DRIVERS OF CONFLICT IN THE RWENZURURU SUBREGION IN WESTERN UGANDA:

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ABSTRACT:

This research examines the drivers of conflict in the Rwenzururu subregion in Western Uganda. It is derived from the study: conflict as a predictor of security and rule of law; a case of the Rwenzururu subregion. The study was important, based on its objectives of: examining the drivers of the conflict in the Rwenzururu sub region; assessing the influence of Conflict on Security; and examining the influence of Conflict on Rule of law.

The research employed a case study design, being the most suitable within a cross sectional research with both qualitative and quantitative approaches; where secondary and primary sources of data collection are used.

The study revealed main drivers, and influence of conflict on security and rule of law, in the Rwenzururu sub region being of; political, economic, social and cultural nature: unequal distribution of natural resources (land), high poverty levels, ethnic divisions and the struggle for self-determination. These lead to rule of law breakdown and hence, the political, economic and social insecurity in the area.

The research recommends liberalism instead of the apparent realism approach to conflict resolution. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) initiatives such as; dialogue, negotiations, conciliations, reconciliations and political socialisation should be employed. State and non-state actors should be involved, with peace and reconciliation mediation committees set up. There should be community-

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policing mechanisms to connect the community and Security Agencies. Thus, all the line government officials should be tasked to submit regular reports.

KEY WORDS:

Conflict, Security, Rule of Law, and Rwenzururu

METHODS AND MATERIALS:

The research is anchored on a case study design, under cross sectional research approach with both quantitative and qualitative approaches of data collection; relying mainly on secondary data and to some extent, primary data that was collected from the field by way of interviews, focus group discussions and surveys as research methods; using interview guide, focus group discussion guide and questionnaire as data collection instruments/tools against a sample size of 400 respondents determined by the Yamane formula; from the Rwenzururu subregion districts of Kasese, Bundibugyo and Ntoroko; covering the period 2009 to 2018. The response rate was as shown in Table 1 below.

The research reviewed several documents/literature including the constitution, and other existing principal and subsidiary legislations. In order to control the data quality and have credible research; reliability and validity tests were performed. Thus, the information collated from respondents was send back to them for ascertaining; to ensure credibility of the information.

THE DRIVERS OF CONFLICT IN RWENZURURU SUB REGION

Introduction

As posited by Suliman (2011), understanding the major drivers of conflicts is a complex study since there is no single cause for the conflicts world over nor is there often any single pre-condition for sustainable peace and security. Thus, the drivers of conflict are both historical, traditional and contemporary and hence, they are always attributed to the interplay of a number of factors.

Thus, understanding the major drivers of conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region is a complex study with

no single cause or set of preconditions for these conflicts. Thus, the drivers of conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region are many, multifaceted in nature, and with constructive and destructive effects on both State and human security. They are both historical and contemporary; and they are attributed to an interplay of a number of factors or aspects of life but essentially and broadly anchored on political, social and economic contexts. These conflicts did not at all start with the current NRM government but during pre-colonial times, intensified during the Colonial era and have lingered on throughout Uganda's span of independence and hence, influencing security and rule of law in the area. As such, the prospective strategies put in place to resolve these conflicts ought to be both contextual and situational; and anchored on liberalism approach.

The researcher asked Respondents whether the factors in the table below; were drivers of conflict in the Rwenzururu subregion. The results were as follows:

Conflict Driver	SA		A		NS		SD		D		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Historical Connotations and Colonial Legacies	188	47	160	40	52	13	0	0	0	0	400	100
Agitation for Political Autonomy/self determination	188	47	160	40	52	13	0	0	0	0	400	100
Struggle for Leadership power	188	47	160	40	52	13	0	0	0	0	400	100
Post - election activities	132	33	120	30	52	13	44	11	52	13	400	100
Discriminatory/misconceived governance policies	160	40	100	25	20	5	80	20	40	10	400	100
Ethnic divisions and cultural differences	88	22	188	47	20	5	80	20	24	6	400	100
Ethnic and Political Perceptions and stereotyping	88	22	188	47	20	5	80	20	24	6	400	100
Social Inequalities	200	50	160	40	0	0	24	6	12	3	400	100
Struggle for access and control of Land and Natural resources.	80	20	180	45	40	10	60	15	40	10	400	100
High levels of Poverty	132	33	200	50	0	0	68	17	0	0	400	100
High rate of unemployment	132	33	200	50	0	0	68	17	0	0	400	100

Table 1: Drivers of Conflicts in the Rwenzururu subregion (Source: Primary data - 2019)
Where; F-Frequency, SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, NS-Not Sure, SD-Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

The research found out the drivers of conflict in the Rwenzururu sub region were as outlined below:

a) **Political Drivers**

    i) Historical Connotations and Colonial Legacies

    ii) Agitation for political autonomy and self-determination

    iii) The Yiira State (Republic) Mystery

    iv) Attacks on the OBR palace by combined government forces

    v) Struggle for leadership and Power

    vi) Post-election Activities

    vii) Discriminative and Misconceived Governance Policies

b) **Economic Drivers**

    i) Struggle for Access and Control of Natural Resources

    ii) High Levels of Poverty

c) **Social Drivers**

    i) Ethnic Divisions and cultural differences

    ii) Perceptions and Stereotyping

    iii) Social Inequalities

    iv) High Levels of unemployment

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

There is no single cause or driver of conflicts as most of them are always attributed to the interplay of a number of factors: Political, Economic and Social.

a) **Political Drivers of Conflict in the Rwenzururu Sub-Region**

    i) **Historical Connotations and Colonial Legacies**

From table 1 above, 188 (47%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 160 (40%) agreed, 52 (13%) were not sure and none disagreed. The majority of the respondents agreed that historical connotations and colonial legacies is a conflict driver in the Rwenzururu subregion. The study revealed that conflicts in the Rwenzururu subregion have connections to historical incidents and colonial governance legacies in the country. The end of colonial era did not end the divisions it had created from their divide and rule policies, but become firmly rooted and continue driving conflicts for generations.

Refugee Law Project – MUK (2014), states that, the Ugandan successive Governments inherited more than just the boundaries of the State of "Uganda" from the colonialists; but a political landscape characterised by ethnic divisions, rivalries, resentments, conflicts and struggles for political power that had developed overtime; but with limited attempts to deal with the colonial connotations and legacies. Neither Uganda's first post-Independence Constitution, nor Obote's abolishing of Kingdoms in 1966/67 comprehensively addressed the colonial legacies thus, the perpetual ethnic-related conflicts.

ii)   **Agitation for political autonomy and self-determination**

From table 1 above, 188 (47%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 160 (40%) agreed, 52 (13%) were not sure and none disagreed. Thus, the majority of the respondents agreed that the struggle or agitation for political autonomy and self-determination is a conflict driver in the Rwenzururu sub-region.

The study revealed that in the Rwenzururu sub-region, power is determined by ethnic divides thus, the struggle for political autonomy/self-determination that resulted into agitation for cessation to create an independent Yiira State. As contended by the Internal Affairs Minister, agitation for Yiira State had been in public domain for quite long. However, Government took a hard stand against it as an impossible dream in the current Republic of Uganda. He observed however, that Government needs to investigate thoroughly the drivers of violent actions and tensions between Obudingiya Bwa Baamba (OBB) and Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu (OBR) in order to determine a lasting solution because government's

recognition of the two cultural institutions was hinged on achieving harmony in the area; instead, it created jurisdictional control conflicts.

iii) The Yiira State (Republic) Mystery

As collaborated by Nabukeera (2016), this study found out that the Yiira State mystery is closely connected to the Bakonzo dominated OBR; in Rwenzururu sub-region and spanning into the DRC. The area is inhabited by over ten ethnic groups: Bakonzo, Banande, Bamba, Basongora, Vonomas, Babwisi, Babutoku (Batuku), Babila and Basumba. The Bakonzo who dominate the OBR, are about seven million with an estimated 1.2 million in Uganda and 5.8 million on the DRC side of Mt. Rwenzori where they are commonly known as Banande. Bakonzo and Banande belong to the Bayiira community, a Bantu speaking people. Thus, security authorities assert that, due to strong cross border linkage and linage, the two groups have always harboured motives of merging and creating the Yiira State; an intention born out of the Rwenzururu Movement ideology hence, the creation of military training camps in the DRC to propel this long-standing motive/ideology. However, many times, the Omusinga has denied these allegations as propaganda by government to muzzle the OBR supporters.

Origin of the Yiira State Idea

As supported by RFPJ (2012), the study revealed that the idea of creating the Yiira State, was born by the Rwenzururus from the perceived marginalisation and mistreatment by the Tooro Kingdom and the Colonial Government. They demanded for fair representation or independent governance but without success as the idea was opposed by the central government and the Tooro monarchists. Thus, the agitation for self-determination was propagated and hence, the formation of the Rwenzururu Liberation Movement in 1918 to mobilise and champion the cause. Initially, it was under the leadership of three representatives of the Bakonzo and Baamba in the Tooro Rukurato: Nyamutswa, Kapolia and Tibamwenda the chief of Bulwa. These were arrested and executed in 1921 at Kagando, the place of the current Kagando Hospital. This research reveals that Kapolia was the grandfather of the current Obudingiya of Baamba and

Tibamwenda was the grandfather of the current Tibamwenda Swaleh, who is one of the prominent claimants to the OBR throne.

In 1951 - 54, Isia Mukirania, another Bakonzo representative in the Tooro parliament, revived the Bakonzo/Bamba agitation for political autonomy and self-determination and where possible, the cessation into Yiira State. Hence, the creation of Bakonzo Life History Research Association (BLHRA) with Isia Mukirania as its President (Bayinda, 2015). Mukirania subsequently promoted his BLHRA "Presidency" to "Yiira State Presidency". Mukirania strongly believed that he was the President of the Rwenzururus and hence, declared the Rwenzururu sub-region in Uganda and across the border into the DRC as an independent Yiira State. He immediately started originating correspondences to the Government of Uganda, National and International organisations under the title of 'President'. He even wrote to the Prime Minister of Uganda in 1962/3 warning of the consequences of not respecting the sovereignty of the Yiira State by deploying Uganda troops there.

However, as Mukirania run the Kingdom-State affair, he realised that being a State President subordinated him to the dictates of the people whom he believed were illiterates in all regards. Hence, he couldn't be questioned by the illiterate Rwenzururus whom he believed did not have political thoughts of their own. He thus, quietly discarded the title of a "*President*" and declared himself and hence, adopted the title of a '*king*'of the Rwenzururu with the Bakonzo as the Royal lineage while the Baamba and other ethnic groups would be sourced as subjects. The conflicts went on upto 1964 when Mukirania was arrested and charged of treason, murder, and terrorism among others. He was granted bail, which he jumped and retreated to the mountains to continue with the rebel Rwenzururu Movement; from where he died under mysterious circumstances in the same year. This political and monarchical ambition was bequeathed to the militarily trained son, Charles Wesley Mumbere, the current Omusinga Bwa Rwenzururu who was also arrested in 2016 and charged of the same offences as was the father.

iv) **Attacks on the OBR palace by combined government forces**

The research found out that the attack on the OBR palace by security forces on November 27, 2016 was driven by a number of factors to wit:

a. *Rwenzururu Royal Guards attack on Security and civilian Installations*

Research revealed that, before November 27, 2016 palace attack by security forces, there were numerous attacks on security and civilian installations and patrols in the sub-region by the OBR royal guards (Kirumira Mutima) who were said to be under direct creation and command of the Omusinga. In all, a number of security personnel died, guns were stolen and property destroyed by the attackers. This provoked the Government Security Forces whose response resulted into violent clashes leaving 137 people dead and property destroyed. Many were displaced and 157 were arrested including the Omusinga; and aligned before courts charged with murder, robbery, treason and terrorism among others.

b. *Alleged denial of OBR Monarchists of their Constitutional/Legal Rights*

The OBR supporters accused government of depriving them of their constitutional/legal rights to cherish their culture in the entire kingdom that is legally recognised. This arose when the Omusinga was stopped from travelling to Bundibugyo district to preside over the OBR peace day celebrations scheduled for June 30, 2013 (anniversary of the Bakonzo/Bamba break away from Toro Kingdom). Government argued that this would lead to violent clashes between the Bamba/Babwisi and Bakonzo with severe security implications as was the case of June 30, 2012; when Omusinga visited Bundibugyo and set up a royal shrine and a flag at Kirindi Village in Bwamba County resulting into violent clashes between the Bakonzo and Baamba-Babwisi ethnicities leading to loss of life, property and displacements as the latter declined paying allegiance to the Omusinga. This government decision was misconceived by some OBR monarchists.

c. *The Omusinga's refusal to reduce the number of royal guards*

Prior to the attack on the OBR palace in Kasese, government had ordered all traditional and cultural institutions to reduce on their royal guards to only nine because Government had deployed UPDF soldiers to oversee their security but the Omusinga didn't comply. Thus, Security Agencies suspected the Omusinga and his royal guards, maintaining their old motives of Yiira State creation hence, were linked to the violent conflicts and the illegal forces fighting government in the area (Basiime, 2016).

The Commander-in-Chief maintained that the Omusinga rejected repeated calls to disband or reduce his royal guards some of which, were reportedly collaborating with subversive forces who carried out thirteen coordinated attacks against security units and civilians in the area. This justified the assault by the combined security forces on the OBR palace (Arinaitwe, 2016).

v) Struggle for leadership and Power

From table 1 above; 188 (47%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 160 (40%) agreed, 52 (13%) were not sure and none disagreed. Thus, majority of the respondents agreed that struggle for leadership and power is a conflict driver in the Rwenzururu sub-region. Research revealed that, the struggle for leadership and power, based on ethnic divides, causes conflicts that severely affect the peaceful coexistence of the Rwenzururus and also the peaceful relations with the State.

Horowitz (1985), asserts that struggle for leadership and power usually causes conflicts that strain the bonds of sustainable civility and violence that results into loss of lives and property, and displacements of many people. Thus, in ethnically divided societies, conflict is always at the center of politics because access to political power by and large, determines the control and distribution of social service benefits.

vi) Post-election Activities

From table 1 above; were that 132 (33%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 120 (30%) agreed, 52 (13%) were not sure, 44 (11%) disagreed and 52 (13%) strongly disagreed. Thus, majority of 252 (63%) of the respondents agreed that post-election activities are a driver of conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region.

The research revealed that the outcome of the 2016 general elections was a serious driver of the 2016 post-election violent clashes in the Rwenzururu sub region where the government (NRM) miserably lost to the opposition Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) who made alliance with the Bakonzo based OBR to gain political power by the later hoping that the former would grant their ethnical demands. Thus, the FDC won majority of the Parliamentary and local council seats in the OBR dominated areas in the sub region. This political loss did not auger well with the NRM and thus, could have made the government and security forces to fabricate rebel and other criminal allegations against the leaders of OBR in order to justify the attacks on the Kingdom palace on November 27, 2016.

However, the security operatives and government officials contend that NRM loss of 2016 general elections happened not only in the Rwenzururu sub region but in many other parts of the country and there has been no such violent conflictual occurrences. In any case, there were attacks by the youth wing of the OBR; the *Isyomango Syo Businga* in Rwenzururu sub region in 2012 and 2014 far before 2016 general elections. These attackers subsequently graduated into a militia, that was trained, uniformed, armed, camped, and under a well-established command and control structure that was composed of the strong hearted and keepers of a secret (*the Kilhumira Mutima*) who occasioned most of the violent attacks in the sub region. It was therefore emphasised that the violent occurrences in the area are a matter of security and rule of law (criminality) for which some people were held accountable.

vii)   Discriminative and Misconceived Governance Policies

From table 1 above; 160 (40%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 100 (25%) agreed, 20 (5%) were not sure, 80 (20%) disagreed, 40 (10%) strongly disagreed. Thus, majority of the respondents (260 representing 65%), agreed that discriminative and misconceived governance policies have significantly aggravated the conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region.

The research revealed that there is also misconception of some of the government policies such as the creation of more cultural institutions and administrative units like the Districts, Counties, municipalities or

sub counties and town councils in the sub region. The decentralised governance policy introduced in Uganda in the 1990s, allows people to demand for administrative units based on ethnic sentiments. This has greatly escalated conflicts in the sub region because administrative units are perceived as an autonomous center for access and control of resources and influence decisions for social service delivery and employment opportunities. The study therefore, concluded that these discriminative governance tendencies drive the prospects for violent conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region. Also the government granting the demands of some ethnicities and leaving others, makes the aggrieved groups misconceive the policy as being discriminative and thus, the conflictual conduct.

This is collaborated by KRC and RFPJ (2012), that political leadership and power in Rwenzururu sub region is determined and held on ethnic basis. The ethnic group in control formulates and enforces governance policies that favour their own ethnicity and hence, discrimination against other ethnicities in the sub region resulting into conflicts. For example, the Basongora in Kasese district were allocated land that was part of the gazetted Queen Elizabeth National Park, which has been long restricted to the Bakonzo and this makes them to feel that they are being excluded, ignored and discriminated in their own land.

b) **Economic Drivers of Conflict in the Rwenzururu Sub Region**

i) **Struggle for Access and Control of Natural Resources**

From table 1 above; 80 (20%) strongly agreed, 180 (45%) agreed, 40 (10%) were not sure, 60 (15%) disagreed and 40 (10%) strongly disagreed. Thus, majority (260 representing 65%) of the respondents agreed that struggle for access and control of natural resources such as land and minerals is a driver of conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region.

The study revealed that ethnic groups in the Rwenzururu sub region have perceptions and stereotype thinking against each other. The Batooro were seen to be highly favored by both colonial and post-independence governments in Uganda, when distributing natural resources such as land, minerals and social service benefits which are significant drivers of economic growth and development. Following the

colonial government's decision to gazette most of the land in this sub region as national parks and game reserves such as Semuliki, Queen Elizabeth, and Rwenzori National Parks, there is inequitable access to, and use of arable land and hence, one of the structural causes of the high levels of poverty that is always exploited by the perpetuators of conflicts in the region leading to breakdown of rule of law and hence, insecurity.

This was collaborated by the Kajura Commission of Inquiry (2005), that there are serious claims after claims over land rights between the Bakonzo and other communities in the Rwenzururu sub region. This is believed to be one of the key causes of conflicts in the sub region. Thus, the commission strongly recommends government intervention on the matter of land rights and disputes; entailing thorough investigations in order to provide solutions for lasting peace and stability.

ii) High Levels of Poverty

As indicated in table 1 above; 132 (33%) strongly agreed, 200 (50%) agreed and 68 (17%) disagreed. Thus, majority of the respondents (332 representing 83%) agreed that the high level of poverty is a serious driver of conflict in the Rwenzururu sub region.

The study found out that there is a high level of poverty in the Rwenzururu sub region which pushes people to resort to violent activities as a way of earning a living. The unemployed youth are highly manipulated into radicalism when they are duped into securing income-generating placements and hence, some of them end up into rebel activities and other law violating transactions.

c) Social Drivers of Conflict in the Rwenzururu Sub Region

i) Ethnic Divisions and cultural differences

As indicated in table 1 above were that; 88 (22%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 188 (47%) agreed, 80 (20%) of the respondents disagreed, 20 (7%) strongly disagreed and 20 (5%) of the respondents were

not sure. Thus, majority of the respondents (268 representing 67%) agreed that ethnic divisions and cultural differences and a conflict driver in the Rwenzururu sub region.

The research revealed that the ethnic groups in the Rwenzururu sub region have their fundamental moral, religious, political, cultural and social values, norms and beliefs that they safeguard strongly and without any compromise. Hence, any clash in these, is a key driver of ethnic and cultural related conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region. Thus, the differences in ethnicity, tradition, cultural practices, values, beliefs, norms and the possible fear of suppression drive ethnic related conflicts in the area. This is also reflected in their political expressions where they vote their political leaders basing on their ethnic identities. Respondents averred that the Bakonzo monarchists have always wanted to use their dominance to impose their traditions, and cultural values and beliefs on all the other ethnic groups in the area; arguing that the existence of Baamba and Basongora in an area under the Bakonzo dominated OBR was undermining the OBR Kingdom powers and authority. The Basongora on the other hand, also want to establish their own kingdom following the creation of the Baamba's Obudingiya and hence, a driver of conflicts in the sub region.

This is collaborated by Kanyangara (2016), that ethnic and cultural dynamics are a strong conflict driver in the great lakes region of Africa. Unlike other regions, conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region in particular and Uganda at large, have been motivated not by ideology, but typically by ethnicity or by political leaders' ability to arouse ethnic and cultural hostility for their specific gains. Thus, to understand the ethnic dimensions in the Rwenzururu sub region, one should first understand the ethnic distributions in the area.

ii) Perceptions and Stereotyping

From table 1 above; 88 (22%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 188 (47%) agreed, 80 (20%) disagreed, 24 (6%) strongly disagreed and 20 (5%) of the respondents were not sure. This means majority of the respondents (276 representing 68%) agreed with the statement.

The study revealed that initially, the Batooro undermined the Rwenzururus as not civilised simply because of their difference in physique and cultural practices that were believed to be inferior. This historically caused tensions and hence, violent conflicts between the Batooro and Rwenzururus. Later the conflict arose between the Bakonzo and other ethnicities in the area when the Bakonzo monarchists also held similar sentiments that they were more superior to the rest of the ethnic groups in the sub region.

This is well collaborated by Mwambusia (2012), that ethnic and political perceptions and stereotyping have greatly contributed to the perpetration of destructive conflicts in Uganda as a country. The monarchical societies in Uganda possess ethnic and political perceptions and stereotype of thinking that they are more civilised and hence superior, and the non-monarchists are primitive. It is this ethnic and political perceptions and stereotype of thinking which was responsible for the 2009 Kayunga riots that left 27 people dead when the Government security forces stopped Kabaka of Buganda from visiting Bugerere, now under the Banyara Cultural leader (Sabanyara).

iii) Social Inequalities

Table 1 above indicates that; 200 (50%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 160 (40%) agreed, 24 (6%) disagreed and 12 (3%) strongly disagreed. Thus, the majority (360 representing 90 %) of the respondents agreed that Social inequalities is a driver of conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region leading to a breakdown in the rule of law and thus, cause for insecurity.

iv) Unemployment

From table 1 above; 132 (33%) strongly agreed, 200 (50%) agreed and 68 (17%) disagreed. Thus, the majority (332 representing 83%) of the respondents agreed that high levels of unemployment is a conflict driver in the Rwenzururu sub region.

The research found out that there is a high level of unemployment in the Rwenzururu sub region especially the youths yet many of them have nucleus and extended families to support. The unemployed

youth are normally pushed into dubious and violent activities and they are manipulated into radicalism by the perpetuators of conflict and insecurity in the area as they are duped into being offered income-generating placements so as to earn a living.

This is collaborated by Akowe (2010), that employment opportunities are a gate-path to social and economic welfare, which in return influences all the other undertakings of humanity. Thus, conflict drivers also revolve around issues of income generating placements hence, the concerns of unemployment. Challenges of unemployment cut across age and ethnicity; especially the youth who feel highly marginalised, leaving them to be manipulated and used by the perpetuators of conflicts and insecurity where they engage for purposes of social identity, economic survival and to let out their frustrations.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

a) Summary

The drivers of conflict in the Rwenzururu sub region of Western Uganda are many and complex Thus, there is no single cause of conflicts nor is there any single pre-condition for sustainable peace and stability. Often, these drivers underlie actual or perceived inequalities and grievances between ethnicities, which among others results into violent expression of the grievances.

The conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region are essentially and broadly driven by political, economic and social factors: historical connotations and colonial legacies, struggle for political autonomy and self-determination, struggle for leadership and power, discriminatory and misconceived government policies, ethnic divisions and cultural differences, post-election activities, perception and stereo typing, Social inequalities, Struggle for Access and control of resources, high levels of poverty, high levels of unemployment and unequal distribution of resources and opportunities.

b) Conclusion

As is the case world over, understanding the major drivers of conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region is a

complex study with no single cause or set of preconditions for these conflicts. Thus, the drivers of conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region are many, multifaceted in nature, and with constructive and destructive effects on both State and human security. They are both historical and contemporary; and they are attributed to an interplay of a number of factors or aspects of life but essentially and broadly anchored on political, social and economic contexts.

It suffices to note that, the genesis of conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region did not at all start with the current NRM government but during pre-colonial times, intensified during the Colonial era and have lingered on throughout Uganda's span of independence. The research reveals both traditional, historical and contemporary contexts of the drivers of the conflicts and how these conflicts have influenced security and rule of law in the area. As such, the prospective strategies put in place to resolve these conflicts ought to be both contextual and situational; and anchored on liberalism approach.

c) Recommendations

The research recommends politically, economically and socially grounded strategies for resolving conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region, to attain lasting peace and stability hence, growth and development of the area. These among others include:

i) **Employing an integrated approach to conflict resolution and accountability;** allowing for the **Alternative Dispute Resolution** (ADR) mechanisms such as mediation, negotiations, dialogue, conciliation and reconciliation with and among the traditional and cultural leaders and involving all other actors/stakeholders; and **traditional justice mechanisms** such as local courts and ritual performance as it was witnessed in northern Uganda with *Culo Kwor, Mato Oput, Kayo Cuk, Ailuc*, *Tonu ci Koka*, to deal with the aftermath of the LRA and other conflicts, The *akiriket* for the Karamojongs, *kitewuliza* for Baganda. All actors should adopt the liberalism, rather than the realism approach of conventional, confrontational, militarism and criminalisation; by involving both state and non-state actors who should be allowed to give their views freely. By so doing, the

State/government should **shift from the traditional power politics** and avoid the negative effects thereof by acting liberal and morally in their routines and hence, encouraging non-partisanship.

ii) **Creation of supra-national institutions and supra ethnical institutions;** replacing the competitive and conflict prone systems of agitations for tribal territorial controls; calling for new transitional norms to check the initiations of conflicts and war, and their possible negative effects or destructions.

iii) **Thoroughly investigate, trace, document and address the perceived Historical Injustices;** by way of reparations preferably physical compensations in case of lost property and human lives; and dully supported by sensitising the masses on the promotion of initiatives that foster attitude change for cohesion and socio-economic transformation.

iv) **Government should consider revisiting the misconceived Policies** that cause conflicts such as; creations of parallel cultural institutions and the decentralisation, which have created a lot of conflicts in the sub region.

v) Both State and non-state actors should **enhance community-security relations**; gathering information and proactively resolving conflicts by building security-community partnerships.

vi) **Actors should avoid politicising security matters and sectarianism for political gains** but instead, work together to inform the communities on the need to exceed denominational and narrow-minded tribalism and look at each other as equal stakeholders in the sub region.

vii) **Actors should re-enforcing the Norms and Values of the Rwenzururu People;** in order to build dynamic families and hence, peace and stability

viii) **Maximum attention should be paid to the domestic and gender-based violence in the area** by providing information and comprehensive assistance to the vulnerable survivors or victims of the conflict, especially in host communities; and paying special attention to persons with special needs, taking into account the cultural and traditional perspectives.

ix) Uganda Communications Commission should **ensure Responsible media reporting is employed in the** already polarised community; by both local and international media houses and networks, avoiding inciting violence and manipulation/misinformation of the public. Lest we end up into full genocide as was the case in Rwanda in 1994.

x) **Government should review and implement Recommendations of the 2005 Kajura Ministerial Commission;** to help settle a number of the long standing tribal conflicts and disputes in the region including the prominent land tensions.

xi) **Application of Constitutional and Subordinate Legal means;** and keep away from ethnic biases encourages transcending the ethnic conglomeration. Article (246) of the Constitution and other subordinate laws, should be reviewed consultatively, to address the existing ambiguities and clearly define the powers and functions of all cultural institutions in Uganda and hence, reduced ethnic clashes.

xii) Law enforcers should always **expediting Investigations and Court Processes** in full observance of the law as to the rights of the detainees and prisoners; and the circumstances of those who lost their lives and property in the conflicts so as to facilitate possible compensation. Court hearings should be expedited and ensure impartial, transparent, fair and speedy trials, so that justice prevails for the accused and victims of the conflicts.

xiii) **Political Socialisation and Dialogue;** should be encouraged to help people acquire knowledge, skills, dispositions and empowering them for responsible political participation, societal integration, and curbing inter-ethnic animosity leading to peace and stability and hence, growth and development of the area.

xiv) **Government should step up her economic intervention Programs;** such as Youth Livelihood Program, SAGE, Women's Fund, Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisations (SACCOs) and other Government funded youth and women's groups. This will improve on the livelihoods of the people and hence, not highly manipulated by conflict perpetuators.

The need for further Research

Further research should be undertaken by the academicians, scholars and any other concerned stakeholders, in the following areas among others: The effectiveness of Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms in resolving conflicts in the Rwenzururu sub region; The drivers of ethnic conflicts in Uganda; The role of government in conflict prevention, management and resolution in Uganda; and The roles played by religious, traditional or cultural leaders in prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Uganda.

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