, we don't go to battles.

Nafisatu's narrative highlights how the women of Dagbon experienced the conflict differently and would have brought a different angle to bear in the negotiation processes if their concerns and voices had been considered and included in the process.

In addition, several participants argued that women contributed to the conflict at the everyday level through both verbal and, in particular, through non-verbal symbolic gestures towards the other side of the conflict. For example, interviewees referred to some women's dress, the way they looked at each other, the movement of their mouths and lips and public pronouncements which they used to further heighten or create tensions in the community.

Niamatu, a participant during the focus group for women, noted the following in her story:

**Niamatu:** Yes, yes, yes, women, hmm, they are so, if you rule them out, they will cause trouble for you. Why, because a woman can even wear headgear that is insulting the other person, even clothes that they are wearing, with one word. I give you an example, there was a time there was something at the other area. A lady started announcing that they have attacked Bolin-Lana and then men who are having this manhood, they are there sitting idle, God should change them to be a woman then we will go.

So, they can incite, and they cause trouble if you underestimate them. Before you realize, there are market women, in the market they can just put fire there. So, they are very dicey, very, very dicey. They will sit together, they can cause trouble, but you may not know. So, the Committee of Eminent Chiefs should have included them in the mediation. What we have seen is that women were not engaged in the process.

Niamatu points out that the role of women in conflict cannot be underestimated because they are also front liners who approach the conflict from a different angle. As a result, the wanton disregard of their concerns and input into the peace processes did not do much to progress the successful implementation of the first peace accord.

### ***7.5.3. Participation of civil society organizations/groups***

Several participants also suggested that there was no space made for the participation of CSOs in the negotiation processes, which would have helped to engender confidence in the process, provide technical support to the CEC, and assist with compliance monitoring. These participants

recounted that the failure to actively engage CSOs partly accounted for the deadlock in the peace processes. A civil society activist, Raymond, reported on this issue in the following manner:

**Raymond:** Civil society groups were involved in the peace processes, but indirectly. As civil society groups, we had a lot of interest in the conflict. Our work as civil society groups is only possible when there is peace. So, we initiated several activities to promote peace in the community. Civil society groups undertook dialogue engagements, capacity building of young people and women, and the changing of perceptions.

This is what we did in our way. However, concerning the negotiation processes, civil society groups did not participate. Perhaps our presence could have built trust among the parties. We could have also guided the parties and created confidence in the process. This for me was a major gap. They did not need to involve all the civil society groups, but having a representative was important because every day we talk with the parties and the people in the community.

It appears from Raymond's excerpt that CSOs enjoyed a certain level of credibility from the parties and in the Kingdom in general, and the Committee could have leveraged this strength by including them during the negotiation processes.

Several participants also expressed that the involvement of CSOs would have enhanced the Committee's work, and that these groups would have provided the Committee with technical support in terms of research, communication, and mediation. Banzema, a civil society activist expressed that the CEC did not leverage on the strength of CSOs to enhance the negotiation processes. He articulated this concern in the following terms:

**Banzema:** I have to be honest with you, they, I mean the CECs and the other negotiators treated the process as a secret. If you look at the CSOs in the region, many of them are engaged in peacebuilding. We recognize that without peace, we cannot undertake our advocacy and capacity building activities. So, from the work we have done, we have gained the trust of the people and the two Gates. When we call them for workshops, they come in their numbers, they listen to us and engage us.

So, we were expecting that the CECs will leverage on this strength and include us in the process. That was not done for a reason, I do not know. For me, that was one of the challenges. In mediation you will also require people with the insight you know, and they will always require people who can advise, give the guidance you know, to be able to navigate the process. This was not present in the work of CECs, and the engagement of CSOs could have addressed these gaps.

Obviously, the non-involvement of CSOs from within the Dagbon Kingdom in the negotiation processes was a missed opportunity for the CEC to tap into the technical capabilities of these organizations.

Other participants argued that it was not feasible to include the participation of young people, women, and civil society groups in the negotiation processes for several reasons. For instance, Mohammed is a peace activist. He noted the following in his narrative:

**Mohammed:** Hmmm, women, children, the core, I mean the root cause of the problem was hinged on, hmmm, were on this: one was the funeral and two was the enskinment. I mean the division of skins amongst royals; divisional skins and others among royals. And Dagbon traditional processes do not involve children, do not involve women, and do not involve youth. Whatever decision that the leadership takes, it is presupposed that the women and the youth will welcome it.

And so, in that process, the interest of the women, children and youth was also part of the resolutions. One was the performance of the funeral, and two was the equitable sharing of the divisional skins. Do you understand?

Mohammed recognized that when it comes to Dagbon's culture and custom, issues concerning tradition and chieftaincy, the views of women, young people, and civil society groups among others are not crucial factors in the decision-making process. Yahaya narrated that the participation of this category of people in the peace processes could be construed as superficial:

**Yahaya:** So, the youth were only involved when there was cultural or historical rhetoric. They were involved; there were some youth groups, voluntary youth groups were asked "how this"? And then they do research and get back to inform them. But in terms of engaging youth groups directly in the negotiation process, or children or women, that was absent. The civil society was also involved but not in the direct negotiations.

But they were involved in the sensitization process. I mean, in the communities at the community level. The youth groups aligned to the parties were engaged not to always use press releases as a medium to address their issues. And also, opportunities were created for them to cross-check rumours that were emanating from the process. And so, this is how the whole thing worked. But looking at the root cause and the major cause of the Dagbon Chieftaincy conflict, the best to do was the higher-level engagement and the rest will trickle down to the youth, the women and the children.

It appears from Yahaya's comment above that the issues that were addressed during the negotiation processes centred on the major causes of the conflict and required a higher-level

engagement. Decisions made at this level trickled down to these groups that were engaged in the process indirectly, but not directly.

Other participants concluded that groups such as young people, women, children, civil society among others should simply support the implementation of the Roadmap based on the information communicated to them. A religious leader in the Kingdom, Rodrigue elaborates this point:

**Rodrigue:** Indeed, they are just implementers, they are just implementers. They are just to engage and tell them that this is what happened, and in telling them you should be able to package it a way that they will understand it, you get me right? Do you understand it? Then you will just come and throw on the information on them.

So, as a result, I could say we were packaging, whatever they come, we have to package it, at the end of the timeline, whatever they have said, at the end of the day, it is about peace and nothing but peace, you must accept it so.

Rodrigue articulated that women, young people, children, and other segments of the society were only recipients of information regarding the decisions that were taken. Also, these groups were only involved in some stages of the implementation processes.

## 7.6. Findings

The first section of this chapter presented a snapshot of participants' perspectives on the management of the first Dagbon peace Roadmap and underscored some of the proffered reasons for the deadlock. In this section, I present the emerging issues from the responses of participants delineated into themes as follows: (1) participation and inclusion, (2) the structure of the Roadmap, (3) the bottlenecks in the mediation talks, (4) the timing of the negotiation processes, (5) the secretive nature of negotiators during mediation talks, and (6) the obstacles in the implementation phase.

First, the participation and inclusion phase was uneven. The findings suggest that the failure to create the space for the participation of young people, women's groups, children, religious groups, and CSOs in negotiations was a contributory factor to the deadlock of the peace processes. Participants explained that although each of the aforementioned groups experienced the conflict differently, they constitute a critical social capital, and as such their direct inclusion would have positively enhanced the outcome of the processes. Many participants were also of

the opinion that the Committee could have leveraged the social capital of these groups to positively impact particularly the mediation talks.

The participants noted that young people were, for instance, being mobilized by the leaders of both Gates, politicians, and conflict contractors to engage in violence. Since young people served as the livewire for the continuity of the conflict, their direct inclusion in the peace processes would have been essential to de-escalating it. Likewise, young people in Dagbon constitute a large segment of the society and, therefore, have a major influence on the direction of the peace processes. Excluding them was not only a denial of their right to participation but it was also a missed opportunity to guarantee their commitment to the processes as well as in changing their attitudes toward the peace processes and conflict in general.

Moreover, the participants argued that Dagbon's women were most affected during the outbreak of the conflict. They intimated that women experienced the conflict differently as they play diverse roles in the continuity of the conflict. Directly engaging women would have formed a critical component of the peace processes in identifying their needs, and the role they could play in moving the peace processes forward. Again, this opportunity was missed because, in the course of the negotiation processes and talks, women were not directly included. This was due to the nature of the patriarchal system in the community that promotes male privilege and relegates women to a second-class status.

What is deduced from participants' responses is that these CSOs have a certain pedigree and influence in Dagbon because of their long history in the community, and the work they have done and continue to do. CSOs have worked with both Gates and with different segments of the society including women, young people, and opinion leaders, and as such, they have gained some trust and respect in the society. The inclusion of CSOs would not only have promoted confidence in the peace processes, but provided an opportunity for the Committee to access technical support. These CSOs could have also served as neutral third parties to monitor compliance.

The failure to include these groups directly in the peace processes was explained from two perspectives. In the first place, Dagbon culture is highly patriarchal and hierarchical. Decisions about traditions and chieftaincy are made by the society's elders who are predominantly men. Women and young people are neither welcome nor included when such decisions are being made. There were assumptions among some elders that because the issues

under consideration were traditional and political decision making required a higher-level engagement and to that end, the direct inclusion of other groups, characterized as passive recipients of these decisions (and to some extent, as the implementers), was considered irrelevant. This means that the system only empowers men while other diverse groups are excluded and are on the margins of the society, and as such, it is not very democratic.

The consequence of this power asymmetry was a missed opportunity for the peace processes to address the unique concerns of these groups, as well as to leverage their expertise, experiences, and influence in a democratic process. Above all else, it was a missed opportunity to mobilize the public support necessary for the success of the peace processes and the Roadmap to peace, and it eventually contributed to the deadlock.

In a summary, the public were not directly involved in the negotiation processes; they were only informed of the processes through press releases by the Gates (and even these apparently did not always fully represent what was discussed at the negotiation table). The Gates, after every negotiation stage, presented alternative narratives about the negotiation discussions and decisions. As such, the public were not properly informed of the decisions that were made during the talks. To a large extent, the mediation committee treated the process as confidential and, therefore, did not consider it imperative to move the society along by involving them as well as communicating key decisions. The communication gap during the negotiation processes, however, further contributed to the collapse of the Roadmap.

Second, the structure of the Roadmap was inadequate. The structure of the Dagbon Roadmap to peace was identified in this research as a contributory factor to the failure of the peace processes. In this regard the participants indicated both unclear or vague provisions (inviting overly subjective interpretations and abuse of the Roadmap) and the unhelpful arrangement or ordering of the provisions or activities in the Roadmap (contributing to reinforcement). The unclear and vague contents in the Roadmap provided the opportunity for their overly subjective interpretations and abuse. Also, the unhelpful arrangement or ordering of the Roadmap's provisions contributed to the local people's entrenchment regarding the implementation of the Roadmap. The cumulative effect of the nature and structure of the Roadmap was that some actors used the opportunity to ensconce their powers, abuse the process, and be averse to compromise to allow for the successful implementation of the Roadmap.

When the contents or provisions of a peace agreement or accord are not clear, the potential for different meanings and interpretations abounds, as well as the possibility of subsequent abuse and power grab by some unscrupulous leaders. When this happens during the implementation process, the roadmap is likely to fail, as was the case with the Dagbon peace processes, and the Roadmap to peace.

Likewise, the Roadmap's provisions were politically inclined. The Roadmap's contents were fashioned to only address political issues and power-sharing between both Gates. What this meant was that other critical areas (socio-psychological) that affected some segments of the society were not given the much needed attention. The Roadmap was therefore discriminatory and exclusionary. Peace agreements that are discriminatory, and do not include the concerns of women, children, young people, and the marginalized, do not receive the support of the entire society.

Third, bottlenecks developed within the mediation talks. It is inferred from the participant comments that during the conduct of the mediation talks between the Gates, several bottlenecks not only delayed the talks but also influenced the outcome of the peace processes. The participants identified three bottlenecks. One, a lack of understanding of the details of Dagbon's culture and tradition, including the Chieftaincy institution, among the mediation Committee hampered effective communication amongst all of the stakeholders during the mediation talks. This situation in part was the result of inadequate representation on the committee. During the mediation process, this gap was exploited by both Gates who resorted to providing different perspectives and meanings to the traditions and customs regarding the Dagbon Chieftaincy.

Two, the absence of a technical support team for the mediation talks was problematic. A technical support team with relevant knowledge about Dagbon and the Dagbon Chieftaincy institution's history, traditions, and customs would have provided accurate information to the Committee during the mediation talks. This team could have steered the Gates' narratives in more precise directions, limiting the peddling of falsehoods and untruths during the mediation talks.

Three, it appears from the data that the Gates did not fully understand the CEC's objective, and for that matter the Committee's entire mediation efforts. Demands and expectations which did not fall within the ambit of the Committee's mandate made it problematic for the mediation talks to proceed smoothly.

In sum, the participants' comments lead us to understand how certain obstacles during the mediation talks of the Dagbon peace processes negatively impacted their outcome as well as contributed to their deadlock.

Fourth, the timing was wrong for the resolution of the conflict. Identifying the right time and the correct entry point for the initiation and implementation of a peace process is crucial for its success or failure. Parties in a conflict must, within the conflict cycle, recognize the need for peace and allow for the successful initiation and implementation of a peace process. The participants were of the opinion how the point in time when the first Roadmap was initiated and began implementation was not conducive, considering that the parties were not ready for peace due to four key reasons.

In the first place, negative emotions were still very high especially on the Andani side of the two Gates. The peace processes were initiated in 2006, four years after the killing of their King, and as a result, they went to the negotiation table still traumatized and angry. They also considered it unacceptable to sit at the same table and to negotiate with the killers of their King. They had as their top-most priority at this point, a strong need for the killers of the Yaa-Naa to be found, to be prosecuted, and for justice to prevail. The pain, hurt, emotions, and trauma that this party had experienced made it difficult for them to allow for the continuity of the process, even after the implementation of the first two provisions of the Roadmap. What is paramount for parties that suffer a trauma such as a murder is to revenge the wrong either directly or indirectly.

Also, both parties harboured fears that the rival could betray them, and abuse the provisions of the Roadmap. For instance, while the Andanis feared that the Abudus would not exit the sacred room after performing the funeral of their father, the Abudu Gate also worried that the Andani Gate was deliberating taking steps to make their Gate extinct. Historical betrayal and abuse that had characterized the conflict created such fear, and as such, each party considered it a risky venture granting the opponent any leeway as it could result in their losing out on their rightful heritage; "give them an inch and they will take everything."

In addition, one party to the conflict, the Andani Gate, did not trust the state and state actors at the time because the King was killed under the watch of the NPP regime/government. As such, the state's failure to act swiftly to avert the March 2002 clashes between the two Gates coupled with the circumstances prior to the killing of the Chief, further depreciated their confidence in the government. In other words, the Andanis did not consider the state a neutral

entity capable of assuming a neutral position when it came to the implementation of the Roadmap.

Finally, the parties' exuberance, coupled with their energy and belief that they were capable of winning the battle, did not ameliorate the already dire situation, which was also buttressed by external political guarantors who provided support to the parties. It can be concluded that the factors above created a conflict condition that was not ripe for the initiation and implementation of the Dagbon Roadmap I.

Fifth, the position of the negotiators during the mediation process were hazy and unclear. The participants suggested that the negotiators' position representing both Gates was not clear during the mediation talks, and that this contributed to the deadlock of the Dagbon peace processes. Participants highlighted two issues in this regard: (1). The negotiators could not make firm decisions during the mediation talks (indeed, they did not always have the power to do so, as they required the blessing of Kingmakers), resulting in some shifting of decisions and (2) The negotiators selectively interpreted the issues underpinning the conflict during the mediation talks, making it difficult for the CEC to identify common ground. The latter element was exacerbated when both Gates provided different narratives during the mediation talks. These strategies were adopted by the Gates to make their stories appear more legitimate to the society and the general public. The failure of the Gates to see things from a common perspective, in fact, made it difficult for the CEC to make progress during the mediation talks, and this largely contributed to the deadlock in the peace processes.

Sixth, obstacles emerged in the implementation of the Roadmap processes. The participants indicated that deficiencies within the implementation the peace processes and first Roadmap processes also accounted for the deadlock. Four deficiencies were outlined in their stories.

To begin, the participants noted that in the initial stages of the implementation of the Roadmap to peace, both Gates disagreed over some of the provisions, and did not achieve a common ground about the implementation of the provisions in respect of the conduct of Yaa-Naa Mahamadu Abudulai IV's funeral. Moreover, some participants cited that there was a skewed implementation of the Roadmap at the initial stages, as one party was viewed as benefiting more from the process. The delay in the implementation of the other provisions after the first two

coupled with Andani Regent remaining as the skin for more than 10 years made the Abudu Gate conclude that the Roadmap was developed to favour only the Andani Gate.

In addition, the participants argued that the provisions did not have concrete, clear, and appropriate timelines for implementation, which opened up the process to abuse by both Gates. As a result, the Gates did not commit themselves to the implementation of the Roadmap and eventually disregarded even those provisions that had specific timelines.

Finally, there were no implemented mechanisms and structures (e.g., council, neutral third party) to monitor compliance during the implementation of the first Roadmap to peace. Likewise, the Roadmap did not assign any serious responsibility to the state in this regard and created a situation that was very prone to individual biases and exploitation.

These hurdles together resulted in the delay in the implementation of the Roadmap and allowed for its abuse and the subsequent degeneration into distrust for the accord and the implementation processes. The consequence was a massive deadlock after the implementation of the first two provisions of the Roadmap.

## **7.7. Conclusion**

How peace processes are managed, from conceptualization to implementation, has a bearing on their outcomes. Chapter seven provided the participants' perspectives about how the management of the Dagbon peace processes contributed to their deadlock. Their comments in this regard focused on the negotiation processes, the Roadmap provisions, implementation, and participation.

Six key themes emerged to represent the participants' comments: (1) participation and inclusion, (2) clarity of some provisions of the Roadmap, (3) bottlenecks in the mediation talks, (4) the timing of the negotiation processes, (5) the forthrightness of the negotiators, and (6) implementation obstacles. The consensus that is inferred from these key findings is that there were challenges with the management of the Dagbon peace processes that impacted negatively on the outcome of the entire peace processes including the deadlock that was experienced from 2006 to 2018. As such, it can be concluded that peace processes that are not properly conceptualized, planned, and implemented, and that do not include representation of all segments of the community are on a collision course with failure.

## Chapter 8

### Overall key findings, recommendations, and conclusions

#### **8.1. Introduction**

Chapter eight summarizes the findings and makes some recommendations and conclusions.

Following the introduction, I provide an overview of the study, a summary of the study's overall key findings, recommendations for policy and future research, limitations, and conclusions, respectively.

#### **8.2. Overview of the study**

Negotiated peace processes have, over the past three decades, become the most acceptable means of resolving violent conflicts and have generated a lot of interest within academic and policy circles in understanding what drives the success and failure of peace processes. For instance, several studies using case studies have been conducted in countries that implemented negotiated peace settlements (see Ozerdem & Mac Ginty, 2019). Recognizing that the contexts of conflict differ, it is important to conduct more research on conflict contexts that have successfully initiated and implemented negotiated peace processes to understand how context-specific conditions drive the success or otherwise of these peace processes (see Byrne, 2001). This study contributes to this objective.

The purpose of this study was to, first, identify the factors that accounted for the deadlock of the first Dagbon peace processes and second, interrogate how these factors influenced the deadlock of the peace processes (2006-2018) in Ghana's Northern Region. The study set out to achieve three objectives: (1) to discuss how the management of the Dagbon peace processes influenced the outcome of Dagbon Roadmap I; (2) to examine how the conflict environment influenced the outcome of Dagbon Roadmap I; and (3) to identify the actions of third parties and party politics, and how they contributed to the outcome of the peace processes. A critical ethnographic case study approach was adopted, which was informed by the post-positivist paradigm. Data was collected from 63 participants using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, and an inductive thematic analysis approach was deployed. The overall key findings are highlighted below.

### **8.3. Overall key findings**

The participants' perspectives highlighted several contributing factors to the deadlock. Key findings emerging from these narratives include the following: (1) the motivation of the parties to continue the conflict, (2) the people's lack of confidence in the Peace Processes, (3) the lack of public and popular support for the Peace Processes, (4) the socio-psychological environment, (5) the content of the Roadmap, (6) the weak implementation of the Roadmap, (7) the centrality of Dagbon's culture and traditions in the negotiation processes, and (8) the absence of internal leadership.

#### ***8.3.1. Motivation of the parties to continue the conflict***

In the initial stages of the peace processes, both Gates were motivated to continue with the conflict, and did not consider the peace processes as an alternative or wish to arrive at a compromise during the negotiation and implementation. The presence of allies or external sponsors, the benefits being accrued and enjoyed by some parties due to the protracted conflict, and the polarized nature of the society at the time bolstered the parties' motivation to continue it.

The external support that both Gates drew from their allies bolstered their confidence in winning the conflict through violence. This confirms other research suggestion that the presence of allies in peace processes can exacerbate conflict especially when such support seeks to help one party to the disadvantage of the other to tilt the balance of power (see Mac Ginty & Ozerdem, 2019; Podder, 2019; Turner, 2019; Kriesberg, 1998; Bose, 2007; Pruitt & Kim, 2004; Ramsbotham et al., 2016; Mitchell, 2014).

Moreover, the Andani Gate benefitted from the duration and continuity of the conflict (specifically, power associated with the Skin occupancy), and from this perspective, supporting and honouring the peace processes would jeopardize the benefits that they derived from it. Implementing the Roadmap to the latter would entail the Kamkpakuya-Na stepping down for a new Yaa-Naa to be enskinned and forfeiting the benefits that came with it. This was a difficult situation, which had a direct impact on the success of the implementation of the Roadmap.

Some frontline actors from both Gates, stakeholders with vested interests, also benefitted from the protraction of the conflict. These interests considered the implementation of the peace processes to be a threat to their status and power (see Mac Ginty & Ozerdem, 2019; Kieh, 2011; Connolly & Maina, 2016; von Hehn, 2011; Stedman, 2000; Westendorf, 2015).

In addition, in the initial stages of the implementation of the peace processes, both Gates had support within Dagbon's general population. The community, especially the youth, was highly polarized and sharply divided along the two Gates. Many tied their security to identifying with either of the two Gates and, therefore, were ready to defend and protect their ethnic identity by confronting all situations that were considered a threat to that identity, including attempts to deny them the opportunity of occupying the skin. Strong public support fueled the confidence of both Gates that they were capable of winning the conflict and outdoing their rival. Societies that are highly polarized and sharply divided among conflicting parties are motivations for the conflict parties to continue the dispute (see Reyhler & Langer, 2003).

Both Gates, therefore, had both similar and different motivations to continue the conflict and not to honour the Dagbon peace processes thereby contributing to its deadlock. Where parties in conflict identify opportunities for continuing the dispute, and they do not support peace processes, these processes often result in failure (see Westendorf, 2015). This also resonates with Zartman's theory of readiness with a specific focus on the motivation to engage in further hostilities (see Zartman, 1989, as cited in Pruitt, 2007, p. 1525).

### ***8.3.2. Confidence in the peace processes***

A second emerging issue from the data is that the parties did not place any confidence in the peace processes themselves (as helping them to reach their own goals and interests), contributing to the erosion of their commitment to the peace accord. Strategies to build the confidence of the two Gates and the general public in this regard (that could have been implemented by third parties) were lacking. This finding augments the literature that confidence-building strategies are an integral part of a conflict resolution process and are significant in the development, signing, and implementation of peace agreements (see Ozerdem & Mac Ginty, 2019, p. 345). Including third parties at the early stages of a peace process helps to address security and political dilemmas which restore confidence and build trust in the processes, contributing to their sustainability (see Hampson, 1996; Tonge, 2014; Mason & Siegfried, 2013).

Indeed, the state - the major third party in the Dagbon conflict and the peace processes – in this case failed to provide the necessary security and political guarantees for the implementation of the first Roadmap to peace. Historical relations between the two Gates were characterized by betrayal, and this embedded a sense of insecurity within the peace process as well as distrust and fear, eroding people's confidence and commitment to the process. What was

needed was for the state to allay these fears and uncertainties by providing the needed security guarantees (see Walter, 1997). Moreover, the state failed to provide any political assurances or guarantees to the feuding parties that their respective goals would be reached or achieved. This resulted in anxiety and uncertainty in the parties and eroded their commitment to the peace processes and Roadmap, culminating in their unwillingness to compromise and honour the agreement (see Stedman, 2002; Walter, 1997).

Likewise, CSOs which could have generated confidence in the parties and the peace accord were not directly involved in the processes. These organizations, as non-state actors, would have been especially important since the state was not considered credible and neutral by the parties (see Nilsson, 2012; Paffenholz, 2010; Nilsson, 2018). However, mediation processes did not create the space for CSOs' direct involvement.

In short, absent were political and security guarantees that could have bolstered the parties' confidence in the peace processes, and assured them that the peace processes would help them to attain their goals. The absence of confidence-building strategies detracted from the parties' support of the processes and the peace agreement they signed, resulting in uncertainty about the future of the Roadmap and its outcomes. This culminated in the deadlock that beleaguered the peace process between 2006 and 2018.

### ***8.3.3. Public and popular support***

Third, the lack of societal support and endorsement was considered as contributing to the deadlock of the Dagbon peace processes. It was difficult to mobilize societal support for the processes in part because of the lack of involvement of young people, women and religious groups, and other CSOs in the dialogue, negotiation, and implementation stages of the processes. The elitist focus (engaging only the elders of both Gates) was complemented by the Roadmap's focus only on political settlements, and the highly polarized nature of Dagbon society at the time.

The patriarchal and hierarchical nature of Dagbon society did not create the space for the active involvement and representation of young people, women and religious groups, as well as other civil society groups in the negotiation, dialogue, and implementation phases of the peace processes. These were undertaken only by the elders of the society, and they were treated as highly confidential with little or no effort made at moving the general Dagbon society along by directly involving them in the peace processes.

In essence the opportunity was not created for the direct participation and inclusion of a critical mass of Dagbon's society. It is inferred from the interviewees that the formal involvement of women, young people, religious, and other civil society groups in the negotiation processes was not considered crucial to the process. This finding is in line with the argument that involving civil society groups in peace negotiations would have afforded the negotiators the opportunity to be transparent and would have helped in addressing the specific needs of these groups, to the end of mobilizing support, endorsing legitimacy, impacting the quality and durability of the peace processes, and increasing the chance of a successful peace agreement (see Krause et al., 2018; Nilsson, 2012; Belloni, 2008; Jastard & Sisk, 2008; Wanis-St. John & Kew, 2008).

Likewise, the negotiation processes were focused on political settlements with little or no attention to the socio-psychological aspects of the conflict such as trust, memory, truth, victimhood, and the role of civil society groups. Nowhere in the Roadmap is mention made of women, youth, or civil society groups nor were any attempts made at addressing the specific needs of these groups. This finding augments the position that agreements that are elite-driven and focused on political settlements reduce the opportunity for the unique needs of different segments of the society to be addressed (see Krause et al., 2018). The individual experiences of people during times of conflict differ, and as such, involving different segments of society in peace processes allows for a more than adequate capturing of the specific experiences, creativity and knowledge of all segments of the society (see Cohen, 2013). Nevertheless, many segments of Dagbon society were first seen as victims and subsequently as recipients of the decisions that were taken by the elders during the negotiation processes.

Further, the highly polarized Dagbon society characterized by individuals aligning themselves to either of the Gates took a toll on the general public's support that was required for the entire peace processes and made it difficult to galvanize efforts. In conflict zones that are highly polarized, it is difficult to mobilize the necessary societal and popular support for the implementation of peacebuilding efforts .

The failure to involve different segments of the society - women, young people, religious groups, and other civil society groups - coupled with the focus of the Roadmap on political settlements and the polarized state of Dagbon society made it difficult to mobilize the needed societal and popular support for the peace processes, and contributed to the deadlock of the first

Roadmap to peace. This observation resonates with the argument that popular response - a popular desire for peace - is required for a successful peace process to happen (see Darby & Mac Ginty, 2000). This is not unlike case studies on peace processes of the world including Northern Ireland, South Africa, Sri Lanka, among others, where it was found that it was difficult to mobilize popular support for peace processes in cases that had a low popular response; a factor which ultimately affected these peace processes (see Darby & Mac Ginty, 2000).

Whereas the study findings and the literature both convey the relevance of popular support and mobilization for peace process successes, there is divergence on what constitutes popular response and support. The literature on popular response focuses on public opinion, on the acceptance of peace processes, and the relevance of peace processes to everyday living. However, this study's findings conceptualize popular response and support from the perspective of polarization, the needs of different segments of society, and their full participation.

#### ***8.3.4. Socio-psychological environment***

Fourth, the data indicates that the socio-psychological environment of the Dagbon conflict was characterized by mistrust, high emotions, grief, revenge investments, habituation, and hatred, which impeded the initiation and implementation of the Dagbon peace processes. As such, prevailing socio-psychological conditions did not create the right space and timing for the peace processes to take place or to be successful (see Zartman, 2008; Darby & Mac Ginty, 2008; Bar-Tal, 2013; Kelman, 2009).

The emotions and hurt that the Andanis brought to the dialogue complicated the negotiation process with the Abudu Gate. With such pent-up emotions, pain, and grief on one side, it was difficult to dialogue with a rival Gate, which failed to even acknowledge the murder. This finding confirms that position that when individuals or groups are hurt and are not encouraged to express their emotions and helped to overcome these emotions and pain, a difficulty is created for the initiation and implementation of peace processes (see Kriesberg & Dayton, 2012; Stimec, et al., 2011).

Likewise, mistrust between both Gates was a socio-psychological barrier that impeded the negotiation, dialogue, and implementation of the peace processes. This mistrust resulted from historical relations and experiences that were characterized by violence, counterattacks, and the failure of both Gates to adhere to previous agreements and peace accords. This is consistent with the literature that historical relations between parties can influence the outcome of a conflict

resolution process (see Byrne, 2017b; Bercovitch & Houston, 1996). When peace processes are initiated within a conflict context defined by violence, there is a minimal chance that the outcome will be successful.

Mistrust between the two Gates brought with it the fear of threats to their goals, interests, and ambitions as well as to their identity. The Gates were, therefore, not willing to take any risks as the existing mistrust led to the development of perceptions that either party could behave negatively in the future; they therefore did not engage meaningfully in the implementation of the Roadmap. These findings support Bar-Tal's (2013) position that mistrust (distrust) between parties in a conflict situation makes it difficult for the parties to communicate meaningfully in the conflict resolution processes, and this can derail the peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Both of these socio-psychological barriers in particular made it difficult for the Gates to compromise on the key issues that underpinned the conflict, and resulted in disagreements during the negotiation processes on specific provisions in the Roadmap and how such provisions should be implemented. Also, these barriers resulted in the Gates and the general public becoming entrenched in specific dogmatic or one-sided narratives and beliefs. Groups were generally unwilling to incorporate new information or narratives which were required for the negotiation and dialogue processes to be successful (see Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011; Hameiri et al., 2014).

In unsupportive socio-psychological environments, the chance for a peace process to be successful is limited. The socio-psychological environment of the Dagbon conflict raises the fundamental question of the timing of the negotiation processes; findings from this study are in line with some of the Elizabeth Kubler-Ross' findings on "Grief theory." The emotions of the conflict parties is a reflection of the pain and hurt that they have experienced (see Pruitt, 2007; Stimec, et al., 2011; Kübler-Ross, 2009).

### ***8.3.5. Structure of the Roadmap***

Fifth, the data further reveals that the Roadmap's peace structure that was signed by both Gates contributed to the peace processes deadlock. Four issues within the Roadmap structure were identified as problematic in this regards: (1) the ambiguity of some of the provisions of the Roadmap (creating room for the entrenchment of differing interpretations and abuse of the peace processes: see Doyle & Sambanis, 2006; Maina, 2016; Rothchild, 2002) and their political rather than social focus; (2) the absence of a credible enforcement authority; (3) the absence of sanctions; and (4) the lack of timelines.

In particular, it should be noted that the provisions were politically inclined, in that, the focus of the Roadmap's provisions was on the political settlement of the conflict with no attention paid to the social fabric of Dagbon society which could hold the people together. Issues relating to reconciliation, hurt, fear, trauma, and grievances were not addressed in the Roadmap (see Mac Ginty, 2018; Ozerdem & Mac Ginty, 2019). The provisions directly targeted the leaders of both Gates - the elites of the Kingdom - and was based on the false assumption that once the leaders of the two Gates are satisfied, then the peace processes would be successful. Indeed, the high-power asymmetrical distance structure of Dagbon stipulated the placement of older men at the forefront of the negotiation processes and as such the processes were tailored towards male power and political gains. This explains why there were no provisions to address the socio-psychological fabric of the society, a weakness that can destabilize an entire peacebuilding effort (see Bar-Tal et al., 2010; Brewer, 2010; Hameiri et al., 2014).

Additionally, assigning timelines to peace agreement provisions helps to commit all the stakeholders to the implementation of the peace agreements (see Reyhler, 2015). Yet the development of the Dagbon Roadmap to peace without smart and concrete timelines opened it up to abuse by the Gates (e.g., Kamkpakuya-Naa remaining on the skin as Regent for more than a decade).

Although others have argued that it is not always in the best interest of peace processes to be rigid (see Hampson, 1996), assigning timelines helps to hold stakeholders responsible and accountable, and allows for easy monitoring of compliance. In other words, my own interpretation is that having concrete timelines are helpful in the implementation processes (see Reyhler, 2015).

Moreover, the Roadmap did not have a credible enforcement authority to monitor compliance. Nowhere in the Roadmap was the state nor any other agency assigned that responsibility. Although others argue that the state, by default, was the only third party to provide that enforcement, the long involvement of the state in the conflict as an ally to either of the Gates - depending on which political party is in power - made it difficult for the state to remain a neutral third party that enforced compliance. The Roadmap did not outline the role of the state with regards to the monitoring of compliance (the closest was the provision for the formation of the CEC to monitor the traditional and cultural aspects of the Roadmap; this Council was never constituted).

Other potential credible enforcing authorities such as CSOs and the NPC were not assigned any role in the Roadmap. Likewise, the Roadmap did not contain sanctions that were to be applied to non-compliance. The absence of a credible enforcement authority and deterring clauses in the Dagbon Roadmap to peace created the opportunity for both Gates to abuse the entire peace processes. Peace agreements that have a credible enforcement authority, which is empowered to monitor compliance, stand a better chance of being durable and sustainable (see Hampson, 1996).

Obviously, one of the reasons for the Dagbon peace processes deadlock was the Roadmap's structure that feeds into the thesis that peace agreements that are not properly designed are more likely to fail (see Hampson, 1996; Ozerdem & Mac Ginty, 2019; Westendorf, 2015). While the research findings of this study, and the existing literature, seem to conclude that a peace agreement's structure is a potential determinant of the success or failure of a peace process, there are variations in delineating the key aspects of a peace agreement's structure, which determine its success or failure. For instance, in terms of participation, the literature focuses on the inclusion of all primary elite actors in the conflict, while this research suggests on that marginalized groups in society must also be included in a multi-track peace process. This study also raises issues about the quality of the leaders that are involved in peace negotiations (see Byrne, 2017a). Also, regarding the key provisions, the literature tends to focus on elite power-sharing, while this research is interested in the provisions that address the needs of all segments of society.

#### ***8.3.6. Implementation of the Roadmap***

Sixth, the participants' comments helped us understand how deficiencies in the implementation of the Roadmap contributed to the peace processes' deadlock. This position is in line with the argument that simply signing or committing oneself to a peace process is not enough indication that the process would be successful. What is crucial is the implementation of the peace process to the satisfaction of the parties and other stakeholders. Deficiencies in the implementation process, therefore, tend to affect entire peace processes and this was no different in the Dagbon case (see Stedman, 2002).

These deficiencies included disagreements about how some of the provisions should be implemented, as noted earlier, that resulted in the withdrawal of some of the parties from the peace processes and, eventually, delayed their implementation (see Colchester et al., 2020).

Another deficiency was the perception that the implementation was skewed in favour of one party over the other. Establishing transparency in the processes would have induced confidence in the parties, and signaled that the Roadmap would be fair and not be used as a conduit to favour one party over the other (see DeRouen et al., 2010; Maina, 2016).

Moreover, the state and the CEC were not forceful in ensuring the full implementation of the Roadmap. The state could provide the needed resources to enforce the implementation of the Roadmap, but it was unwilling to commit itself because of the fear of reprisal attacks and the political suicide of the government. In addition, the failure of the Roadmap to outline the specific roles of the state in the implementation phase resulted in the state excusing itself and opting out of the processes. In essence, the credible enforcement authority that was required to compel the implementation of the Roadmap was lacking (see DeRouen et al., 2010; Hampson, 1996). A decisive authority or third party can ensure that terms of peace agreements are adhered to by all parties and implemented accordingly. Credible third parties in the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict include the CSOs, religious leaders, UNDP, and the Regional House of Chiefs.

Failing to take the necessary steps to address deficiencies in the implementation stages negatively affected the Dagbon peace processes. After the implementation of the Roadmap's first two provisions in 2006, all of the other provisions were not implemented until November 2018 when a new Roadmap was signed and implemented in December 2018. This conclusion confirms that argument that, to ensure peace agreements are successful and the necessary impact made in Dagbon, deficiencies within the implementation processes need to be adequately addressed by the Mediation Committee and other credible third parties such as CSOs and religious leaders (see Stedman, 2002).

#### ***8.3.7. The centrality of culture and tradition***

A seventh consideration indicated in the participants' narratives was how the culture and tradition of the conflict context shapes peace processes and outcomes. Peace processes must be undertaken based on, and guided by the culture of the conflict context; as a result those that are not culturally sensitive stand the chance of failing (see Avruch, 2012; Brigg, 2008; d'Estrée & Parsons, 2018; Bräuchler, 2015; LeBaron, 2014; Pillay & Lebaron, 2006).

In Dagbon, the culture and traditions, especially those connected to the chieftaincy institution were influential in the initiation, negotiation, dialogue, and implementation stages of the peace processes. The entire peace processes were anchored on Dagbon's culture and

traditions. The terms and conditions of the work of the CEC, for example, clearly stated that the Committee must conduct the negotiation processes within Dagbon's culture and traditions.

All of the Roadmap's provisions were developed using the culture, customs, and traditions of the Dagbon Chieftaincy. In addition, Provision B of the Roadmap proposed the establishment of a Council of Elders to oversee the traditional aspects of the peace processes (see Avruch, 1998, 2012; Brigg, 2008; Lebaron, 2003; Lebaron & Pillay, 2006; Lee, 2019; Ozerdem & Lee, 2015).

There were, however, several instances where Dagbon's culture and traditions were not adequately integrated into the peace processes, such that the approach to resolving the conflict was considered alien to Dagbon's known cultural structures (most notably, Dagbon's chieftaincy conflicts were traditionally mediated by the Nayiri, whom many participants viewed as the appropriate third-party option). Taking the conflict to a third party that was not sanctioned by Dagbon's culture and tradition was considered disrespectful to Dagbon's identity and status. This conclusion augments that argument that the selection of a third party for the negotiation of a peace process must be based on the conflict's cultural context, and the parties and general public must accept the third party for the purpose(s) for which it is selected. (see Brett, 2007; de Rivera, 2009; Lebaron, 2003; Pillay & Lebaron, 2006; Lebaron & Pillay, 2006; Lederach, 1995). As espoused by scholars of indigenous peacemaking, the structures, institutions, regulations, and policies adopted to resolve conflicts must mirror the culture and traditions of the conflict context (see Mac Ginty, 2010a; Tolulope & Muthoni, 2017; Wanis-St. John, 2013)

While it is important to use culturally appropriate structures and institutions for the resolution of conflicts, the situation in Dagbon draws the attention of PACS scholars and practitioners to reflect on the application of cultural institutions, norms, and structures in conflict resolution. The protracted nature of the Dagbon conflict had resulted in the traditional and cultural structures becoming part of the conflict web. The cultural and traditional structures became the foundations of the conflict because it was basically about culture, tradition, and elite power. In other words, these structures were compromised and the local community's general trust toward these structures was lost. In abnormal situations like the case of Dagbon, how can cultural and traditional structures be applied in resolving conflicts? In as much as it is imperative to let the culture and traditions of the conflict context guide the peace processes, there are exemptions to this norm.

The CEC did not fully understand Dagbon's culture and traditions and as a result, allowed for the parties to provide different interpretations of the culture, customs, values and traditions governing chieftaincy in Dagbon. Having a mediator that is knowledgeable in the culture and traditions of the conflict context s/he is tasked to mediate is necessary to guide the mediation processes forward, facilitate communication, as well as provide constructive feedback to the conflict parties. Otherwise, it becomes difficult to take pragmatic and timely decisions as well as win the confidence of the parties (see Avruch, 2012; d'Estrée & Parsons, 2018; Brigg, 2008; Lebaron & Pillay, 2006; Byrne, 2017b). As members of the Committee did not have a full grasp of Dagbon's culture and traditions, it became challenging for it to decipher truths from untruths, and it resulted in the delay of the negotiation processes as well as the implementation of the Roadmap.

Likewise, the parties relied on Dagbon's culture and traditions to abuse the peace processes. On several occasions, they rejected some of the decisions that were made during the negotiation stages when those decisions did not follow Dagbon's culture and traditions or they were considered unfavourable to their cause. Thus, parties who share a common culture can also provide different interpretations of their culture that give rise to intracultural encounters with the culture itself becoming the major means through which parties pursue the conflict (see Avruch, 2012; Mac Ginty, 2010a, 2011).

The participants also indicated that Dagbon's culture and traditions especially those surrounding the chieftaincy institution, and chieftaincy governance were discriminatory (see Ateng et al., 2018). As a high-power distance society, Dagbon is characteristically patriarchal and hierarchical where leadership and decisionmaking are the exclusive reserve of old men with little or no direct involvement of women, young people, and other segments of the society. The consequence was the complete exclusion of these marginalized groups from the negotiation processes. Culture can sometimes become a conduit for oppression and discrimination especially in high-power cultures (see Ateng et al., 2018; Lee, 2019; Mac Ginty, 2011; Ozerdem & Lee, 2015; Ramsbotham et al., 2016).

Culture and for that matter Dagbon's traditions and customs guided the negotiation processes and the development of the Roadmap to peace. However, in the selection of the institution and structures for the mediation of the conflict, Dagbon's culture and traditions were not fully considered. Moreover, Dagbon's culture and traditions became the means of

discrimination and abuse of the peace processes. It can, therefore, be inferred that culture is imperative in shaping peace processes, and further that the exclusion of minorities and male abuse during peace processes may result in hurdles in gaining the support of the parties and the general public, and negatively affect their outcome (see Avruch, 2012; Brigg, 2008; Ross, 2007; d'Estrée & Parsons, 2018; Pillay & Lebaron, 2006; Lebaron & Pillay, 2006; de Rivera, 2009).

### ***8.3.8. Internal leadership***

As an eighth point for discussion, a significant finding of this research is that the failure of internal leadership in Dagbon contributed to the peace processes deadlock. The failed internal leadership (e.g., absence of an internal leader at the community level to drive the processes and the fractured leadership structure) in Dagbon contributed to the deadlock. This finding augments the argument that, peace processes are best implemented when there is an internal leader interested in the success of the processes who mobilizes resources and support to implement the process to the satisfaction of all parties. An internal leader who shares the vision of a peaceful society is critical (see Amaladas & Byrne, 2017; Hauss, 2010; Olonisakin, 2012; Zyl, 2019; Miller & Green, 2015; Reyhler & Stellamans, 2003, 2005).

When internal leaders become part of the conflict, agreements are likely to succeed. An internal leader (referred to as a peace leader) who provides purpose and direction during a peace process and shares a vision of peace is important to its success (see Zyl, 2019; Reyhler, 2006; Olonisakin, 2012; Miller & Green, 2015). The leaders must possess good leadership characteristics, specifically pragmatism, resilience, and independence of mind to win the confidence and trust of all the stakeholders in the peace processes (see Byrne, 2017b; Miller & Green, 2015; Reyhler & Stellamans, 2003; Zyl, 2019). The data from this study suggests that Dagbon's internal leadership did not possess these qualities.

Moreover, internal leadership is not only about individual(s), but it also includes the structures and institutions (both modern and traditional) that are established to govern society. These institutions and structures must be seen to be firm, truthful, and candid in discharging their responsibilities. Such an environment contributes to successful implementation of peace processes and agreements (see Olonisakin, 2012, 2017; Reyhler, 2006). It emerged from the study that Dagbon's traditional structures and institutions that were mandated to provide guidance and appropriately interpret Dagbon's culture and traditions were fractured and not trusted by the parties, contributing to the peace process challenges. Internal leadership is,

therefore, imperative for the success of peace processes and agreements. Neutral and capable internal leadership (both individual and institutional) can provide the necessary support for the success of peace processes and agreements; in the absence of this structure, we see the collapse of many peace processes and agreements such as the Dagbon peace processes and agreement.

Reflecting on the eight findings discussed above within the context of the three models elaborated on in Chapter three, the conclusion can be drawn that the kind of approach (peace process model) that is used to guide the design and implementation of a peace process also has a role in determining the outcome of that peace process. The Dagbon Peace Process was designed for a communal conflict, yet it was largely based on some of the tenets of the liberal and realist models of peace processes. The peace processes' focus was on the establishment of Dagbon's political structure (getting a King/Ya-Na for the Kingdom) and addressing the political dimensions of Dagbon's political structure. Also, there was an objective to satisfy all the parties involved in the conflict. As a result, some power-sharing elements were embedded in the process.

However, in designing the Dagbon Peace Process based on the tenets of the liberal and realist peace process models, attention was not given to trust building, fear, insecurity, the effectiveness of the third parties, and the key participants' perceptions. These are imperative conditions that need to be addressed when using liberal and realist models to design peace processes. Moreover, the process did not provide attention to the socio-psychological dimensions of peace processes that are outlined in the social-psychological peace processes model. For instance, mobilizing public support, ensuring grassroots participation, addressing emotions and hurt, promoting reconciliation, among others did not receive the needed attention within the Dagbon Peace Process. Their absence also had an effect on the outcome of the first Dagbon Peace Process.

#### **8.4. A peace process model**

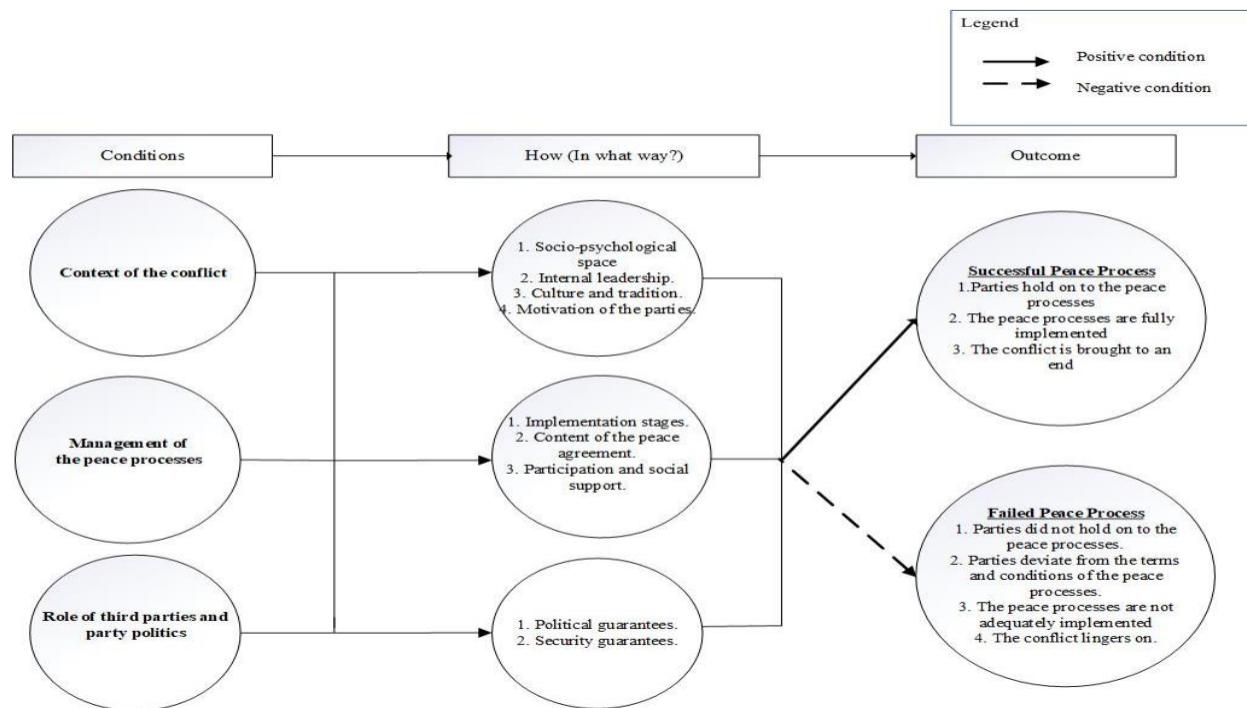
Grounded in the findings of this study, I proffer the following model, the "peace process model" to explain how the context of the conflict, the management of the peace processes, and the role of third parties and party politics influence the outcome of a peace process.

The outcome in this model is defined from two dimensions (failure and success). A failed outcome is defined as the unwillingness of the parties to hold onto the peace processes, the

deviation of the parties from the peace processes, the inadequate implementation of the peace processes, and the lingering on of the conflict. A successful outcome is defined as holding onto the peace processes, the adequate implementation of the peace processes, and the termination of the conflict. In this model, the two outcomes are binary, independent, and do not interact (see Figure 2 below).

**Figure 2:**

A Peace Process Model



**Source:** Derived from the field research (2019).

The model explains that the context of the conflict environment influences the outcome of a peace process through the establishment of a socio-psychological environment, the role of internal leadership, culture and tradition, and the motivation of the parties to continue or end the conflict ( see Figure 2 above). When these factors are in a negative direction, a failed outcome is anticipated. However, when they are defined in a positive direction, a successful outcome is achieved. For example, socio-psychological elements of mistrust and a threatening atmosphere can contribute to the failure of a peace process.

Further, the management of a peace process influences the outcome of a peace process through the implementation of a peace process, the content of a peace agreement, and that of broad participation and social support (see Figure 2 above). Again, when these factors are in a negative direction, a failed outcome is predictable. When these factors are however in a positive direction, a successful outcome is likely to be achieved. For instance, a management process that creates the space for inclusion and participation leads to the likelihood that a peace process will be supported by all segments of society. On the other hand, a management process that excludes a critical segment of the society makes it difficult to mobilize the necessary social support for the peace process and the parties to hold on to the agreement, an indication of the likelihood of the failure of a peace process.

Moreover, the role of third parties and party politics influences the outcome of peace processes through security and political guarantees (see Figure 2 above). Third parties and party politics that ensure the presence of political and security guarantees is likely to produce a successful outcome. On the contrary, when political and security guarantees are not provided by third parties and party politics, a peace process can fail.

The outcome of a peace process is not the consequence of a single factor. It is the interaction of several factors from the three conditions in the model that produces an outcome. For instance, the interaction between culture and tradition, and that of the content of a peace agreement could lead to the subjective interpretations of a peace process. Also, the interaction between the socio-psychological space and political and security guarantees can bring about trust/mistrust in the process. Likewise, the interaction between motivation, participation, and implementation influences the acceptability or otherwise of a peace process. Again, it has to be emphasized that these forces are not arranged in any higher order. Also, it is not the presence of these forces at all material times that an outcome of a peace process is determined.

This model could be used to test the outcome of peace processes in other jurisdictions in Ghana and neighboring countries. The model is developed based on specific and unique factors that are or were at play in the Dagbon Peace Processes. However, the model provides broader level factors/conditions that are helpful in understanding peace processes within other contexts. Again, when the model is compared with the contingency model of mediation (see Bercovitch 1996) there are similarities and differences. In terms of similarities, both models acknowledge the role of third parties (mediators) and the context of the conflict as key determinants of the

outcome of peace processes. Also, both models defined outcome from the dimensions of success and failure. The contingency model, however, limits the process to the behaviour of the mediators, while this model broadly defines process from a management perspective. This model offers a structure to understand how certain conditions influence the outcome of a peace process. Moreover, it offers an opportunity to evaluate and predict the likely outcomes of certain actions during a peace process.

## **8.5. Recommendations**

A peace process is an accumulation of procedures that require constant reflection. It involves considering the stories of stakeholders and learning about best practices and using this knowledge to improve the initiation and implementation of these processes (Senehi, 2002, 2019). The findings of this study underscore certain gaps in the initiation and implementation of the Dagbon peace processes which contributed to the outcome of the first Roadmap. Based on the identified lapses, this section provides a few recommendations for policy and future research, as well as for practice and continuous improvement in the initiation and implementation of peace processes in Dagbon and other communal conflicts in northern Ghana. These include the following:

### ***8.5.1. Promote broad participation and inclusion of different stakeholders***

A future comprehensive peace process for Dagbon or any intercommunal conflict must ensure wide participation of all stakeholders. Although the conflict was about chieftaincy and power, thereby requiring the traditional leaders to be at the forefront of the peace processes, the protracted nature of the conflict had wide effects on all segments of the society. This necessitated direct participation and inclusion of the different segments of the society such as women, religious leaders, civil society, youth groups, business groups, intellectuals, and citizens of Dagbon in the diaspora. These groups should have been consulted and invited to engage directly in the initiation, dialogue, negotiation, and implementation of the peace processes so that their voices can be heard, and their agency empowered. Creating the space and environment for the inclusion and participation of all of Dagbon's groups promotes local ownership of the peace processes, which can contribute to their success.

### ***8.5.2. Expand on issues discussed and captured in the Roadmap***

Likewise, mediators selected to lead the negotiation processes must ensure that future peace processes in Dagbon and beyond focus on critical issues that affect civil society and the marginalized in society. This means extending beyond political solutions to include and address the social-psychological sphere. Mediators must recognize that in any conflict, the experiences and encounters of people differ, so do their needs and aspirations. As such mediators must always undertake a comprehensive analysis of the conflict to identify the needs and aspirations of the different groups in the society and include these groups in the peace processes. Promoting genuine and direct inclusion of the voices, concerns, and needs of the different segments of Dagbon enhances the legitimacy of the peace processes.

### ***8.5.3. Institutionalize confidence-building measures***

A future Dagbon peace process must establish structures and procedures to promote confidence-building in the processes. Cognisant of the fact that the state was not a credible third party to provide the needed confidence-building mechanisms in respect of the Dagbon conflict, it would have been essential to identify and include other third parties such as the NPC and the coalition of CSOs in the peace processes. These third-party actors could be tasked with monitoring compliance as well as engaging the parties to build confidence and trust in the processes. The role of the state should be limited to providing security measures, and the support needed by these third parties to undertake their functions.

### ***8.5.4. Establish a technical support committee***

A future peace process in Dagbon should incorporate a sub-committee to provide technical support for the mediation team. The success of the mediation team is largely based on the availability of facts and accurate information about the dynamics of the conflict, the cultural and traditional structures of the conflict's context as well as the history of the parties, conflict, and people. The mediation committee of Eminent Chiefs had influence in the society, but it did not fully understand the conflict dynamics, the culture, and mediation processes. The technical support committee would undertake research and provide the mediation team with accurate and concise information to undertake the mediation and negotiation processes. Also, a technical committee would be able to identify the best approach that the mediation team could use in the processes.

Although the need for a technical support committee was raised by just one participant, it resonates with me based on my experience as a human security specialist. From my experience working with most mediators in conflict zones, there is usually a knowledge gap on the part of these mediators regarding the conflict they are working on. These mediators ordinarily have the influence and the necessary stature to move the parties along. However, their inadequate understanding of the dynamics of the conflict in most cases makes their work difficult. The presence of a technical support committee is crucial in addressing this gap.

#### ***8.5.5. Overarching implementation plan and strategy***

Developing and signing a Roadmap is not the decisive stage of peace processes. What is imperative is the implementation of agreements. In the absence of an implementation strategy or plan, it becomes difficult to hold people accountable, and opens up the agreement to abuse. As such there should be an overarching implementation plan and strategy outlining specific activities, and timelines for each phase, and the actors responsible for each phase of the implementation. The plan should, however, have some flexibility, and allow room for further negotiations and implementation when the parties express concerns.

#### ***8.5.6. Tackle socio-psychological barriers***

At the initial stages of a future Dagbon peace process, much attention should be given to identifying stakeholders and strategies for addressing the socio-psychological barriers of mistrust and hurt. The Mediation Committee must identify prominent religious and traditional leaders as well as civil society groups that are respected in the Dagbon Kingdom and beyond to lead the process of addressing the barriers of mistrust and hurt.

This can be achieved through peace education with young people and children, reconciliation, storytelling, joint project initiation and implementation, and training workshops for parties from both Gates. These interventions should focus on providing information that is contradictory from the prevailing information. Also, the interventions should teach new information through experiences as well as new technical skills (see Hameiri et al., 2014). The end result of these strategies is the promotion of intergroup interaction, recognition, and trust building not only at the elite level but also at the middle and lower levels of the Kingdom.

### **8.5.7. Further research**

Regarding future research on the Dagbon peace processes, as well as similar peace processes in Northern Ghana with regards to interethnic or intercommunal conflicts, this study provides the following research recommendations:

First, this study focused on gaining knowledge grounded from the wisdom of key actors about contributing factors to the deadlock or failure of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace. With the implementation of the second Roadmap, further inquiry should explore how these same (and perhaps different) factors contributed to the successful implementation of the second Roadmap to peace. This research would assist in identifying the factors that changed during the initiation and implementation of the second Roadmap to peace.

Second, this study concentrated on identifying and understanding how a broad range of factors could be used to explain the failure of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace. Accordingly, this study recommends further inquiry that will rank these factors in a bid to elicit the details that played a more prominent or significant role in influencing the outcome of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace.

Third, the study suggests further research on the relationship between peace and justice in peace processes. Throughout the research and my interaction with the participants, one issue that kept coming up was the need to pursue peace and justice (see Byrne & Thiessen, 2019). Further research is, therefore, required to gauge the participants' perspectives about which should be given priority in peace processes.

Fourth, the study recommends a multi-case study of peace processes in Ghana. The four known peace processes initiated and implemented in Ghana are the Bawku Peace Processes, the Alavanyo-Nkunya Peace Processes, the Konkomba-Nanumba Peace Processes, and the Dagbon peace processes. A cross-study of the success and/or failure of these peace processes will help us to understand how these factors accounted for the success and/or failure of these peace processes.

Fifth, the study recommends further studies to elicit detailed information with regards to the reasons for the inadequate representation and involvement of some segments of the society in the peace processes.

## **8.6. Limitations of the study**

The findings of this study help us to understand the conditions that accounted for the deadlock of the first Dagbon peace processes. However, there are a few limitations to the application of the findings of this study:

In the first place, one of the limitations that might be associated with this study is that generalizing the findings and recommendations would be problematic and unreliable. The study was conducted within a particular cultural context (the Dagbon Kingdom) in order to have an in-depth understanding of the circumstances that led to the failure of the peace processes that were initiated within that context. The findings are, therefore, contextualized within the scope of the study and as such the application of the findings beyond Dagbon could result in several challenges. In other words, I foresee a difficulty in a wholesale generalization of the findings and recommendations that emerged from this study and projecting them onto other cultural and intergroup contexts.

This notwithstanding, the findings and recommendations of this study (case) which are based on a rigorous process are applicable to other chieftaincy conflicts in northern Ghana where there are similarities in culture and the chieftaincy institution. Moreover, the study's findings, when compared with other studies of peace processes initiated in similar contexts, can enhance our understanding of the peace processes in intercommunal and chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana. However, if the findings are developed further at an abstract level, they might be transferable to other conflicts as well, and that is one of the strengths of the study.

Further, as an insider-researcher, I had prior contact and a relationship with some of the study's participants. The professional relationship that I had developed with some of the participants had some positive outcomes in terms of conducting the study. To some extent, it facilitated my acceptance and entry into the research context as well as access to other participants. On the other hand, it cannot be ruled out that the relationship I had with some of the participants potentially influenced their narratives and stories or their understanding of the peace processes.

Similarly, the study was conducted in an environment that is polarized along the Andani and Abudu Gates. Some of the participants, especially the indigenes, are either aligned to the Abudu Gate or the Andani Gate and this could have influenced the narratives they presented.

Potential biases among participants could have arisen as a result of their lineage to either the Abudu or Andani Gates.

Finally, the purpose of the study was to elicit the key stakeholders' insights about the Dagbon peace processes in the face of the multiplicity of conditions that accounted for the deadlock of the first Roadmap to peace from 2006 - 2018. The conditions outlined by the participants were however not ranked, and as such make it difficult to determine which factor or group of factors significantly influenced the outcome more of the peace processes and Roadmap to peace. From the participants' responses, it is quite difficult to specifically outline the most important factors that could be used to explain the peace processes deadlock. These factors are intertwined and complex to single out a particular factor. Based on my experience, however, the role of third parties, political and security guarantees, leadership, and the socio-psychological environment played a key role in the peace processes deadlock.

Nonetheless, one of the major strengths of this study is the fact that the interpretation of the findings was, to some extent, influenced by my own personal understanding of the conflict, the culture, and the peace processes. Having worked in the study area as a peacebuilding specialist, I have developed an in-depth understanding and appreciation of the dynamics of the conflict and the peace processes. My position as an insider-researcher was brought to bear in the analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the findings of the study. Recognizing this bias of my interpreting the data to fit my understanding of the conflict and peace processes, I also relied on the context/background knowledge, some secondary data (mostly newspaper articles) and the participants' stories in the analysis and interpretation of the data in an attempt at achieving a balanced and fair output.

## **8.7. Conclusion**

The foundation of a peace process's success is our ability to identify and deal with the conditions that undermine the initiation and implementation of such a process. In undertaking this noble exercise, however, I do recognize the differences in context, and I am cognizant of the fact that what is applicable in one context cannot be applied in another. As such any study to understand the dynamics of peace processes must be undertaken within the context of the conflict. This study, therefore, sought to contribute to a specific understanding of how certain conditions shape

the outcome of peace processes using the first Dagbon peace processes (2006 - 2018) as a case study.

Among other things, the study's key findings indicate that the absence of internal leadership, the weak implementation of the peace processes, the people's lack of confidence in the peace processes, and the absence of societal and popular support were some of the conditions that accounted for the failure of the first Dagbon Roadmap to peace. Additionally, the motivation to continue the conflict, the socio-psychological environment, the Roadmap's contents, the people's culture and tradition were some of the key findings that emerged from the participants' responses as factors that conspired to undermine the success of the first Roadmap to peace.

The study's findings focus our attention on some critical and grey areas within the broader body of literature and knowledge about peace processes. First, timelines in peace processes is an under researched area. This study makes the case that the presence of concrete timelines helps to promote accountability, transparency, and legitimacy in the initiation and implementation of peace processes. The absence of concrete timelines predisposes the processes to non-compliance and failure. Second, the study's findings on culture and tradition in peace processes goes further to broaden the position of the school of thought that argues for the consideration of culture and traditions in peacebuilding efforts. While the study confirms the position that culture and traditions are important factors that can influence the initiation and implementation of peace processes, it also discovered that culture and tradition can be used by stakeholders to undermine peace processes.

Third, the study also makes a significant contribution to the justice-peace debate in peacebuilding. The findings side with the school of thought that calls for the administration of justice that empowers local people's agency and leads to positive peace (Byrne & Thiessen, 2019). This is at variance with the argument that high-context cultures prefer reconciliation and relationship building to justice or punishment (Lebaron, 2003). Fourth, participation and inclusion should transcend beyond the general populations' participation in decision-making to their initiation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of peace processes. Fifth, this research contributes to the existing knowledge of internal leadership within peace processes. The absence of internal leadership or weak internal leadership has a negative impact on the outcome of peace processes. Finally, the study contributes to our general understanding of the complexities underpinning the initiation and implementation of peace processes. Peace processes

are proposed and introduced to address issues that focus on criminality, tradition/culture, and peace/reconciliation. These are issues that are sometimes incompatible, so that addressing one issue may lead to the eroding of gains made in another. This complex phenomenon, therefore, requires careful and critical thinking in order to establish a balance based on the needs of the society and the local communities.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: Interview guide**

#### **Introduction**

Good morning/afternoon/evening and thank you for agreeing to be part of this interview. My name is Mathias Awonnatey Ateng a PhD Candidate of the University of Manitoba. Please, you can address me by my first name (Mathias). I am conducting this research for my PhD thesis. The focus of this research is to understand the dynamics of the two peace processes that have been implemented in the Dagbon conflict. Specifically, I will like to understand the factors or conditions that have shaped the outcomes of the two peace processes/agreements. Your participation in this research is voluntary, as such you can withdraw or refuse to answer any question for any or no reason.

I would like to record the interview session using an audio tape recorder, as such do you consent to this arrangement? The recording will only be used for the purpose for which it was recorded. The recording will not be shared with anybody, institution, or organizations. I will like to share the transcripts with you for your inputs, suggestions, and comments, and if you do agree how will you like to receive the transcripts? Please, do you have any questions for me?

#### **General questions**

1. How long have you/organization been engaged in peacemaking and peacebuilding work?
2. What motivated you or your organization to undertake peacebuilding working?
3. Which areas of peacemaking and peacebuilding are you interested in?
4. What has the experience been so far?
5. Tell me about your involvement in the Dagbon Peace Processes?

#### **Questions on Roadmap I**

1. Tell me about the first peace agreement (Dagbon Roadmap I)?
2. How did the first peace agreement come about?
3. What was the outcome in the implementation of the first Roadmap?
4. What do you think accounted for the outcome you mentioned?

## **Questions on Roadmap II**

1. Tell me about the second peace agreement (Dagbon Roadmap II)?
2. How did the second Roadmap come about?
3. What was the outcome?
4. What do you think accounted for the outcome discussed above?

## **Concluding questions**

1. What other factors do you think impacted the implementation and outcomes of the two peace agreements?
2. What are your best wishes and hopes for the future of Dagon and yourself?
3. What are your worst fears and worries for Dagbon?
4. What do you recommend moving forward for sustainable peace process?
5. Do you have any questions for me?

## **Closure**

I will like to thank you for participating in this interview. As stated in the introduction, I will send to you the transcripts of this interview for your comments. Please, if there are grey areas that I need your clarification, I will be contacting you. Please, you can contact me if you need an information regarding this interview and the research.

## **Appendix 2: Focus group interview guide**

### **Introduction**

Good morning/afternoon/evening and thank you for agreeing to be part of this focus group discussion. My name is Mathias Awonnatey Ateng a PhD student of the University of Manitoba. Please, you can address me by my first name (Mathias). I am conducting this research for my PhD thesis. The focus of this research is to understand the dynamics of the two peace processes that have been implemented in the Dagbon conflict. Specifically, I will like to understand the factors or conditions that have shaped the outcomes of the two peace processes/agreements. Your participation in this research is voluntary, as such you can withdraw or refuse to answer any question for any or no reason.

The discussion we going to have here should be treated confidential and should not be shared outside. I would like to record the discussion using an audio tape recorder, as such do you consent to this arrangement? The recording will only be used for the purpose for which it was recorded. The recording will not be shared with anybody, institution, or organizations. I will like to share the transcripts with you for your inputs, suggestions, and comments, and if you do agree how will you like to receive the transcripts? Please, do you have any questions for me?

### **Discussion questions**

1. How will you describe the outcomes of Dagbon Peace Agreement I?
2. What factors explain the outcome of Dagbon Peace Agreement I?
3. How will you describe the outcome of Dagbon Peace Agreement II?
4. What do you think accounts for the outcome of Dagbon Peace Agreement II?
5. What are your best wishes and hopes for the future of Dagon and your group?
6. What are your worst fears and worries for Dagbon?
7. What do you recommend for a sustainable peace process?

### **Closure**

I will like to thank you for participating in this focus group discussion. As stated in the introduction, I will send to you the transcripts of this interview for your comments. Please, if there are grey areas that I need your clarification, I will be contacting you. Please, you can contact me if you need an information regarding this interview and the research.

**Appendix 3: Letter of support from the National Peace Council**

## NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL

*In case of reply, the  
number and date of this  
letter should be quoted.*

Tel: 0244480562

Our Ref. No.....

Your Ref. No. ....



REPUBLIC OF GHANA

P.O. Box 2374  
Tamale, N/R

9<sup>th</sup> May, 2018

**International Development Research Centre (IDRC)**  
**150 Kent Street**  
**Ottawa, Ontario**  
**Canada, K1P 0B2**

### RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP WITH NORTHERN REGIONAL PEACE COUNCIL

The National Peace Council is established by an act of Parliament (Act 818) for the sole purpose to promote peace in the country and perform other related purposes. The overall objective of the Council is to develop mechanisms for conflict preventions, management, resolution and to build sustainable peace throughout the country through research, education, and training.

The Peace Council is therefore very much interested in any research that will support the council fulfil its mandate and in this instance welcomes the research on the Conflict among the Royal families of the Dagomba Kingdom popularly known as the “Dagbon” Conflict. The research project of Mathias Awonnamey “A Peace Process in a deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Dagbon Ethnopolitical Peace Processes in the Northern Region of Ghana” is therefore of interest and significance to the Council. The research project will contribute to eliciting the challenges that bedevil the Dagbon Peace Process from the perspectives of the key stakeholders, as well stimulate a discussion on how these challenges can be addressed.

In that regard, the Council is ready to assist Mathias Ateng, who is a PhD Student at the University of Manitoba, Canada in conducting his research with any available material and literature that has been gathered in relation to its work with the parties of the conflict. The

council will also make available the office space for his research. In addition, the Council will in some case assist Mathias in the recruitment of the respondents for the research.

Yours sincerely,



Fr. Thaddeus Kuusah

(Executive Secretary: N/R)

**Appendix 4: Request letter to Institutions and Organizations**  
 (On University letterhead)

**Date**

To Whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

Request for permission to conduct research interview

I write to request for permission to conduct a research interview on your institution's role in the Dagbon Peace Process. I am a Ph.D Candidate in the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme of the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada and in the process of writing my Ph.D dissertation toward my Ph.D degree. The study is entitled "*A peace process in a deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Peace Processes of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftaincy Conflict in the Northern region of Ghana*".

The purpose of this research is to understand the trajectories of the Dagbon peace processes (Dagbon Roadmap I and II) from 2003 to date. Specifically, I seek to understand the conditions that derailed the implementation of the Dagbon Roadmap I and the conditions that facilitated the successful implementation of Dagbon Roadmap II.

As a key stakeholder in the Dagon Peace Processes, I consider your organization to be in a better position to provide experiences and perspectives on the journey and trajectories of the peace processes since its inception in 2003. I intend to conduct the interview in the first week of August 2019. I could however change my schedule based on the availability of staff.

The data gathered from the interview will solely be used for the intended objectives of this research which include the writing of my thesis, community engagement, policy briefs and advocacy. In addition, I will abide by all protocols associated with conducting research in the organization including entry and exit protocols. I also undertake to provide your organization with a copy of the research report after the completion of the study. Please, attached to this letter, is an introductory letter from my Department for your consideration. If you do require further information, please, do not hesitate to contact me via email [atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca).

I count on your kind support and approval.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Yours faithfully,**

Mathias Awonnatey Ateng  
Peace and Conflict Studies Programme  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Canada  
[atengm@myumaitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumaitoba.ca)

**Appendix 5: Request letter to the United Nations Development Programme**  
 (On University letterhead)

**Date**

The Resident Representative  
 United Nations Development Programme  
 P. O. Box GP 1423  
 Accra-Ghana

Dear Madam,

Request for permission to conduct research interview

I write to request for permission to conduct a research interview in your institution, the UNDP. I am a Ph.D Candidate in the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme of the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada and in the process of writing my Ph.D dissertation toward my Ph.D degree. The study is entitled “*A peace process in a deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Peace Processes of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftaincy Conflict in the Northern region of Ghana*”.

The purpose of this research is to understand the trajectories of the Dagbon peace processes (Dagbon Roadmap I and II) from 2003 to date. Specifically, I seek to understand the conditions that derailed the implementation of the Dagbon Roadmap I and the conditions that facilitated the successful implementation of Dagbon Roadmap II.

As a major facilitator of the Dagon Peace Processes, I consider the UNDP as a key stakeholder that can provide experience and perspectives on the journey and trajectories of the peace processes since its inception in 2003. I intend to conduct the interview in the last week of August 2019. I could however change my schedule based on the availability of staff.

The data gathered from the interview will solely be used for the intended objectives of this research which include the writing of my thesis, community engagement, policy briefs and advocacy. In addition, I will abide by all protocols associated with conducting research in the organization including entry and exit protocols. I also undertake to provide your organization with a copy of the research report after the completion of the study. Please, attached to this letter, is an introductory letter from my Department for your consideration. If you do require further information, please, do not hesitate to contact me via email [atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca).

I count on your kind support and approval.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Yours faithfully,**

Mathias Awonnatey Ateng  
Peace and Conflict Studies Programme  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Canada  
[atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca)

**Appendix 6: Request letter to the Northern Regional House of Chiefs**  
 (On University letterhead)

**Date**

The Secretary  
 Northern Regional House of Chiefs  
 Northern Region, Tamale

Dear Sir/Madam,

Request for permission to conduct research interview

I write to request for permission to conduct a research interview on your institution's role in the Dagbon Peace Process. I am a Ph.D Candidate in the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme of the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada and in the process of writing my Ph.D dissertation toward my Ph.D degree. The study is entitled "*A peace process in a deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Peace Processes of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftaincy Conflict in the Northern region of Ghana*".

The purpose of this research is to understand the trajectories of the Dagbon peace processes (Dagbon Roadmap I and II) from 2003 to date. Specifically, I seek to understand the conditions that derailed the implementation of the Dagbon Roadmap I and the conditions that facilitated the successful implementation of Dagbon Roadmap II.

As a key stakeholder in the Dagon Peace Processes, I consider your organization to be in a better position to share your experiences and perspectives on the journey and trajectories of the peace processes since its inception in 2003. I intend to conduct the interview in the first week of September 2019. I could however change my schedule based on the availability of staff.

The data gathered from the interview will solely be used for the intended objectives of this research which include the writing of my thesis, community engagement, policy briefs and advocacy. In addition, I will abide by all protocols associated with conducting research in the organization including entry and exit protocols. I also undertake to provide your organization with a copy of the research report after the completion of the study. Please, attached to this letter, is an introductory letter from my Department for your consideration. If you do require further information, please, do not hesitate to contact me via email [atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca).

I count on your kind support and approval.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Yours faithfully,**

Mathias Awonnatey Ateng  
Peace and Conflict Studies Programme  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Canada  
[atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca)

## **Appendix 7: Letter to the Committee of Eminent Chiefs**

(On University letterhead)

### **Date**

The Overlord (Nayiri) of the Mamprugu Kingdom

Nayiri Palace

Nalerigu, North East Region

Ghana,

Your Majesty, Naa Bohugu Abdulai Mahami Sheriga

### **Request for permission to conduct a research interview**

Your Majesty, I write to request for permission to conduct a research interview with you on the Dagbon Peace Process. I am a Ph.D Candidate in the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme of the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada and in the process of writing my Ph.D dissertation toward my Ph.D degree. The study is entitled "*A peace process in a deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Peace Processes of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftaincy Conflict in the Northern region of Ghana*".

Your Majesty, the purpose of this research is to understand the trajectories of the Dagbon peace processes (Dagbon Roadmap I and II) from 2003 to date. Specifically, I seek to understand the conditions that derailed the implementation of the Dagbon Roadmap I and the conditions that facilitated the successful implementation of Dagbon Roadmap II.

Your Majesty, as the one of the mediators of the Dagbon Peace Processes, I consider you a key stakeholder that is in a better position to provide experiences and perspectives on the journey and trajectories of the peace processes since its inception in 2003. I intend to conduct the interview in the last week of October 2019. I could however change my schedule based on your availability or any member of your administration.

Your Majesty, the data gathered from the interview will solely be used for the intended objectives of this research which include the writing of my thesis, community engagement, policy briefs and advocacy. In addition, I will abide by all protocols associated with conducting research including entry and exit protocols. I also undertake to provide you with a copy of the research report after the completion of the study. Please, attached to this letter, is an introductory

letter from my Department for your consideration. If you do require further information, please, do not hesitate to contact me via email [atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca).

Your Majesty, I count on your kind support and approval.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Yours faithfully,**

Mathias Awonnatey Ateng  
Peace and Conflict Studies Programme  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Canada  
[atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca)

**Appendix 8: Letter to the Overlord of the Dagbon Traditional Kingdom  
(On University letter Head)**

**Date**

His Majesty

The King of Dagbon

Yaa-Naa Abubakari Mahama II

Gbewaa Palace

Yendi

Northern Region

Your Majesty,

**Request for permission to conduct PhD Research in Dagbon**

Your Majesty, it is with great pleasure that I humbly write to you this letter to request for your permission to conduct my PhD research in your Kingdom - the Dagbon Kingdom.

Your Majesty, I am a PhD Candidate in the Peace and Conflict Studies Department of the University of Manitoba, Canada, and currently undertaking my research towards the completion of my studies. My research focuses on the Dagbon Peace Processes that were initiated by the Committee of Eminent Chiefs which resulted in restoring peace to the Dagbon Kingdom.

Your Majesty, my research seeks to understand the challenges that militated against the implementation of the peace processes, conditions that facilitated its implementation and what can be done to sustain the current peace that Dagbon is enjoying. I will like to talk to a variety of stakeholders such as Opinion Leaders, Civil Society Organizations, youth groups, women groups, representatives of the parties in the conflict, representatives of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs and Security Agencies. Moreover, I will be pleased to have a conversation with your office.

Your Majesty, I will like to undertake this exercise in the month of September 2019. The Specific dates will be based on the availability of the above participants.

Your Majesty, I will also like to undertake a formal community entry process by visiting your office to physically introduce myself to you. I will observe all traditional protocols associated with this visit and during my research.

Thank you and counting on your kind support.

**Sincerely yours**

Mathias Awonnatey Ateng  
Peace and Conflict Studies Programme  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Canada  
[atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca)

**Appendix 9: Oath of confidentiality for focus group participants  
(University letter head)**

**Name of researcher:** Mathias Awonratey Ateng

Peace and Conflict Studies Programme

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg, Canada

[atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca)

**Title of research project:** A Peace Process in a Deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Peace Processes of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftaincy Conflict in the Northern Region of Ghana

I understand that as a participant of the focus group discussion for the above study being conducted by Mathias Awonratey Ateng of the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme of the University of Manitoba agree that:

1. All information pertaining to identity of the participants of this focus group discussion is strictly confidential and is not to be disclosed in any manner to third parties outside the research team.
2. Any information that is discussed in this focus group session is to be considered strictly confidential and is not to be disclosed or discussed in any manner with third parties outside the research team.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby declare that I have read, understood, and agree to adhere to the policies and procedures concerning confidentiality as it pertains to participants of the focus group discussion and the information discussed during this discussion.

**Signature of Participant**\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of witness**\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 10: Confidentiality agreement for Research Assistants  
(University letterhead)**

**Name of researcher:** Mathias Awonnatey Ateng

Peace and Conflict Studies Programme

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg, Canada

[atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca)

**Title of research project:** A Peace Process in a Deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Peace Processes of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftaincy Conflict in the Northern Region of Ghana

I \_\_\_\_\_ have been hired as a Research Assistant for the above research project, do hereby agree to:

1. keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., audiotapes, transcripts, contact details of participants) with anyone external to the research.
2. keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., audiotapes, transcripts, contact details of participant) secure while it is in my possession.
3. return all research information in any form or format (e.g., audiotapes, transcripts, contact details) to the Researcher when I have completed the research tasks.
4. consult the Researcher at all times before accessing the lockable research cabinet.
5. consult the Researcher before engaging in any discussion with any of the research participants in any issue relating to the project or contact any of the participants.
6. respect the views of the participants as well as their cultures and traditions.
7. not to engage in any other activity that has the potential to cause harm to the participants, the researcher and other research assistant or bridge the confidentiality and privacy agreement with the participants.

I hereby declare that I have read, understood, and agree to adhere to the policies and procedures concerning confidentiality as it pertains to the participants and other team members of this research project.

Signature of Research Assistant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher:**

Name of Researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 11: Informed Consent form for Focus Group Interview participants  
(University letterhead)**

**Research Project Title:** A Peace Process in a Deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Peace Processes of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftaincy Conflict in the Northern Region of Ghana

**Principal Investigator and contact information:**

Mathias Awonnatey Ateng, PhD Candidate

Peace and Conflict Studies Programme

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg, Canada

[atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca)

**Research Supervisor and contact information:**

Dr. Sean Byrne

Peace and Conflict Studies Programme

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg, Canada

[Sean.Byrne@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Sean.Byrne@umanitoba.ca)

204.474.7979

**Introduction**

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

1. The purpose of this research is to understand the trajectories of the Dagbon peace processes (Dagbon Roadmap I and II). Specifically, I seek to understand the conditions that derailed the implementation of the Dagbon Roadmap I and the conditions that facilitated the successful implementation of Dagbon Roadmap II.
2. The focus group discussion will take place in Tamale at the Ghana Institute of Linguistics and Bible Translation (GILBT).

3. Your acceptance to participate in this research is an indication that you agree to engage in a fruitful discussion with other participants on the Dagbon Peace processes. The discussion will focus on the role of trust among the parties, the role of leadership, the role of third parties, local participation and the content of the agreements in influencing the outcomes of the peace processes. I will facilitate the group discussion. The focus group discussions will take about 4-5 hours and will be recorded using an audiotape recorder (Sony ICD PX333 Digital voice recorder). I will summarize all the discussion and share them with you for your review and verification. You will receive a summary of the results and transcripts either by email, mail, or I will personally deliver it to you. This is to enable you to cross check the data you provided.
4. I will also like to share the results of my research with the community members through five community sensitization workshops. In addition, I will data presentation seminars with middle tier stakeholders. Likewise, I will use policy briefs to communicate with the policy makers. This is to get feedback from the participants. Feedback from participants will be received by the November 2019.
5. Your participation in this focus group discussion is voluntary. Should you want to withdraw from the research, you have the right to do so. To withdraw from the research, kindly inform me of your intention and when you want to withdraw. You are not obliged to provide any reason(s) for your withdrawal. Should you withdraw in the process of the discussion, the data you provided will be destroyed. The intended purpose of this research is for my PhD Dissertation as such you cannot withdraw from the research after December 2019.
6. You will be compensated for the time you commit to this discussion and other traveling related cost. You will be paid an amount of \$40 (GHs136.00) for the time you commit to this discussion and for feeding. Also, you will be paid an amount of \$10 (GHs 34.00) for transportation.
7. Although the research is purposely for academic reasons, it also serves as an avenue for you to express your thoughts on the two peace processes. Therefore, it is a way of empowering and recognizing the voices of all stakeholders in the peace processes. There are no major identified risks associated with your participation in this research. However, I do recognize that in these discussions, people might apportion blame. I entreat that we

respect each other and make our submission without labelling or blaming anyone. Also, external names should not be used in making a submission that have the tendency to tarnish one's image. I have counseling resources available and in case you need the services of a counselor, kindly make use of this contact information (Amos Alale, Guidance and Counselling Unit of the University for Development Studies, 0205762584).

8. I will not associate your name or identity with the data that you provide in during the focus group discussion. Rather, I will make use of pseudonyms. As such, your data will be treated anonymously and confidentially. I will store all data and information of this focus group discussion such as the focus group discussion audio files, the discussion summaries, contact details strictly confidential. I will use lockable research cabinets and the research laptop in the storage of the data. These will only be accessible by me and the research assistants in some cases. I will use the data solely for the purpose for which this research is been conducted. You are to remain confidential with the information shared during this discussion. You are not permitted to discuss or share the content of what transpired here with any third party.
9. The data you provide will be destroyed in March 2020. That is immediately after the submission of the first draft of the thesis.
10. The results of this research are purposely for my PhD dissertation as such will be published. I will also share the results with the community, the policy circle, and people in academia through conferences, policy briefs, and journal publications.

As the Principal Investigator of this research, I undertake to respect and keep confident and private all information that you share with me in this focus group discussion.

Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

This research has been approved by the Joint Ethics Board of the University of Manitoba. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator at 204-474-7122 or [humanethics@umanitoba.ca](mailto:humanethics@umanitoba.ca). A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I will like to share a summary of the results with you. As such I will be happy if you can kindly provide your contact information below.

Email:.....

Phone contact:.....

**Appendix 12: Informed Consent form for in-depth interviews participants  
(University letterhead)**

**Research Project Title:** A Peace Process in a Deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Peace Processes of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftaincy Conflict in the Northern Region of Ghana

**Principal Investigator and contact information:**

Mathias Awonnatey Ateng  
Peace and Conflict Studies Programme  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Canada  
[atengm@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:atengm@myumanitoba.ca)

**Research Supervisor and contact information:**

Dr. Sean Byrne  
Peace and Conflict Studies Programme  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Canada  
[Sean.Byrne@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Sean.Byrne@umanitoba.ca)  
204.474.7979

**Introduction**

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

1. The purpose of this research is to understand the trajectories of the Dagbon peace processes (Dagbon Roadmap I and II). Specifically, I seek to understand the conditions that derailed the implementation of the Dagbon Roadmap I and the conditions that facilitated the successful implementation of Dagbon Roadmap II.
2. The one-on-one interview will take place at a location that will protect confidentiality and mutually agreed upon by researcher and participant.

3. Your acceptance to participate in this research is an indication that you agree to a one-on-one interview with me to share your thoughts and experiences of the Dagbon Peace processes. The interview session will discuss among other things the role of trust among the parties, the role of leadership, the role of third parties, local participation and the content of the agreements in influencing the outcomes of the peace processes.
4. The interview session will last for approximately 90 minutes. Please note that I will record the interviews using an audiotape recorder (Sony ICD PX333 Digital voice recorder). Also, I will share the transcripts of the interviews with you for your review and verification. You will receive a summary of the results and transcripts either by email, mail, or I will personally deliver it to you. This is to enable you to cross check the data you provided.
5. I will also like share the results of my research with the community members through five community sensitization workshops. In addition, I will undertake data presentation seminars with middle tier stakeholders. Likewise, I will use policy briefs to communicate with the policy makers. This is to get feedback from the participants. Feedback from participants will be received by the November 2019.
6. Your participation in this interview is voluntary. Should you want to withdraw from the research, you have the right to do so. To withdraw from the research, kindly inform me of your intention and when you want to withdraw. Should you withdraw in the process of the interview, the data you provided will be destroyed. You are not obliged to provide any reason(s) for your withdrawal. The intended purpose of this research is for my PhD Dissertation as such participants cannot withdraw from the research after December 2019.
7. Although the research is purposely for academic reasons, it also serves as an avenue for you to express your thoughts on the two peace processes. Therefore, it is a way of empowering and recognizing the voices of all stakeholders in the peace processes. There are no major identified risks associated with your participation in this research. However, I do recognize that discussions during the interviews could generate trauma, emotions, and remembrance. Should situation of this nature arise, you are free to take a break or discontinue the interview. Also, I have a Counsellor who can provide you the needed support. In case you need the services of a counselor, kindly make use of this contact

information (Amos Alale, Guidance and Counselling Unit of the University for Development Studies, 0205762584).

8. I will not associate your name or identity with the data that you provide in this interview. Rather, I will make use of pseudonyms. As such, your data will be treated anonymously and confidentially. I will store all data and information of this interview such as the interview audio files, transcripts, contact details strictly confidential. I will use lockable research cabinets and the research laptop in the storage of the data. These will only be accessible by me and the research assistants in some cases. I will use the data solely for the purpose for which this research is been conducted.
9. The data you provide will be destroyed in March 2020. That is immediately after the submission of the first draft of the thesis.
10. The results of this research are purposely for my PhD dissertation as such will be published. I will also share the results with the community, the policy circle, and people in academia through conferences, policy briefs, and journal publications.

As the Principal Investigator of this research, I undertake to respect and keep confident and private all information that you share with me in this interview.

Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

This research has been approved by the Joint Ethics Board of the University of Manitoba. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator at 204-474-7122 or [humanethics@umanitoba.ca](mailto:humanethics@umanitoba.ca). A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I will like to share a summary of the results with you. As such I will be happy if you can kindly provide your contact information below.

Email:.....

Phone contact:.....

### **Appendix 13: Codebook**

**Political interference:** This code refers to participants description of the involvement of the two major political parties and politicians in the Dagbon conflict. Subcodes under this category include, *political commentary, political promises, and political support.*

**Political interest:** This code represents text segments of the participants that suggest that the two political parties were benefiting from the conflict and therefore had an interest in its continuity and the outcome of the peace processes.

**Political influence:** This label describes the participants' view about the continuous involvement of the state in the conflict and its influence in key decisions that are taken in Dagbon.

**Political will to enforce:** This code denotes the participants' description of the unwillingness and non-commitment of the state and its institutions to implement the Dagbon roadmap to peace. Subcategories under this code include *fear, violence, and uncertainty.*

**Guarantees:** This label refers participants' perspectives that describe the absence of assurances from the state and the mediators that the Roadmap to peace will be implemented according to the terms and conditions agreed by all the stakeholders. Subcodes under this category include *political guarantees and security guarantees.*

**Timing:** This code refers to the participants' perspective that suggests that the timing of the initiation and implementation of the roadmap was bad.

**Mediation processes:** This code relates to the situation where the participants suggest that the mediation processes encountered some challenges. Subcodes included *mediation support team, objective of the mediation processes, and culture and tradition.*

**Behaviour of negotiators:** This code labels the participants view about the attitudes of the negotiators during the mediation processes. The subcategories included *different narratives and high emotions.*

**Narratives of the parties:** This code refers to the participants view on the different interpretations that the parties gave to the provisions of the Roadmap to peace. Subcategories included *unclear provisions and disagreement on some key provisions.*

**Structure of the roadmap:** This code describes participants perspectives on the arrangement of the provisions of the Roadmap to peace and how it contributed to the deadlock of the peace processes.

**Disagreements:** The code refers to the participants description of the parties' divergent opinions on the provisions of the Roadmap to peace.

**Skewed implementation:** This code describes the participants suggestion that the implementation of the Roadmap to peace favoured one party and disadvantaged the other party.

**Timelines:** This label describes text segments where the participants suggested that the Roadmap did not have specific timeframes. Subcategories under this label are *no SMART timelines and disrespect for timelines that were provided for some provisions of the Roadmap*.

**Monitoring compliance:** This code describes the participants view that there were no structures integrated into the Roadmap peace or assigned any responsibility to ensure that the parties and all stakeholders complied with the implementation and provisions of the Roadmap to peace.

**Participation:** This label represents participants perspective that some critical segments of the society were not included in the peace processes. Subcodes include the *participation of CSOs, participation of women, and participation of young people*.

**Emotions:** This code refers to text segments of participants that describe the parties feeling of pain and hurt.

**Behaviour of parties:** This code denotes the participants description of the parties' attitude during the negotiation and implementation stages of the peace processes. Some of the subcategories under this code are *entrenched positions, mistrust, outrageous demands, and different narratives and cultural interpretations*.

**Mistrust:** The code refers to the participants description of the suspicion of the parties towards each other and state and the lack of confidence in the rival party, the state, and the CECs.

**Insecurity:** This label represents the text segments of the participants that the fear of the parties that, the rival group had the intention of harming or eliminating the other.

**Violence:** This code denotes participants perspectives that describe attacks both physical and structural. Subcategories include *reprisal attacks, curfews, tensions, spiritual attacks, and verbal attacks.*

**Energized young people:** The code denotes text segments of participants that describe overzealous young people of Dagbon who are recruited to disturb the peace processes.

**Ripeness:** This code represents participants description of the right conditions for the initiation and implementation of the peace processes.

**Conflict entrepreneurs:** The label refers to faceless but influential people who benefit from the continuity of the conflict.

**Polarization:** This code refers to the divisions within the society. Subcategories include *geographical divisions and divisions among the populace of Dagbon.*

**Internal leadership:** The code represents text segments of participants that describe the role of internal leadership in the outcome of the peace processes. Subcodes under this category include *failed community leadership, segmented and porous community leadership, and lack of leadership structures and qualities.*

**Composition/structure of CECs:** This label refers to text segments of participants that suggest that the make-up of the CECs was not in accordance with the culture and traditions of Dagbon.

**Perceptions about the CECs:** This code refers to perspectives of participants that suggest the bias and opinions that are held by the parties regarding the CECs.

**Culture and traditions:** This code describes participants suggestion that the CEC did not fully understand the traditional and cultural structures, institutions and values of Dagbon.

## Appendix 14: Ethics Protocol Approval Letters



UNIVERSITY  
OF MANITOBA

Research Ethics  
and Compliance

### PROTOCOL APPROVAL

Human Ethics  
208-194 Dafoe Road  
Winnipeg, MB  
Canada R3T 2N2  
Phone +204-474-7122  
Email: [humanethics@umanitoba.ca](mailto:humanethics@umanitoba.ca)

**TO:** Mathias Awonnatey Ateng  
Principal Investigator

(Advisor: Hamdesa Tuso)

**FROM:** Julia Witt, Chair  
Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB)

**Re:** Protocol J2019:039 (HS22885)  
A Peace Process in a deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Peace  
Processes of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftancy Conflict in the Northern Region

**Effective:** June 5, 2019

**Expiry:** June 5, 2020

Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB) has reviewed and approved the above research. JFREB is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is granted for the research and purposes described in the application only.
2. Any modification to the research or research materials must be submitted to JFREB for approval before implementation.
3. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to JFREB as soon as possible.
4. This approval is valid for one year only and a Renewal Request must be submitted and approved by the above expiry date.
5. A Study Closure form must be submitted to JFREB when the research is complete or terminated.
6. The University of Manitoba may request to review research documentation from this project to demonstrate compliance with this approved protocol and the University of Manitoba *Ethics of Research Involving Humans*.

#### Funded Protocols:

- Please e-mail a copy of this Approval, identifying the related UM Project Number, to the Research Grants Officer at [researchgrants@umanitoba.ca](mailto:researchgrants@umanitoba.ca)



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### AMENDMENT APPROVAL

July 16, 2019

**TO:** **Mathias Awonnatey Ateng** (Advisor: Sean Byrne)  
Principal Investigator

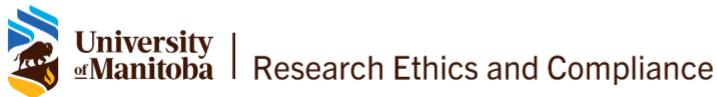
**FROM:** **Julia Witt, Chair**  
Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB)

**Re:** **Protocol #J2019:039 (HS22885)**  
**A Peace Process in a deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Peace Processes of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftancy Conflict in the Northern Region of Ghana**

**Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB)** has reviewed and approved your Amendment Request received on July 15, 2019 to the above-noted protocol. JFREB is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is given for this amendment only. Any further changes to the protocol must be reported to the Human Ethics Coordinator in advance of implementation.
2. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to JFREB as soon as possible.
3. Amendment Approvals do not change the protocol expiry date. Please refer to the original Protocol Approval or subsequent Renewal Approvals for the protocol expiry date.



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### RENEWAL APPROVAL

Date: June 3, 2020

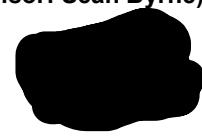
New Expiry: June 5, 2021

To: **Mathias Awonnatey Ateng**  
Principal Investigator

(Advisor: Sean Byrne)

From: **Julia Witt, Chair**  
Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB)

Re: **Protocol # J2019:039 (HS22885)**  
**A Peace Process in a deadlock: Critical Assessment of the Peace Process of the Dagbon Intra-Chieftancy Conflict in the Northern Region**



**Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB)** has reviewed and renewed the above research. JFREB is constituted and operates in accordance with the current *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

- i. Any modification to the research must be submitted to JFREB for approval before implementation.
- ii. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be submitted to JFREB as soon as possible.
- iii. This renewal is valid for one year only and a Renewal Request must be submitted and approved by the above expiry date.
- iv. A Study Closure form must be submitted to JFREB when the research is complete or terminated.