

**CONFLICT MONITORING IN AFRICA FOR
STRATEGIC INTERVENTION**

Centre for Research, Training and Publication (CRTP)

Hekima University College

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INTRODUCTION

Conflict, especially between communities and nations has always been a dominant concern for societies and civilizations.¹ The year 2023 has witnessed a notable increase in global conflicts, stemming from various sources. These conflicts include the Israel-Palestinian conflict in Gaza, the ongoing Russia invasion of Ukraine, clashes between Hezbollah and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) on the Israel-Lebanon Border, the Houthis posing a threat to the transport of goods in the Red Sea, the Sudan Civil War, violent extremism in the Sahel and West Africa, and instability in Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Sudan. Throughout the world conflicts persist, and 2023 has unfortunately marked the highest number of conflict-related deaths since the beginning of the 21st century. According to the Diakonia International Humanitarian Law Centre's report as of December 12, 2023, the Gaza health ministry reported approximately 18,205 Palestinians killed in Gaza, with around 70% of the deaths being women and children.² Conversely, Israeli authorities reported 1,200 deaths due to Hamas attacks on Israel, and 105 IDF soldiers were reported killed since Israel's ground invasion in Gaza as of the same date.³ In October 2023, the United Nations Aid Chief stated that 9,000 people had been killed in the six-month war in Sudan.⁴ Additionally, violence has escalated significantly in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Ethiopia in the East African region.

The ongoing conflicts in Africa have resulted in the displacement of more than 40 million people, and this number has further increased in 2023, primarily due to heightened violence in various countries including Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Sudan, Chad, Mali, DRC, Eritrea, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Burundi, Somalia, South Sudan, Cameroon, and the Central African Republic (CAR).⁵ The conflict between the Sudan Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has particularly devastated the people of Sudan, leading to the external displacement of over 4.5 million people to neighboring countries.⁶ In Somalia, the state government's offensive against Al-

¹ J., Burton, & F., Dukes, eds, *Conflict: Reading in Management and Resolution*, (Place: Publisher, Date) p. 1.

² 2023 Hostilities and escalating violence in the OPT | Factual account of events. (2023). Diakonia International Humanitarian Law Centre. <https://www.diakonia.se/ihl/news/2023-hostilities-in-gaza-and-israel-factual-account-of-events/>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Magdy, S. (2023, October 15). UN aid chief says six months of war in Sudan has killed 9,000 people | AP News. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/sudan-war-military-rsf-conflict-khartoum-f12975eb72c830ed86ed6a7a49e9658d>

⁵ Studies, T. a. C. F. S. (2023, October 26). African conflicts displace over 40 million people – Africa Center for Strategic Studies. Africa Center for Strategic Studies. <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/african-conflicts-displace-over-40-million-people/>

⁶ Ibid.

Shabab has triggered retaliatory attacks on civilians.⁷ In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, violence linked to nonstate militias, notably the M23 rebel organization, has forcibly displaced nearly a million people from their homes in 2023.⁸ Ethiopia continues to experience significant displacement, primarily driven by long-standing intercommunal tensions and violence inherent in the country's ethnic federal architecture, posing an ongoing threat to peace and stability.⁹ Consequently, in 2023, conflicts persist across Africa, spanning from the Great Lakes and the western Sahel to the Horn of Africa, underscoring the profound impact of these conflicts on regional stability.

The ongoing conflicts have highlighted the significance of creating proactive ways to mitigate conflict and its devastating consequences. As a result, the 2023 Conflict Monitoring Tool (CMT) was developed to conduct a comprehensive analysis of conflict scenarios in the DRC, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Kenya. The 2023 CMT examines the present status of conflict in these four countries while also proposing possible responses mechanisms. The CMT data is meant to assist peacemakers and conflict resolution experts in developing effective strategies based on the conflict levels determined. Furthermore, the conflict monitoring exercise makes it easier to identify and implement preventive measures aimed at restoring peace in conflict-affected areas in Kenya, South Sudan, Ethiopia and DRC.

The CMT project focused on the development of a Conflict Monitoring Tool (CMT) with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan as selected sample countries for the study. DRC was chosen because it represents African states experiencing protracted conflicts with regard to the competition for natural resources, inter-ethnic conflicts, national boundaries, poor governance, multiplication of militia groups, failure of the UN peace mission to engage and integrate key actors as well as lack of integration and engagement of local cultures. DRC not only has fertile agricultural land and a rich diversity of wildlife, but also huge deposits of minerals like copper, cobalt, diamonds, gold, uranium, platinum, palladium among others. However, the unending violent conflicts that have characterized the country's history remains a major concern of the country.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

Ethiopia on the other hand, represents a unique case study for the implications of governance structures in peace stability. The country is governed by an ethno-federalism model that demarcates regions in terms of ethnic groups of Oromo, Tigray, Amhara, Somali, Sidama, Gurage, Weleyta and Hadiya. These regions have considerable independence to the extent of being able to vote to secede.¹⁰ The adoption of an ethnic-based federal system which provides territory authority to different ethnic groups has been the driving force behind the ethnic-based conflicts in Ethiopia. Though this system was set in place to address conflict between regions by giving them a certain degree of independence, it has also been a source of conflict in recent years. Ethiopia gives insights into understanding conflict brought on by tensions within government systems.

Kenya represents African countries that experience occasional conflicts and terror attacks. While the country is generally stable and enjoys strong economic performance regionally, it has had a number of overlapping low intensity conflicts ranging from ethnic clashes, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), election-related violence, and terrorism. The nature of conflict in Kenya can be attributed to issues concerning social fragmentation, negative ethnicity, political animosity, corruption, impunity of leaders, as well as gender and social group exclusion from conflict management and peace building process. Other issues include land disputes, discrimination, and marginalization, the penetration of Al-Shabaab's ideologies into the country's local politics, and the proliferation of small arms.

Finally, South Sudan has experienced intermittent conflict since it gained independence in 2011. At the center of South Sudan's conflict is a myriad of factors such as political arrangements for power-sharing, agreements on the number of states, demobilization of the armed forces, failure of peace agreements, delayed election date, and the formation of a government of national unity. Since the 2013 eruption of conflict in South Sudan, there have been several peace agreements between President Salva Kiir's faction and that of his former deputy Riek Machar. Though the

¹⁰ Ethiopia's Constitution of 1994, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Ethiopia_1994.pdf?lang=en (accessed November 18, 1994).

peace agreement signed in 2020 brought an end to a five-year conflict,¹¹ implementing the agreement has been slow, with fears that widespread conflict would be ignited once again.¹²

This report is divided into four sections: The first section deals with the conceptualization of the conflict monitoring tool, followed by an analysis of existing conflict monitoring tools. The second section provides a background of the conflict and peace situations in each of the countries under study. This is followed by an analysis of the factors that tend to influence the status of peace or conflict. The third section outlines the methodology used in conducting the study. This includes research design, sampling, and data collection strategies, as well as analysis of the data and a systematic explanation of the development and application of the Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations (HIPSIR) Conflict Monitoring Tool (CMT). The final section outlines the diverse areas of concern in the study and some recommendations for action.

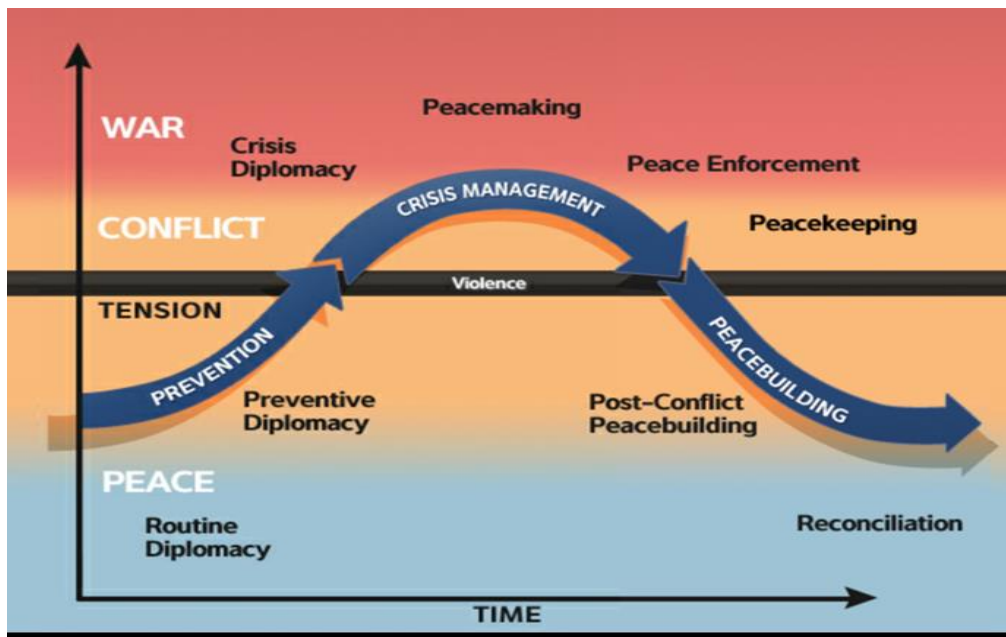
¹¹Mednick S, “Old grudges and empty coffers: South Sudan’s precarious peace process,” *The New Humanitarian*, January 21, 2021, <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2021/01/21/south-sudan-peace-deal-violence-famine>

¹² United Nations, “South Sudan’s Transitional Government Must Build on Gains, Speed Up Implementation of Peace Agreement, Mission Head Says in Security Council Briefing,” <https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/sc14457.doc.htm> March 21, 2021.

Conflict Curve Assessment

In order to monitor conflict levels, the HIPSIR CMT was designed to analyze conflicts in line with the conflict curve assessment. To accomplish this, a modified version of Lund's conflict curve was adopted (See Lund's curve in figure 1 below). Lund's conflict curve is elaborate and gives different methods of intervention employed in conflict resolution. In addressing ongoing conflicts, Lund's is a useful tool¹³ to indicate the various stages of a conflict. Conflict curve seeks to achieve seven goals. *First*, it indicates the stage of a conflict. *Second*, it points to possible interventions that can be adopted by different actors. *Third*, it plays an important role in identifying the indicators for conflict early warning. *Fourth*, it shows five stages of a conflict. *Fifth*, it assesses how conflict escalates from one stage to another. *Sixth*, it is ideal for identifying patterns in the conflict. *Finally*, it shows the increasing or decreasing intensity of a conflict situation.¹⁴

Figure 1: Conflict Curve Representing Different Levels of Conflict



¹³ Lund S. M., "Curve of Conflict," United States Institute of Peace. <https://www.usip.org/public-education/students/curve-conflict>, 2012

¹⁴ Marian Hassan, "Conflict Curve/Stages Of Conflict," *The Peace and Collaborative Development Network (PCDN)*, June 27, 2010. <https://pcdnetwork.org/blogs/conflict-curve-stages-of-conflict/>

Source: Conflict Curve Representing Different Levels¹⁵

Niklas Swanström and Mikael Weissmann additionally explore the phases of conflict development. Recognizing the dynamic nature of conflicts, they emphasize the importance of comprehending the conflict life cycle to determine optimal moments and methods for strategic interventions. This underscores the necessity for a monitoring tool that tracks the progression of conflict, aiding in the understanding of opportune moments for strategic interventions to prevent the escalation of conflict and its frequently destructive outcomes. The conflict model delineates an abstract conflict cycle, segmented into distinct phases representing various aspects of conflict progression.¹⁶

According to Swanström and Weissmann these stages of the conflict are:

¹⁵ Conflict Curve Adopted from United States Institute of Peace, Accessed June 7, 2019, url: <https://www.usip.org/public-education/students/curve-conflict>.

¹⁶ Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann. Conflict, Conflict Prevention, Conflict Management and beyond: a conceptual exploration. Johns Hopkins University: Massachusetts, p. 9.

Table 1: Stages of Conflict

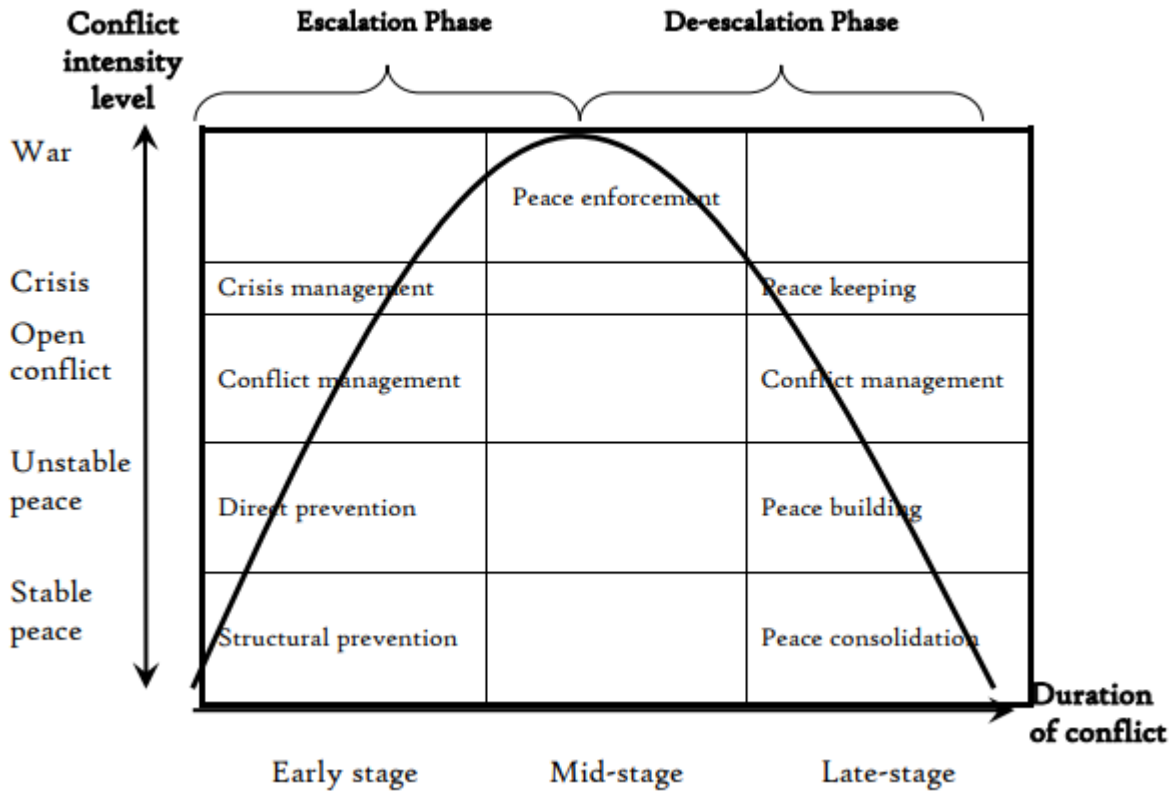
STAGE OF CONFLICT	DESCRIPTION
Stable peace	Where there exists very little or any tension between parties and there is cooperation between parties, economically, socially, and environmentally. There is also cooperation in non-sensitive areas.
Unstable peace	Presence of negative peace and increased tensions between parties.
Open Conflict	Whereby the conflict has been identified and conflict parties are ready to engage in the conflict, even if militarized options have not been adopted. ¹⁷
Crisis	Militarized options are preferred, sporadic acts of violence and the eventuality of war is imminent.
War	Intense, widespread violent conflict.

(Source: Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005)

While the five stages present an escalation of conflict, for the de-escalation the progression is reversed, until the situation arrives back at stable peace.

¹⁷ Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, Conflict, Conflict Prevention, Conflict Management and beyond: a conceptual exploration, p.11.

Figure 2: The Conflict Cycle



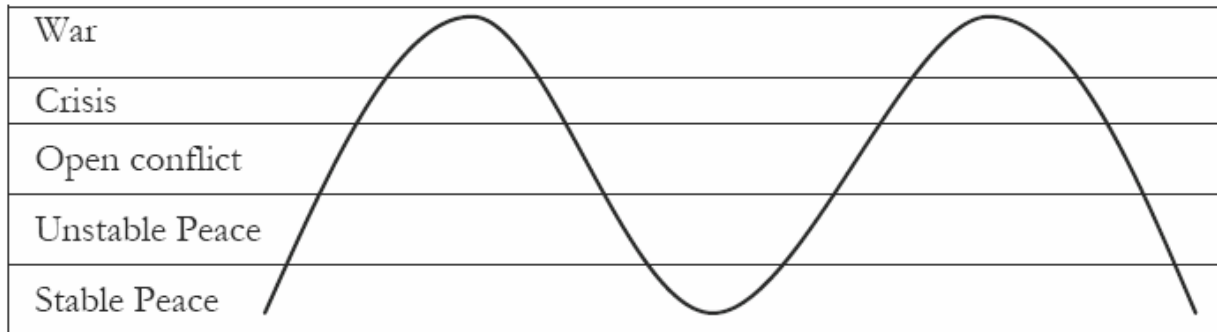
(Source: Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005, p. 11)

Swanström and Weissmann also acknowledge that this conflict curve is idealistic as conflict does not always follow such a predictable progression; because of its dynamic nature, each conflict situation adopts its unique conflict curve. They, therefore, highlight various scenarios that could characterize a conflict cycle.

To begin with, a conflict can re-occur over time, “and pass through the different stages over and over again.”¹⁸ It thus takes on the form of a wave as below:

¹⁸ Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, p. 15.

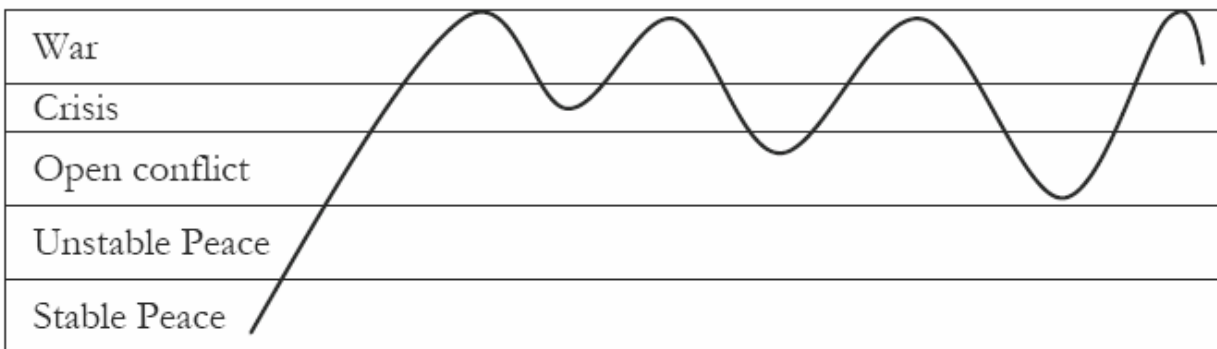
Figure 3: Conflict Curve A



(Source: Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005, p. 15)

Secondly, the above conflict wave does not occur predictably as indicated. However, a conflict can re-escalate at any phase of the conflict curve.¹⁹ Indeed what is usually observed is that a conflict will often reoccur between the crisis and war phases, either because crisis management breaks down or conflict resolution strategies adopted are not effective. The conflict curve is as below:

Figure 4: Conflict Curve B



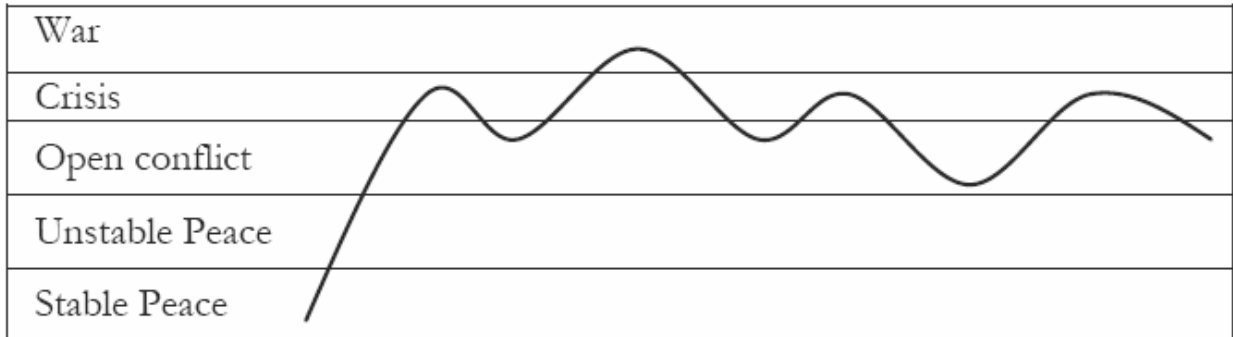
(Source: Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005, p. 15)

Thirdly, a conflict situation sometimes gets entrenched between the escalation phases of open conflict and crisis never reaching the level of war. Such conflicts are usually left without concrete

¹⁹ Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, Conflict, Conflict Prevention, Conflict Management and beyond: a conceptual exploration, p. 15-16.

resolution, making them prone to further escalation in the future. The conflict curve would therefore look like this:

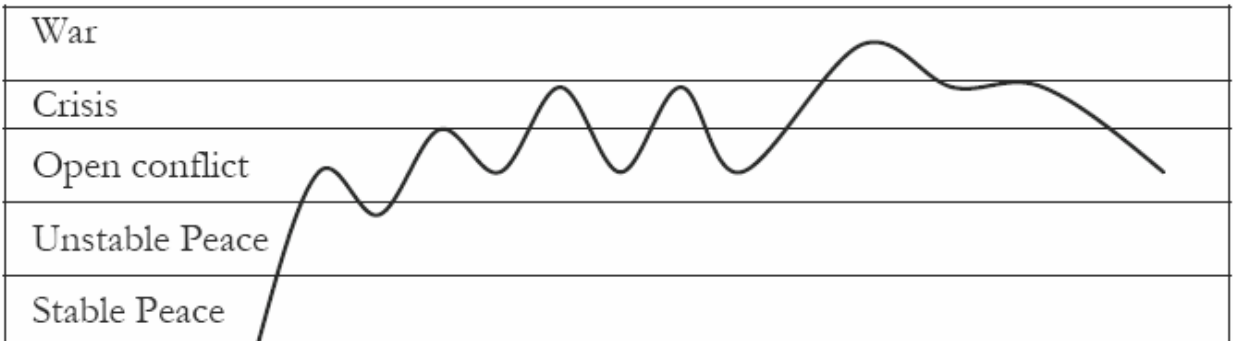
Figure 5: Conflict Curve C



(Source: Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005, p. 16)

Moreover, Swanstrom and Weissmann also point out that sometimes conflicts will waver between unstable peace, open conflict, and crisis. Somewhat similar to the previous example, while the conflict may not fully escalate to war, it usually remains unresolved over a long period as shown below.

Figure 6: Conflict Curve D

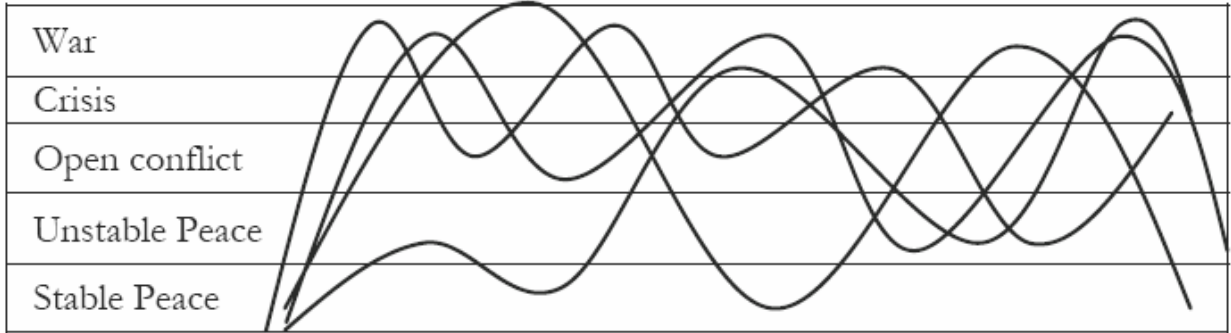


(Source: Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005, p. 16)

Further, they also hold that conflicts can also occur concurrently, meaning that during a specific time and space multiple conflicts driven by diverse issues can be occurring side by side.²⁰ This is illustrated by the conflict curve below:

²⁰ Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, p. 17.

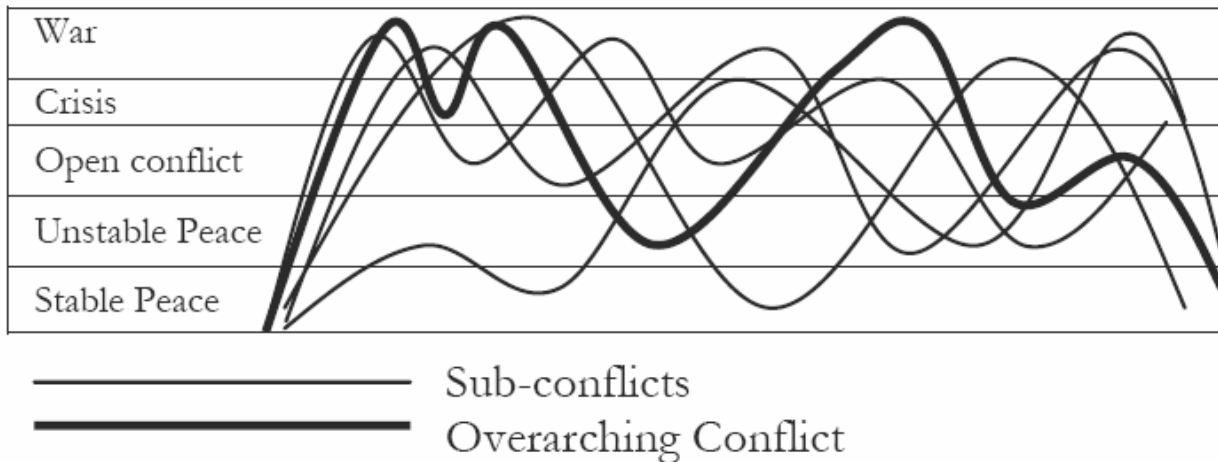
Figure 7: Conflict Curve E



(Source: Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005, p. 17)

Also, in other instances there could be a core conflict with smaller (sub) conflicts occurring alongside it, each of these sub conflicts would have its conflict cycles.²¹ Once again this complicates the conflict curve. Such a conflict situation would be indicated with the model below:

Figure 8: Conflict Curve F



(Source: Swanstrom and Weissmann, 2005, p. 17)

Therefore, their point is that, conflict is not neatly simplified and consequently it does not follow a predictable progression as imagined by the conflict curve. Nonetheless, a conflict curve is useful in indicating trends.

²¹ Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, p. 17.

Understanding the conflict curve and the various phases that a conflict progresses through is integral to the monitoring of conflict and consequently informs the intervention and resolution strategies to be employed to effectively mitigate and eventually resolve a conflict to realize stable (positive) peace. Therefore, over time, having successfully monitored conflict in the region periodically, the HIPSIR CMT will be in a position to represent various conflict scenarios with the use of the conflict curve.

HIPSIR CMT Conflict Curve

The HIPSIR CMT conflict curve is a tool developed by the Centre of Research, Training and Publications to monitor the conflict levels across different regions. It is an innovation combining the concept of a conflict curve as detailed by Michael Lund and Swanstrom and Weissmann and the levels of conflict as detailed in Table 2. The conflict curve from Swanstrom and Weissmann indicates five stages of a conflict, namely: stable peace, unstable peace, open conflict, crisis, and war, while Lund's curve indicates three stages of conflict i.e., peace, conflict, and war.²² However, the HIPSIR CMT chose to use the levels of conflict as detailed by Marian Hassan. This is because they indicate escalation and de-escalation levels of conflict thus making it easier to identify indicators that describe each level of conflict clearly. Having clear indicators to describe each level of conflict is important as this would ensure having a clear understanding of what level a conflict situation might be at a given point in time. Subsequently, this identification would inform what intervention strategies to be applied.

The second innovation is that the HIPSIR CMT has a numerical scale of measuring conflict levels, unlike Lund's and Swanstrom and Weissmann's models. This scale was developed through a rigorous process of selecting measurable indicators of conflict and statistical calculations that were tested over time to ascertain their accuracy in measuring conflict levels. Conflict level or the severity of a conflict, according to the HIPSIR CMT, is measured on a scale ranging from negative two (-2) and positive three (+3). In this case, the CMT has six levels that are statistically calculated using 34 indicators of conflict (see Appendix). The HIPSIR CMT conflict curve is shown in the figure below.

²² Swanström, Niklas L.P. & Mikael S. Weissmann, p. 11.

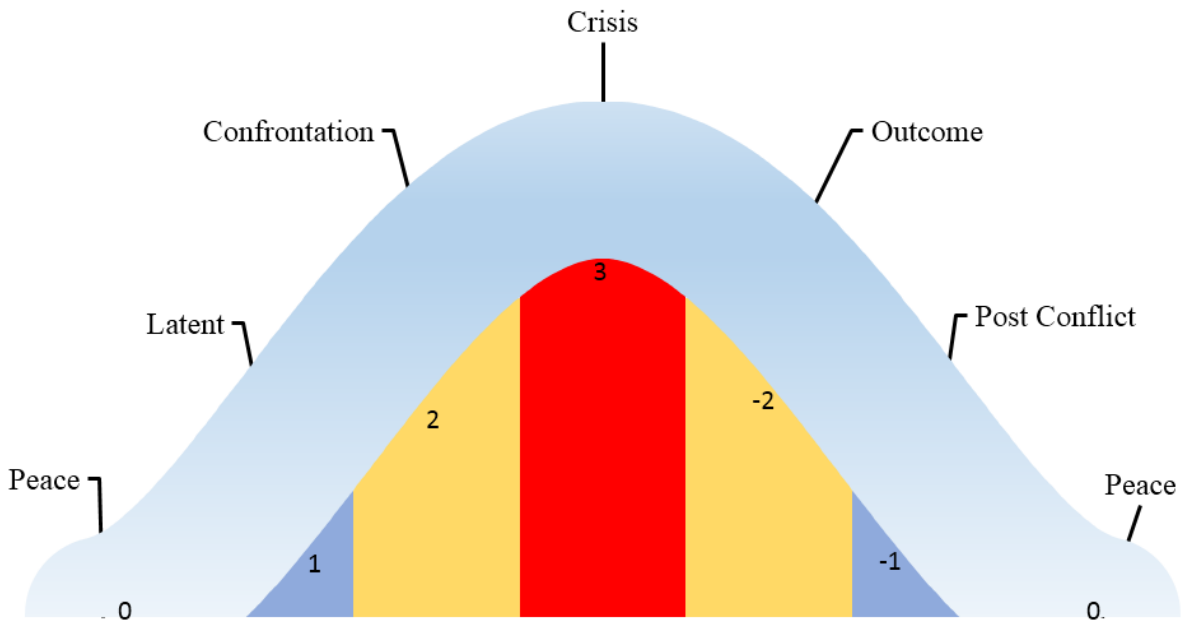


Figure 9: HIPSIR CMT Conflict Curve

These levels and their respective numerical denotation are explained below.

Table 2: Description of conflict levels

Conflict Level	Description
Peace (0)	At this stage, there is no conflict whatsoever.
Latent (1)	This level is characterized by incompatible goals between one or more parties but hidden from the public. If not identified early and proper intervention not taken to address the causes of the tension, a confrontation occurs. ²³
Confrontation (2)	At this stage, the conflict is more open. There could be intolerance that may lead to confrontational behavior. If no interventions take place, the situation may become polarized leading to a crisis. ²⁴
Crisis (3)	At this level, there is war or open conflict.
Outcome (-2)	Either one party in the conflict is defeated, or there may be an intervention from a third party that leads to a ceasefire. It may also occur when the conflict is ripe for intervention and all parties are tired and ready for dialogue. The force of the government could also lead to an outcome.
Post Conflict (-1)	When the issues are finally resolved and relationships normalize. If the cause of the incompatible goals among the parties is not addressed, the tension can occur and revert to pre-conflict or confrontation stages.

(Source: Marian Hassan, 2010)

In some instances, many issues of a cycle of conflict are not fully addressed and this sets the stage for a subsequent conflict. A similar situation may also occur if state machinery is generally weak and not able to enforce enduring peace. The result is usually another outbreak of war.

²³ Marian Hassan, "Conflict Curve/Stages Of Conflict," *The Peace and Collaborative Development Network (PCDN)*, June 27, 2010, <https://pcdnetwork.org/blogs/conflict-curve-stages-of-conflict/>

²⁴ Marian Hassan, "Conflict Curve/Stages Of Conflict," *The Peace and Collaborative Development Network (PCDN)*, June 27, 2010, <https://pcdnetwork.org/blogs/conflict-curve-stages-of-conflict/>

Conceptualization of Conflict Monitoring Tool (CMT)

On realizing the need to bring together all actors through the creation of a platform for gathering and sharing of information, the Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations (HIPSIR) developed a conflict monitoring tool (CMT) known as the HIPSIR CMT. Through its development, the HIPSIR CMT seeks to contribute to the practice of conflict monitoring in Africa by fostering cooperation in generating information on the best strategies to manage conflict.

To effectively monitor conflict and develop goal-oriented conflict resolution or peace-building interventions, there is need to understand the theory of change, which “explains how a given intervention, or set of interventions, are expected to lead to specific development change, drawing on a causal analysis based on available evidence.”²⁵ A theory of change explains why certain actions will produce desired change in a given context. It is intended to make all the implicit assumptions more explicit, in order to clarify which drivers of conflict are being addressed, what are intended outcome of the conflict situation and articulate how and why the situation should be addressed as per the drivers of conflict to achieve the intended outcomes.²⁶ Further, the theory of change is appropriate in understanding conflicts in Africa which are complex due to the numerous drivers and actors involved. Such an approach helps in the identification of actors-centered solutions to address the drivers of conflict effectively by leveraging comparative advantages throughout the change process.

Based on the theory of change, the HIPSIR conflict monitoring tool can be used to suggest the action needed to manage the conflict to ensure peace stability based on the data collected. For instance, if the main driver of conflict is youth, then based on the theory of change we can assume that they are not relatively engaged in constructive work and then if jobs can be created for them, there is anticipation that the youths will be engaged and will not be used as conflict perpetrators.

The conflict monitoring tool can be used to monitor conflict indicators that are consistently observed, to understand whether the conflict is escalating or deescalating for appropriate policy recommendations. This can be explained by the fact that each indicator plays a certain role in

²⁵ Corlazzoli, Vanessa. White, Jonathan. *Practical Approaches to Theories of Change in Conflict, Security, and Justice Programmes: Part II: Using Theories of Change in Monitoring and Evaluation*. City: Department for International Development (DFID), 2013.

²⁶ Babbitt, Eileen, Diana Chigas and Robert Wilkinson. (March 2013). *Theories and indicators of change briefing paper concepts and primers for conflict management and mitigation*. City: United States Agency for International Development.

understanding a conflict situation. In the context of theory of change, indicators are mainly used to assess the assumptions, outputs, outcomes sustainability in comparison with the expectation informed by the design of the program.²⁷ For instance, if conflict management experts in conflict-affected areas accept a new conflict resolution method different from the previous method due to changes in the intensity of the conflict, then in response to such changes, peace practitioners are expected to intervene and suggest appropriate strategies.

Therefore the HIPSIR CMT seeks to generate information by monitoring conflicts and disseminate up-to-date information on the conflict trends of the selected countries for appropriate policy formulation and strategic interventions. The consumers of the information are expected to help restore peace across the region to improve the economic, social, cultural, and political conditions of the people. In this case, the HIPSIR CMT seeks to promote peace by monitoring key indicators that point to concerns that would need attention. By doing so, measures can be taken based on the information provided to prevent an escalation of conflict.²⁸ The use of the HIPSIR CMT will allow for a broader identification of the causes of conflict and propositions on possible ways of resolving conflicts. Following its development, the HIPSIR CMT is one of the numerous existing tools. Some of the existing conflicts monitoring tools and data sources are discussed below.

²⁷ Corlazzoli, V. and White, J (2013). *Practical Approaches to Theories of Change in Conflict, Security, and Justice Programmes: Part II: Using Theories of Change in Monitoring and Evaluation*. City: Department for International Development (DFID).

²⁸ Ibid

Existing Tools for Conflict Monitoring

Conflict Sensitivity Resource Pack. This tool was designed for governments, donors and civil society involved in development, humanitarian assistance and peace building. It recommends the use of perception-based indicators, (for example, does the respondent feels more or less safe) alongside the objective indicators (such as violence incidences) to capture the intangible effects of the conflict.²⁹ This is because classifying conflict indicators by group helps conflict monitoring experts to detect conflict sensitivity concerns. Moreover, the tool is important to peace-builders because peace-building initiatives need to be both conflict sensitive and accountable to peace-building criteria. However, the major limitation of the tool is that it does not provide detailed guidance for every type of intervention or cross-cutting issues in a conflict

Gender and Conflict Sensitivity tool. This tool helps Peace-builders to analyze how gender is affected differently by conflict and how they may seek to resolve it differently, how gender inequality can trigger conflict tension, as well as the intersection of gender with other social divisions such as religion, ethnicity etc.³⁰ The strength of this tool is that it incorporates gender and considers the role of gender in conflict management and peacebuilding.

The *Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)* is majorly involved in conducting “research on the conditions for peaceful relations between states, groups, and people.”³¹ Its emphasis is on understanding issues that either unite societies or split them. Some of the issues that PRIO investigates include how conflicts emerge, their effects on people, how societies respond to them, and how to resolve them.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has been in existence since 1966. Its main aim is “to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.”³² To achieve this, it constantly collects data from open sources, analyses it, and uses the results to make recommendations. Consequently, it is significantly involved in policy analysis where it makes

²⁹ Haider, H., (2014). *Conflict Sensitivity: Topic Guide*. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham.: http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/gsdrc_cs_topic_guide.pdf (Accessed on May 15, 2022)

³⁰ *Gender and Conflict Analysis Toolkit for Peacebuilders* (2015): <https://rc-services-assets.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/CR%20Gender%20Toolkit%20WEB.pdf> (Accessed on May 15, 2022)

³¹ Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO). (n.d.). *About PRIO – Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)*. <https://www.prio.org/About/>

³² *SIPRI data on conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament*. (2024, May 6). Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. <https://www.sipri.org/>

recommendations to parliamentarians, diplomats, journalists, and other experts in the field of security.

The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) is a Swedish based conflict monitoring tool and data source.³³ It has been providing event-based data on violence for over 40 years. It relies on information from news reports that it then codes before entering into the system. It controls data quality by conducting a post-estimation validation exercise. The limitation of this tool is that it relies on information on news reports for data which might affect the data quality and authenticity.

The Institute for Economics and Peace is not only known for developing metrics for peace analysis but also its quantification of the economic value of the same.³⁴ It focuses on four study areas: measuring peace, positive peace, the economics of peace, and understanding risk. It releases the Global Peace Index annually that “measures national peacefulness, ranking 163 countries according to their levels of peace.”³⁵ It collects at least 5000 data sets on eight factors that it uses to measure positive peace besides acting as a guide for overcoming conflicts and promoting lasting peace. It relies on data on 13 types of costs incurred on issues related to conflict to compute the economic valuation of violence as well as fear. Furthermore, the institute measures violence risks using data that it has been collecting since 1996.

*Conflict Alert*³⁶ is a system of monitoring conflict that tracks and reports violent incidence, their causes, as well as their human costs in the Philippines. Its development was based on two databases. It makes a regional comparison of conflict situations with an intention “to shape policymaking, development strategies, and peacebuilding approaches by providing relevant, robust, and reliable conflict data.”³⁷ Its data sources include incident reports from police offices, news reports, and members of multi-stakeholder validation groups (MSVGs). Once the data is collected, it is sorted, encoded, validated, and analyzed. The information is disseminated in the form of charts, graphs, tables, and mapped locational context.

³³ UCDP - Uppsala Conflict Data Program. (n.d.). <https://ucdp.uu.se/>

³⁴ Measuring and Communicating the Economic Value for Peace. (n.d.). Institute of Economics and Peace. <https://www.economicsandpeace.org/about/>

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ “Conflict Alert,” Conflict Alert, <http://conflictaalert.info/about/>

³⁷ “Conflict Alert,” Conflict Alert, <http://conflictaalert.info/about/>

Based in the USA, *the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED)* “is a disaggregated conflict collection, analysis, and crisis mapping project. ACLED collects the dates, actors, types of violence, locations, and fatalities of all reported political violence and protest events across Africa, East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, Latin America, and the Caribbean, and Southeastern and Eastern Europe and the Balkans.”³⁸ It identifies various forms of conflict across the world, the actors’ involved, historical documentation of political violence as well as protests that occur in many countries across the world.

In 2023, ACLED documented numerous instances of violence stemming from political and resource-related competition in Kenya.³⁹ Meanwhile, in the DRC, ACLED highlighted growing tensions between the DRC and Rwanda due to the M-23 rebel group's presence in Eastern DRC, alongside concerns of potential disruption to the national elections scheduled for December 2023.⁴⁰ Additionally, ACLED reported ongoing insecurity in Ethiopia, marked by tensions among militia groups, federal state security forces, and Ethiopian government forces, leading to violent confrontations, particularly in the Amhara region.⁴¹

Good Governance Africa established in 2012 seeks to improve governance in Africa for the betterment of its citizens. It is a “research and advocacy non-profit organization with centers across Africa focused solely on improving governance across the continent.”⁴² One of its tools related to conflict is the Conflict in Africa Monitor (CAM). This conflict monitoring tool is “designed to track and analyze major conflict hotspots across the continent, with the objective of providing decision makers with the data and tools necessary to develop informed policy solutions to mitigate or end political violence and conflict.”⁴³

³⁸ ACLED. (2023, December 5). About ACLED - ACLED. <https://www.acleddata.com/about-acled/>

³⁹ ACLED. (2023, November 16). Kenya situation Update: November 2023 | Competition over politics and resources affect recent county border disputes. ACLED. <https://acleddata.com/2023/11/14/kenya-situation-update-november-2023-competition-over-politics-and-resources-affect-recent-county-border-disputes-in-kenya/#:~:text=Wafula%20Okumu%20and%20Paul%20Kibiwott,identified%20in%20the%20report%20and>

⁴⁰ ACLED. (2023, April 17). Conflict Watchlist 2023: Democratic Republic of Congo. <https://acleddata.com/conflict-watchlist-2023/drc/>

⁴¹ ACLED. (2023a, August 25). Fact Sheet: Crisis in Ethiopia’s Amhara region. ACLED. <https://acleddata.com/2023/08/10/fact-sheet-crisis-in-ethiopia-amhara-region/>

⁴² Molefe, T. (n.d.). About us | Good Governance Africa. <https://gga.org/about-us/>

⁴³ Molefe, T. (n.d.-b). Conflict in Africa Monitor | Good Governance Africa. <https://gga.org/africa-digital-databank/conflict-in-africa-monitor/#governance-barometer>

The Kivu Security Tracker (KST), which is based in the US, was developed in 2017 “to map violence by state security forces and armed groups in the eastern DRC to better understand trends, causes of insecurity and serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.”⁴⁴ Just like the Conflict Alert Tool, the KST reports violent incidences that armed groups and security forces perpetuate.⁴⁵ Trained researchers collect the data daily after which it is entered into a database. They also review media reports, exchange information with other organizations, and verify the information before publishing reports.⁴⁶

Table 3: Summary of Conflict Monitoring Tools and Data Sources

Date	Name	Country	Scope
1980s	Uppsala Conflict Data Program	Sweden	Global
2011	ACLED	USA	Global
2011	Conflict Alert	Philippines	Philippines
2017	The Kivu Security Tracker	USA	Eastern Congo
1959	Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)	Norway	Global
1966	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)	Sweden	Global
1990s	Global Peace Operations Review (under CIC)	USA	Global
2012	Good Governance Africa	South Africa	Africa
2007	Institute of Economics and Peace (Global Peace Index)	Australia	Global
2002- 2003	Conflict Sensitivity Resource Pack	Kenya, Uganda, and Sri Lanka	Global
2015	Gender and Conflict Sensitivity Tool	Global	Global

(Source: HIPSIR Research)

⁴⁴ “Kivu Security Tracker,” Kivu Security Tracker, <https://kivusecurity.org/about/project>

⁴⁵ “Methodology,” Kivu Security Tracker, https://kivusecurity.org/static/KST_Methodology_Nov2017.pdf

⁴⁶ “Methodology,” Kivu Security Tracker, https://kivusecurity.org/static/KST_Methodology_Nov2017.pdf

HIPSIR CMT: Having reviewed the aforementioned tools and data sources, HIPSIR CMT comes in as an additional tool that adds value to conflict monitoring, particularly in Africa. It combines both secondary gathering of data with qualitative research by relying on key informant interviews. This approach gives voice to people closely related to the conflict situations, while at the same time it triangulates and validates the information collected from newsprint and other popular media sources. The HIPSIR CMT observes socio-political occurrences that could trigger conflict or exacerbate prevailing tensions in Kenya, Ethiopia, DRC, and South Sudan. Its purpose is to gain a comprehensive insight into conflict patterns, identifying the primary drivers and actors involved in these conflicts. The tool seeks to empower peacebuilders in these four nations by providing them with responsive strategies based on the assessed conflict intensity.

Review of Conflict in DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Sudan

Unaddressed disputes have adverse effects on the welfare and progress of both individuals and nations. The recurring conflicts in the DRC, Kenya, Ethiopia, and South Sudan are particularly worrisome for residents, governments, peacebuilders, and conflict management specialists, given their impact on the socio-political stability of the respective regions. Therefore, efforts should be made by both peace building experts and the countries' governments towards ensuring that an "integrated" approach in analyzing the on-going conflict and conflict drivers in DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan is considered towards achieving sustainable peace and effective peacebuilding programs. To address these conflicts appropriately, there is a need for constant and reliable analysis of conflict situations in order to plan adequate responses or preventive measures where necessary. Regular analysis is vital for creating good strategies for local and regional responses to conflict. This section provides a contextual analysis of literature on the four countries by giving historical and the most recent background to the conflict and peace situation.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

The warfare in DRC can be traced back immediately after independence and since then the country has been in occasional conflicts. Violent conflicts within the DRC have been recorded from the 19th century onward when King Leopold II of Belgium acquired the vast territory along the Congo basin as his personal property and exploited its natural resources. He named it the Congo Free State. However, Leopold's methods of subjugating the indigenous population were so brutal that the Belgian government (in response to an international outcry) took over the territory re-naming it Belgian Congo in 1908.⁴⁷ Belgian colonization continued the exploitation of the people and the land. Eventually, a Congolese uprising led to independence in 1960. Nevertheless, the nation plunged into turmoil due to various conflicts arising from the struggle for political leadership. This resulted in armed violence, coup attempts, and secession efforts, causing a significant loss of lives. The crisis concluded in 1965 through a coup d'état orchestrated by Joseph-Désiré Mobutu, who subsequently assumed the presidency and established a highly centralized government.

⁴⁷ Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa: White Man's Conquest of the Dark Continent, 1876-1912*, New York, Avon Books, 1991, p. 660-661; Cf. Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*, London: Pan Macmillan, 1998.

Mobutu's reign has been described as a 'kleptocracy'⁴⁸ characterized by a patronage system of buying loyalty and amassing wealth from public funds and resources. In as much as there was relative political stability during his regime, significant human rights violations were reported and the country's economy was severely affected. With the end of the Cold War the West, especially the United States, no longer supported him, calling for democratic reforms within the country, as well as citizens who had become disillusioned with his regime. Subsequently, in 1996 Laurent Kabila, with support from the Rwandan and Ugandan governments, launched a military offensive from Eastern Congo and reached the capital by May of the same year. His march towards Kinshasa was followed by reports of atrocities meted out on the civilian population. The conflict was known as the First Congo War. However, by 1998 when Kabila asked the Rwandans and Ugandans to leave the country, a conflict was ignited that went on to trigger the Second Congo war from 1998-2003. This conflict also referred to as 'Africa's World War'⁴⁹ is often regarded as the genesis of the DRC's ongoing conflict. The war was fought between Kabila's government with support from Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, and Chad against the RDC (Rally for Congolese Democracy), RDC-Goma, Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi, among other parties. To a great extent, the instability in the DRC plays out in the instability within the Great Lakes region. In 2001 Laurent Kabila was assassinated and his son Joseph Kabila replaced him as president. In 2002, the ensuing, "July 2002 Pretoria Accord (known as the Sun City Agreement) between Rwanda and Congo, as well as the Luanda Agreement between Uganda and Congo, put an official end to the war as the transitional Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo took power in July 2003."⁵⁰

Although the Second Congo War ended in 2003, it set the stage for subsequent violent conflicts which have continued to date, especially in the Eastern regions of the country. There has been a multiplication of rebel groups over the years, culminating into five main conflicts:

- i. March 23 Movement (M23) attacks backed by Rwanda between 2012 and 2013
- ii. Conflict in Kivu between the DRC army (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo - FARDC) and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR)

⁴⁸ Acemoglu, Daron, James A. Robinson, and Thierry Verdier. "Alfred Marshall Lecture: Kleptocracy and Divide-and-Rule: A Model of Personal Rule." *Journal of the European Economic Association* 2, no. 2/3 (2004): 162-92. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40004896>.

⁴⁹ Gerard Prunier, *Africa's World War: Congo, the Rwanda Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009)

⁵⁰ "History of the conflict," Eastern Congo Initiative. <http://www.easterncongo.org/about-drc/history-of-the-conflict>

- iii. Ituri ethnic conflict between the Lendu and Hema groups who have had historical differences. In reality, the Second Congo War brought in arms and increased grievances between the two communities.
- iv. Kasai conflict between the army and customary chiefs in Kasai-Central Province in 2016-2017⁵¹
- v. Multiple armed groups that remain active in the east. These armed groups have been responsible for the deaths of citizens, sexual and gender-based violence, abductions looting, and the displacements of people.⁵²

Moreover, a climate of impunity, violation of human rights, and attacks by rebel groups has resulted in a lot of conflict in DRC.⁵³ Due to non-uniformity in the dynamics and experiences of conflict in DRC, justice perception among the citizens has been affected. This could be attributed to the diverse nature of the conflict in DRC which makes it uneasy to restore peace using one single approach strategy. However, the report opined that responding to citizens' localized knowledge of conflict and victimization by practicing maximal decentralization of transitional justice is preferable. This is because in using the strategy of maximal decentralization, the needs of the war victims and the context under which the conflict operates is easier to devise specific transitional justice processes i.e., the method applicable in Kasau may differ with that in South Kivu and Ituri parts of the DRC. This confirms that, to reduce the intensity of war in DRC, transitional justice should be practiced based on the needs of Congolese victims

In conclusion, as a report by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) highlights,

Today's conflicts in the country are, to a large extent, a reincarnation of those of the past. This indicates that the structural causes of the conflicts have not been adequately addressed. Thus, even apparent episodes of

⁵¹ "Conflict in the Kasai, DRC," UNCEF West and Central Africa. <https://www.unicef.org/wca/conflict-kasai-drc>

⁵² "Analytical note on the human rights situation in the highlands of Mwenga, Fizi and Uvira territories, South Kivu province, between February 2019 and June 2020," United Nations Joint Human Rights Office, https://monusco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/20200806.unjhro.analyse_hauts_plateaux_en.pdf

⁵³ Arnould, V. (2021). Reflections on a Decentralized Approach to Transitional Justice in the DR Congo. *Egmont Africa Policy Brief* No. 33 April 2021. <http://aei.pitt.edu/103641/>

peace, such as under the Mobutu regime in parts of the 1970s and the 1980s, were achieved not by successful peacemaking, but through repression of popular discontent.⁵⁴

On 30th December 2018, the DRC held its presidential elections which brought about its first peaceful transfer of power from President Joseph Kabila to President Felix Tshisekedi, given its turbulent post-colonial history. Although some armed groups contested and interfered with the elections, there has been a significant number of armed groups willing to surrender since the inauguration of President Tshisekedi. The willingness to demobilize is driven by some factors such as a new change of government, exhaustion, disillusionment, and FARDC operations against them.⁵⁵ Even so, the DRC remains insecure as a result of the widespread presence of numerous local and foreign armed groups.

In addition to this, the fight against corruption is key in President Tshisekedi's economic agenda such that he called upon all government ministers to declare their assets to the constitutional court.⁵⁶ Vital Kamerhe, the Chief of Staff of the President and leader of the Union pour la Nation Congolaise, was detained on 8 April 2020 on embezzlement of about \$51.2 million, a charge he denies. The money was earmarked for the President's 100-day program. Despite jubilation from some CSOs that welcomed the arrest as a milestone in the fight against corruption, a section of the 16 National Assembly deputies drawn from Kamerhe's party decried the arrest and detention of their party leader.⁵⁷ This included his supporters holding protests over his allegedly politically motivated arrest and sentencing.⁵⁸ On June 20, 2020, Vital Kamerhe was sentenced to 20 years in prison with hard labour.⁵⁹ He however, appealed his sentence and on June 17 2021 it was reduced to 13 years.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, *Conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo* (Addis Ababa, United Nations, 2015), p 9.

⁵⁵ UNSC. December 2019, p. 20

⁵⁶ UNSC. November 2019.

⁵⁷ UNSC. June 2020., p. 2

⁵⁸ J.P., Ging, "Vital Kamerhe appeal hearing against corruption charges postponed again," *Africa News*, August 08, 2020, Accessed November 18, 2020, url: <https://www.africanews.com/2020/08/08/vital-kamerhe-appeal-hearing-against-corruption-charges-postponed-again/>

⁵⁹ "Vital Kamerhe: DRC president's chief of staff found guilty of corruption <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-53121994>," BBC, June 20, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-53121994> (accessed August 21, 2021).

⁶⁰ "DRC: Kinshasa court slashes Vital Kamerhe's jail time to 13 years," *Africa News*, June 17, 2021, <https://www.africanews.com/2021/06/17/drc-kinshasa-court-slashes-vital-kamerhe-s-jail-time-to-13-years/> (accessed August 21, 2021)

Moreover, the human rights situation in the DRC remains of concern. A United Nations Security Council report on the DRC noted that “the security situation in the highlands worsened considerably and was characterized by tit-for-tat militia attacks against civilians.”⁶¹ These incidences included deaths and injuries to civilians. In April 2022, Human Rights Watch also documented that the Congolese government was reversing on fundamental rights and freedoms under the pretext of martial law in North Kivu and Ituri provinces, in violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and; at the same time appealing to the country's international partners to break their silence and publicly pressure the government to end its martial law-related crackdown in the east of the country.⁶²

An existing border dispute between the DRC and Zambia flared up and has been ongoing since mid-March 2020 with a build-up of troops reported from both nations around Moba territory. Several soldiers from DRC were killed in sporadic clashes with their Zambian counterparts. The two governments have displayed a willingness to address the dispute and defuse the tensions through diplomacy by calling upon the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to act as a mediator and agreeing to dispatch a technical team for the peaceful resolution of the dispute.⁶³

After 60 years of independence, the Congolese remain uncertain about political and democratic stability.⁶⁴ Generally, the peaceful transition of power presented a ray of hope for sustainable peace, stability, and development in a country that has been marred by cyclic violence. The willingness by armed groups to demobilize presents an opportunity for the restoration of peace and security in the DRC. President Felix Tshisekedi has made security in Eastern Congo one of his main concerns. To achieve this, he has tried different strategies such as negotiations with armed groups, a demobilization and disarmament program, and the declaration of a state of siege in the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri.

In August 2021, President Tshisekedi announced that he had authorized US Special Forces to assist the FARDC to combat the ADF which has been responsible for much of the violence in the Eastern

⁶¹ UNSC. September 2020

⁶² Human Rights Watch (HRW): DR Congo “Martial Law Brings Crackdown in East (7 April, 2022)

⁶³ UNSC. June 2020.

⁶⁴ Mulumba, 2020

region. It has also been classified as a terrorist group by the USA. The operation was slated to last for several weeks and was specifically targeted at combating the ADF.⁶⁵ According to the Catholic Church the group had been responsible for killing at least 6,000 civilians since 2013, while the Kivu Security Tracker stated that from 2017, the group had killed more than 1200 civilians.⁶⁶ On the other hand, Congo claimed that the Rwandan Defense Forces (RDF) were actively fighting alongside the M23.⁶⁷ As a result, Rwanda alleged that the Congolese army is collaborating with the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a largely Rwandan Hutu armed group operating in Congo, some of whose members were fighters during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, and attacked Rwandan forces and abducted two of its soldiers during a patrol along the border.

Different military operations are being undertaken by various foreign military forces against armed groups in eastern Congo. According to Human Rights Watch, President Tshisekedi invited Ugandan forces to the northeast for joint military operations against the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a well-known Islamist armed group led by Ugandans. Likewise, Burundian troops have engaged against the Burundian armed group called RED-Tabara (Resistance for the Rule of Law in Burundi/ Resistance to the Rule of Law in Burundi), which has been based in the region South Kivu. In addition, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in DRC (MONUSCO) has offered its military support to Congolese government forces and its assistance to civilians in need of protection.⁶⁸

The M23 crisis escalated in late 2022 and early 2023, leading to a significant number of people being displaced and creating urgent humanitarian requirements. Based on the third crisis analysis assessment released on March 23, 2023, by the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), more than 904,829 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were compelled to flee from the conflict-affected

⁶⁵ Agence France-Presse, "DR Congo Accepts US Military Help against ADF Militia," August 15, 2021, <https://www.voanews.com/africa/dr-congo-accepts-us-military-help-against-adf-militia> (accessed September 09, 2021).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Human Rights Watch., (2022) DR Congo: Civilians at Risk Amid Resurgence of M23 rebels, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/01/dr-congo-civilians-risk-amid-resurgence-m23-rebels> (Accessed on June1, 2022)

⁶⁸ Human Rights Watch.,(2022) DR Congo: Civilians at Risk Amid Resurgence of M23 rebels, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/01/dr-congo-civilians-risk-amid-resurgence-m23-rebels> (Accessed on June1, 2022)

regions. Among them, 60% were women and 11% were children under the age of five. This figure is a significant increase compared to the 180,000 individuals displaced in November 2022.⁶⁹

In March 2023, an attack carried out by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels in the village of Mukondi, located in the Beni territory of North Kivu province, resulted in the deaths of more than 40 people and caused injuries to several others. The eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have been plagued by armed group attacks and inter-communal violence for almost three decades. With over 120 active groups operating in the region, a notable upsurge in attacks targeting civilians has been observed.⁷⁰ These armed conflicts have resulted in extensive and recurrent displacement of the population, causing over 5.8 million individuals to be displaced within the country. This has established the country as having the largest displaced population in Africa. Internally Displaced People (IDPs) endure extremely harsh living conditions, including a lack of shelter, clean water, sanitation, food, and inadequate healthcare (OCHA, 2023).⁷¹

According to the Crisis 24 report of 2023, ongoing clashes between the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) and suspected M23 rebel group members in North Kivu Province continue as of April 2023.⁷² It is anticipated that the fighting will persist until at least early May, with the rebels having retreated from certain areas but still maintaining a presence in Rutshuru and Masisi territories. This conflict has led to the displacement of numerous individuals who have sought refuge in Sake and Goma. Reports indicate that there are approximately 300,000 Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in the vicinity of Goma. The isolation of Goma from crucial supply routes has resulted in challenges in delivering essential humanitarian assistance.⁷³

Moreover, International Rescue Committee report of 2023 has alighted that the approaching general elections, slated for late 2023, may further escalate the political unrest and contribute to

⁶⁹ IOM. (2023). Democratic Republic of the Congo Crisis Response Plan 2023.

<https://crisisresponse.iom.int/response/democratic-republic-congo-crisis-response-plan-2023>

⁷⁰ OCHA. (2023). *Democratic Republic of the Congo - Conflict, displacement and Humanitarian Air Bridge (DG ECHO) (ECHO Daily Flash of 10 March 2023)*. Relief Web. <https://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/democratic-republic-congo-conflict-displacement-and-humanitarian-air-bridge-dg-echo-echo-daily-flash-10-march-2023>

⁷¹ Ibid,

⁷² Crisis24. (2023). *DRC: Clashes between M23 rebels and security forces continue in North Kivu Province as of early April /update 5*. <https://crisis24.garda.com/alerts/2023/04/drc-clashes-between-m23-rebels-and-security-forces-continue-in-north-kivu-province-as-of-early-april-update-5>

⁷³ Ibid,

ongoing conflict.⁷⁴ Accordingly, there have been allegations of leaders inciting and supporting violence to gain support from constituents. The violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has also triggered protests against the United Nations peacekeeping force, MONUSCO, and the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) as protesters believe it has failed to protect civilians from militia violence. Consequently, some troops are being withdrawn from the region. Prior to the elections, there is a possibility of an increase in violence targeting aid organizations.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, as of April 2023, the security situation in the DRC continues to be critical. Meanwhile, violence by armed groups persists in other eastern provinces, exacerbating the humanitarian crisis. The DRC and Rwanda are embroiled in a prolonged diplomatic dispute, with Kinshasa calling for France to impose sanctions on Kigali despite efforts to de-escalate tensions supported by the Peace and Security Council (PSC).⁷⁶

Several parallel processes are unfolding to address the crisis. Peace talks have taken place at the head-of-state level in Nairobi, Luanda, Bujumbura, and Addis Ababa. As the East African Community (EAC) concludes its deployment of regional forces in eastern DRC by early December 2023, the DRC government is contemplating a fresh agreement with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to engage its military in a peacekeeping mission in the DRC. Additionally, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) is planning a drawdown after playing a role in protecting civilians and consolidating peace since 2010. However, more could be achieved by streamlining efforts and coordinating security initiatives, as urged by the PSC in its summit on February 17, 2023, which called for coordination and harmonization of stabilization efforts in the DRC.⁷⁷

The ongoing regional efforts primarily prioritize military approaches rather than political solutions, despite the potential for the political process to bring peace and security. The EAC has intensified its military efforts by deploying regional forces and lifting notification requirements for military equipment and training. While enhancing the DRC's capacity to combat armed groups, a solely military-focused approach is inadequate to address the underlying causes of conflict in

⁷⁴ Rescue. (2023). *Democratic Republic of Congo: decades-long conflicts escalate*. Watchlist 2023. <https://www.rescue.org/article/democratic-republic-congo-decades-long-conflicts-escalate>

⁷⁵ Ibid,

⁷⁶ Ibid,

⁷⁷ Ibid,

eastern DRC. A well-considered hybrid approach that combines diplomatic and military measures is necessary.⁷⁸

There is a consensus among policymakers that the African Union (AU) has yet to demonstrate strong leadership in the DRC, despite being responsible for promoting peace, security, and stability in Africa.⁷⁹ The AU's role in coordinating efforts with regional economic communities (RECs) has been diluted, and it has not filled the leadership gap effectively. Better coordination, particularly in military efforts, is essential. Funding for peace efforts in the DRC is insufficient, and the AU should facilitate the sourcing of more funds to support regional initiatives. The AU should also strengthen its liaison office in Kinshasa and encourage greater financial support from the European Union. Long-term vision and strong leadership are crucial given the complexity of the situation.⁸⁰

The 11th high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the region was held in Bujumbura, Burundi on May 6, 2023. The meeting, supported by the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), aims to assess the progress and challenges in implementing the commitments made under the Framework. It was also focusing on the implementation of decisions from the Nairobi and Luanda peace processes and the coordination of both processes.⁸¹

Furthermore, discussions took place on the contribution of the Contact and Coordination Group on Non-Military Measures to enhance security cooperation in eliminating armed groups in eastern DRC. A draft roadmap for revitalizing the Framework Agreement considered to address peace and security concerns more effectively in the region. The meeting also highlighted the implementation of the UN Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention, and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes region, specifically the Action Plan for 2021-2023.⁸²

⁷⁸ ISS. (2023). *AU must take the lead on the DRC conflict*, <https://issafrica.org/pscreport/psc-insights/au-must-take-the-lead-on-the-drc-conflict>

⁷⁹ ISSAfrica.org. (n.d.). *AU must take the lead on the DRC conflict - ISS Africa*. ISS Africa. <https://issafrica.org/pscreport/psc-insights/au-must-take-the-lead-on-the-drc-conflict>

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes. (2023). *11th Summit of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region. Bujumbura, Burundi, 6 May 2023*.

<https://ungreatlakes.unmissions.org/11th-summit-regional-oversight-mechanism-peace-security-and-cooperation-framework-drc-and-region>

⁸² Ibid.

On June 1st, the government of the DRC and the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to enhance their collaboration and cooperation.⁸³ However, an article in the *East African* of June 27th, 2023 highlights the failure of military interventions in resolving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).⁸⁴ In response, on the 7th of July 2023, the European Union's High Representative expressed support for the UN Security Council's decision to extend the mandate of the UN Group of Experts, aligning with its updated strategy for the Great Lakes region.⁸⁵ The EU remains committed to resolving armed conflicts, fostering peace, democracy, and sustainable development, and is considering imposing targeted sanctions on those responsible for armed conflicts, destabilization, human rights violations, and obstruction of the electoral process in the DRC.⁸⁶

In addition, the 2023 mid-term report from the UN Group of Experts oversimplifies the complex origins of violence in the eastern DRC by attributing it mainly to inter-communal conflicts, disregarding the deeper motivations of armed groups. This narrow viewpoint could prolong the cycle of violence in a country that has experienced turmoil for thirty years. Failure to address other crucial conflict drivers in their communication to the UN Security Council might lead to the implementation of inadequate strategies for stabilizing the DRC.⁸⁷

According to the HIPSIR CMT 2019 findings, the conflict in the DRC is attributed to the poor distribution of natural resources and corruption. The presence of these aspects is largely linked to complaints of economic hardships and high poverty levels in the country, which recorded a weighted mean of 2.04. Also, the acquisition of small arms and light weapons by non-state actors and the presence of demonstrations and riots were reported as dominant factors in DRC, with each indicator's mean ranked at 1.85. Conflict crisis in the country is indicated by displacements of citizens and the presence of deployed peacekeeping personnel (MONUSCO),⁸⁸ with weighted

⁸³ Africa news. (2023). *DRC, ICC to strengthen cooperation in fight against war crimes impunity*, <https://www.africanews.com/2023/06/02/drc-icc-to-strengthen-cooperation-in-fight-against-war-crimes-impunity/>

⁸⁴ *The East African*. (June 27, 2023). Military interventions have failed to end DRC's conflict – what's gone wrong, https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/military-interventions-have-failed-to-end-drc-conflict-4285102#google_vignette

⁸⁵ European Council. (2023). *Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): Statement by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union*, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/07/07/democratic-republic-of-the-congo-drc-statement-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-european-union/>

⁸⁶ Ibid,

⁸⁷ The Conversation. (2023). DRC violence has many causes – the UN's narrow focus on ethnicity won't help end conflict, <https://theconversation.com/drc-violence-has-many-causes-the-uns-narrow-focus-on-ethnicity-wont-help-end-conflict-208774>

⁸⁸ United Nations. 2020. MONUSCO fact sheet

means of 1.95 and 1.91 respectively. On the other hand, CMT-2020 revealed that DRC had a conflict level of 1.04. This was lower than the conflict level in 2019. In 2020, respondents indicated that the biggest challenge to peace intervention efforts in the region was lack of political will. They also indicated that international interference by external actors was another significant challenge. In 2021, DRC had a conflict level of 2.45 which is higher compared to 1.04 level in 2020. However, in 2019 the conflict level was 1.834 as per the CRTP monitoring report of 2020. The turbulent nature of the conflict level for the three years can be attributed to factors such as sexual violence, failure of peace missions to integrate all the key actors in peace building, violation of human rights, attacks by the rebel groups as well as lack of confidence in Congolese judicial system due to absence of judicial freedom. Moreover, the armed groups in DRC have also contributed to the internal conflict crisis in that the crumbling of power as a result of Justin Ngudjolo's death in April 2020 by FARDC has brought violent confrontation between Lendu and Hemu soldiers.⁸⁹

Ethiopia

With a population of at least 112 million⁹⁰ people, Ethiopia is a large, landlocked country in the Eastern region of Africa and one of the most populous countries in Africa, second only to Nigeria. The country is also ethnically diverse: the 2017 Ethiopian census states that there are “more than 90 distinct ethnic groups in the country.”⁹¹ The majority of the citizens are from the Amhara, Oromo, Tigray and Somali ethnic groups.⁹² The Amhara and Tigray consider themselves *Habesha*, “the self-proclaimed core of Ethiopia's national identity.”⁹³ When one thinks of Ethiopia these are the peoples that come to mind. They have dominated Ethiopian politics⁹⁴ and while they both speak languages from the same Ethio-semitic language family, Amhara is the official working language

⁸⁹ Kleinfeld, P. and Flummerfelt, R. (2020). Rebel splits and failed peace talks drive new violence in Congo's Ituri. *The New Humanitarian*, 5 May 2020. <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/feature/2020/05/05/>

⁹⁰ World Bank, Website, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=ET> (accessed June 09, 2021).

⁹¹ Minority Rights Group International, Ethiopia, website, <https://minorityrights.org/country/ethiopia/#:~:text=The%20Ethiopian%20census%20lists%20more,two%2Dthirds%20of%20the%20population.> (accessed May 25, 2021).

⁹² Minority Rights Group International, Ethiopia, Website, <https://minorityrights.org/country/ethiopia/> (accessed May 24, 2021)

⁹³ Éloi Ficquet and Dereje Feyissa, “The Structure and Transformation of the Population,” in *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia: Monarchy, Revolution and the Legacy of Meles Zenawi*, ed. Gerard Prunier and Éloi Ficquet (London: C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., 2015), 17

⁹⁴ Nations Encyclopedia, Ethiopia - Ethnic groups, Website, <https://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Africa/Ethiopia-ETHNIC-GROUPS.html> (May 24, 2021).

of the country and the most widely spoken.⁹⁵ Together the two groups constitute 32% of the population and they are predominantly Orthodox Christians.

On the other hand the Oromo from the Cushite language family group are the most populous ethnic group in the country representing at least 40% of the population.⁹⁶ The Somali are the third largest ethnic group in Ethiopia after the Amhara while the Tigray are the fourth largest ethnic group.⁹⁷ Alongside these four major ethnic groups, the Southern region of Ethiopia is occupied by the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, represented by at least 70 different languages, these ethnic groups include, “Ethio-Semitic, Cushitic, Omotic and Nilotic speakers,”⁹⁸ and are distinctly different from the Northern and Eastern ethnic groups in terms of culture and way of life.

With regard to religion, Ethiopia, has long been a center for Islam and Christianity, the two major religions in the country. Within Christianity the majority belong to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC). Other significant religions practiced in the country are Judaism and traditional religions.⁹⁹ Over all, an estimated “44 percent of the population adheres to the EOTC, 34 percent are Sunni Muslim, and 19 percent belong to Christian evangelical and Pentecostal groups.”¹⁰⁰

Abiy Ahmed is the current Prime Minister of Ethiopia. He comes from the Oromo community and is the first Oromo to hold the position of Prime Minister. His ascent to power ushered in a new era of governance in Ethiopia. He came to power after the 2018 elections that took place after Hailemariam Desalegn stepped down from power in the same year due to widespread protests by the Tigray people against the government due to the perceived discrimination in government affairs.¹⁰¹ Ahmed began his rule with sweeping reforms that many Ethiopians saw as a turn for the better. He spent his first 100 days as Prime Minister,

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Éloi Ficquet and Dereje Feyissa, “The Structure and Transformation of the Population,” in *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia: Monarchy, Revolution and the Legacy of Meles Zenawi*, ed. Gerard Prunier and Éloi Ficquet (London: C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., 2015), 36.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 38.

⁹⁹ Ethiopian Treasures, Website, <http://www.ethiopiantreasures.co.uk/pages/religion.htm> (June 09, 2021).

¹⁰⁰ United States Department of State, Ethiopia 2019 International Religious Freedom Report, June 2020, Website, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/ethiopia/> (June 09, 2021).

¹⁰¹ “Ethiopia PM Hailemariam Desalegn in surprise resignation,” BBC News, February 15, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-43073285> (accessed June 17, 2021).

[L]ifting the country's state of emergency, granting amnesty to thousands of political prisoners, discontinuing media censorship, legalising outlawed opposition groups, dismissing military and civilian leaders who were suspected of corruption, and significantly increasing the influence of women in Ethiopian political and community life. He also pledged to strengthen democracy by holding free and fair elections.¹⁰²

In all this, the hallmark of the prime minister's reforms was his historic meeting with the president of Eritrea, Isaias Afwerki, effecting a detente after a 20-year post war territorial stalemate between the two countries. He received international recognition for this and consequently was awarded the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for "his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and in particular for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighboring Eritrea."¹⁰³ His reforms ignited hope in Ethiopians who had long been repressed by both the Derg and EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolution Democratic Front) regimes.

However, despite having had such a stellar start to his reign, three years into his rule, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has faced challenges that have questioned his leadership as head of government in Ethiopia. Rather than being hailed for opening the way for more democratic freedoms, his reforms met resistance, including from his own Oromo community.¹⁰⁴ From June 2018, the country began to experience heightened civil unrest in the wake of the reforms set in motion by the Prime Minister. As a result of these reforms, "Local leaders (took) advantage of the new freedoms to build ethnic power bases. Groups that (had) felt excluded in a system once dominated by Tigrayans (began) flexing their muscles."¹⁰⁵ In addition, "old state border disputes reignited (with) large ethnic groups that dominate in many regions demanding more territory and resources. At the same time, smaller groups, tired of being sidelined, (were) pushing back,"¹⁰⁶ thus resulting in increased violence in the country.

When Ethiopia started its political liberalization in 2018, the desires of its citizens was to move out of autocratic leadership into a democracy. However, this was not realized due to ethnic based

¹⁰² The Nobel Prize, The Nobel Peace Prize for 2019, Website, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2019/press-release/> (June 02, 2021).

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ teleSUR, "Ethiopia: Ethnic violence between Somalis and Oromos kills 21," December 15, 2018, <https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Ethiopia-Ethnic-Violence-Between-Somalis-and-Oromos-Kills-21-20181215-0009.html> (June 02, 2021).

¹⁰⁵ "Explainer: Ethiopia's ethnic militias in the spotlight after failed coup," Reuters, June 24, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-security-explainer-idUSKCN1TP2CI> (accessed June 17, 2021).

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

violence among the communities.¹⁰⁷ The root cause of conflict in Ethiopia can be attributed to the disagreement over the balance of power. Furthermore, the adoption of an ethnic-based federal system which provides territory authority to different ethnic groups has been the driving force behind the ethnic-based conflicts in Ethiopia¹⁰⁸, because the kind of leadership systems practiced encourages ethnic-based sentiments that result in differences that can cause ethnic clashes.¹⁰⁹

Moreover, the conflict between the federal government in Addis Ababa and the Tigray region and its ruling party, well-known as TPLF, appears to be at an impasse.¹¹⁰ Yet, fighting and confrontations still recorded in some regions.

The Ethiopian government and rival Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) signed a peace agreement of “permanent cessation of hostilities” on 3rd November 2022 in Pretoria, South Africa. Speaking to the media in Pretoria after a peace deal was signed between the Ethiopian government and Tigray rebels, President Uhuru (former president of Kenya) said that ‘the lasting solution can only come through political dialogue. People should sit and engage, agree that they have differences because they do, and agree that the lasting solution can be through political engagement and dialogue’. Former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, the African Union mediator, said that ‘the agreement signed on Wednesday in South Africa marked a new “dawn” for Ethiopia’¹¹¹ The signing of the peace deal came as a result of face-to-face negotiations mediated by an African Union (AU) delegation in Pretoria, South Africa for 10 days.

In February 2023, the Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia to the Executive Council of the African Union announced that the Ethiopian government would submit a draft resolution at the upcoming session of the UN Human Rights Council to terminate the mandate of the International

¹⁰⁷ Yusuf, S. (2019). What is driving Ethiopia’s ethnic conflicts? *ISS East Africa Report*, 2019(28), 1-16.

<https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.10520/EJC-1fda629dc3>

¹⁰⁸ Mengstie, M. M. (2022). Exploring indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms between the Awi and Gumuz ethnic communities in Zigem Woreda, Ethiopia. *Journal of Aggression, Conflict and Peace Research Vol 14(3) pp 244-248*. https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/JACPR-05-2021-0603/full/html?skipTracking=true&utm_source=TrendMD&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=Journal_of_Aggression%252C_Conflict_and_Peace_Research_TrendMD_1&WT.mc_id=Emerald_TrendMD_1

¹⁰⁹ Baye, T.G. (2018), “Center–periphery relations, local governance and conflicts in Ethiopia: the experience of metekel province”, *Social Identities*, Vol. 24 No. 6, pp. 745-763

¹¹⁰ Alex de Waal, 22 June, 2022, A peace process is possible in Ethiopia, but obstacles remain, <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/06/22/a-peace-process-is-possible-in-ethiopia-but-obstacles-remain/>

¹¹¹ ALJAZEERA, Ethiopia peace deal hailed as a ‘new dawn’ (November, 2022), <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/3/how-did-the-world-react-to-the-ethiopia-peace-deal>

Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE).¹¹² The undersigned civil society and human rights organizations urged delegates to oppose any resolution that would have prematurely ended the ICHREE’s mandate, and to publicly support the Commission’s activities and responsibilities. Following this, in 20 March 2023, Antony Blinken, US Secretary of State, announced that parties involved in the conflict in Ethiopia had committed war crimes in his speech during the release of the State Department’s annual human rights report.¹¹³

According to the Human Rights Watch report of 22 March, 2023, it was stated that the US government should endeavor to assure renewal of the ICHREE’s mandate, preserving the space for in-depth, independent investigations, while energizing global efforts to ensure credible investigations, justice, and redress.¹¹⁴ HRW Report further states that the US and other peace agreement supporters should demand public reporting of any violations of the agreement’s accountability provisions, including condemnation of sexual violence, and be ready to take concrete action if alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity continue.

However, since Eritrean soldiers continue to operate in Tigray, where much of the fighting had been waged, and are apparently committing murders and sexual assaults as well as preventing humanitarian aid, it should be underlined that the signing of the truce has not put a stop to atrocities in Ethiopia’s Tigray region. There are persistent accusations of Tigrayans being ejected forcibly from Western Tigray as part of an ongoing ethnic cleansing campaign.¹¹⁵ It is reported that the government’s restrictions on media and rights reporting hide a number of violations. Over the last few months there have been protests in Tigray demanding that the Eritrean troops withdrawal.¹¹⁶ In 2023, social media sites were taken down by the government, and journalists and human rights advocates were detained. Justice is actually a right to which victims are entitled and which they demand. Additionally, it is essential for long term peace.

The Ethiopian government announced its intention to incorporate all regional Special Forces into

¹¹² Human Rights Watch, February 2023, “Threats to Terminate the Mandate of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia.” <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/02/28/threats-terminate-mandate-international-commission-human-rights-experts-ethiopia>

¹¹³ Human Rights Watch, March 2023, “Ethiopia: US Recognizes Atrocities in Conflict.” <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/03/22/ethiopia-us-recognizes-atrocities-conflict>

¹¹⁴ *ibid*

¹¹⁵ Human Rights Watch Report, April 2023, “EU Council Conclusions on Ethiopia Shortchange Justice.” <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/04/26/eu-council-conclusions-ethiopia-shortchange-justice>

¹¹⁶ Aljazeera, May 2023, “Protesters in Ethiopia’s Tigray demand Eritrean troops withdraw.” <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/23/protesters-in-ethiopia-tigray-demand-eritrean-troops-withdraw>

either the national army or the federal or regional police, a move that is likely to be interpreted as an effort to curtail regional autonomy.¹¹⁷ This also comes in hand with forces surrendering their weapons as part of the process of integration. According to their preferences and needs, the members of the Special Forces troops from all regions were encouraged to join the military, the federal police, or the local police.

According to Relief web, as of April 2023, about 2.3 million children were not back in school despite the peace agreement since there was the challenge of partially or severely damaged buildings, thus calling for urgent funding to re-open the classrooms.¹¹⁸ The needs of schools included the reconstruction of schools, victim assistance, back to school drives, provision of teaching and learning materials, psychosocial support for both teachers and students among others. However Tigray cluster members have proved to be supportive by “*coordinating back to school campaign for children at all levels, planning de-mining efforts in and around schools, distribution of basic scholastic supplies for children and teachers as well as additional approved funding for new IDP influx in Amhara for provision of temporary learning centers and learning materials as well school furniture.*”¹¹⁹ According to the Cluster Status by United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, a needs assessment is underway in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray to identify child protection risks and barriers to education by having a joint Education Cluster and Child Protection Area of Responsibility (AoR) effort.¹²⁰

International Institutions have also been involved in different capacities in the Tigrayan war. Earlier in February, the African Union held its annual head of state summit. This meeting is known to give a chance to African leaders to gauge and rate the readiness of the African Union to deal with both internal and external challenges that the continent is facing or might face in future. Among the priorities of the African Union during the meeting was the nurturing of agreements in Ethiopia and Sudan and urging regional cooperation around the Grand Ethiopian

¹¹⁷ Dawit Endeshaw , April 2023, “Ethiopia to dismantle regional special forces in favour of ‘centralized army’”.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/ethiopia-dismantle-regional-special-forces-favour-centralized-army-2023-04-06/>

¹¹⁸ ReliefWeb, April 2023, “More than 2.3 million children out of school in northern Ethiopia despite peace agreement.”

<https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/more-23-million-children-out-school-northern-ethiopia-despite-peace-agreement>

¹¹⁹ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, May 2023, ETHIOPIA

Cluster Status: Education.” <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ethiopia/card/5TCJFYzqI4/>

¹²⁰ Ibid

Renaissance Dam.¹²¹ It is a matter of concern that the war in Ethiopia possibly derailed discussions of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), since there ought to be a well-planned strategy for the flooding of the dam which is important for the survival of states that are prone to drought in East Africa in the coming years.¹²²

The European Union has played a part as the ministers noted the importance of accountability and transitional justice for sustainable peace and reconciliation. According to the Human Rights Watch Report, it is pointed out that if the European Union is serious as it seems to be about justice, it ought to ensure authorities' engagement with UN.¹²³ In light of ensuring justice is served, EU should therefore consider the UN International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE) to carry out their mandate without marginalizing them.

The conflict in Tigray has had a lot of implications for the Horn of Africa. Being one of the most stable countries in Africa, Abiy government's actions against its own people have raised questions and mistrust on its capacity to be a supporter of security. The war in Tigray posed a danger and proved to be destructive to its own citizens and the neighbouring countries. It has also thrown Abiy's government off-track as it had gladly taken a responsibility in 2019 to help Sudan transition to democracy after following disagreements in Khartoum and the AU's encouragement of mediated talks between Sudan's military and civilian opposition.¹²⁴

With the ongoing Sudan conflict, analysts do not omit a possibility of both Ethiopia and Eritrea being dragged in it if the violence spreads to the borders.¹²⁵ As African countries are marred by protracted conflicts, there is a possibility that the unstable regions tend to experience resurgence of conflicts accordingly. The end of Ethiopia war presented an opportunity for the country to redeem itself in the African region as well as in the face of the international community. However, if there is no call for justice to the victims, and continued operation of the Eritrean soldiers in the country, committing murders and sexual assaults as well as preventing

¹²¹ International Crisis Group, February 2023, "Eight Priorities for the African Union in 2023." <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/african-union-regional-bodies/b186-eight-priorities-african-union-2023>

¹²² Centre for Prevention Action, April 2023, "Conflict in Ethiopia." <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-ethiopia>

¹²³ Human Right Watch, April 2023, "EU Council Conclusions on Ethiopia Shortchange Justice." <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/04/26/eu-council-conclusions-ethiopia-shortchange-justice#:~:text=Six%20months%20after%20the%20warring,EU's%20future%20engagement%20with%20Ethiopia>.

¹²⁴ Centre for Prevention Action, April 2023, "Conflict in Ethiopia." <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-ethiopia>

¹²⁵ Mat Nashed, May 2023, "Will Ethiopia and Eritrea be dragged into Sudan's complex war?" <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/6/will-ethiopia-and-eritrea-be-dragged-into-sudans-complex-war>

humanitarian aid, this might pose a threat to the peace of the country. Alternatively, the rise of immigrants from Sudan comes as an overwhelming force to Ethiopia as the country is still recovering from the recently concluded conflict.

Kenya

Since independence Kenya has experienced several violent inter-communal clashes. These localized ethnic conflicts are often linked to competition over land ownership and land use, often triggered by the search for water and pasture, the proliferation of small arms, and insecurity¹²⁶ perpetrated by identity-based communal militias. For example, Mount Elgon located in the western region of Kenya experienced conflict between local communities over land¹²⁷ while Tana River County located in Eastern Kenya witnessed two waves of ethnic-instigated violence in 2001 and 2012 between the Pokomo and Orma and Wardei.¹²⁸ Moreover, a study by Maelo and Harris (2021)¹²⁹ indicated that the major causes of armed conflict in Isiolo County include power struggles among the elite, weak social agreements, marginalization and exclusion, resources and climate change factors such as drought and floods. The researchers suggested strategies such as control of the illegal firearm trade, empowering citizens in the region economically, as well as reconciliation programs among the communities to promote peaceful co-existence.

For decades, the relations between the Pokot and the Marakwet, Turgen, and Turkana communities in Rift Valley have been marred by perennial disputes culminating in series of attacks and counter-attacks over agricultural land, livestock, and resources at the Pokot-Marakwet border. The clashes between 2016 and 2019 led to over 120 deaths, dozens maimed and injured, thousands internally displaced, property destroyed, and the closure of over 20 schools along the border.¹³⁰ Following a series of peace dialogues, the two communities signed a peace pact in July 2019.

¹²⁶ TSA, 2014, p. 34; KNCHR, 2012, p. vii, Okumu, 2013, p. 1; Mbugua, 2013, p. 13

¹²⁷ Lynch, 2011

¹²⁸ Kirchner 2013, Martin 2012

¹²⁹ Maelo, Frederick, and Geoffrey Harris. "Conflict Policing in the Pastoral Communities in Isiolo County." *Journal of Conflict Management* 2.1 (2021): 1-13. <https://iprjb.org/journals/index.php/JCM/article/view/1431>

¹³⁰ Xinhua (August, 2019). Calm returns to Kenya's troubled region after leader's ink peace pact.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-08/01/c_138276060.htm. (Accessed 20 July 2020); Shanzu, I. (June 2019). Survivors' tales of pain due to cattle raids. <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/rift-valley/article/2001328332/survivors-of-cattle-raids-tell-of-anguish#> (Accessed 20 July 2020); Marakwet-Pokot clashes worrying, 116 houses torched - Red Cross. <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018-02-04-marakwet-pokot-clashes-worrying-116-houses-torched-red-cross/> (Accessed 20 October 2020)

Apart from the West Pokot-Marakwet dispute, West Pokot is embroiled in another dispute with Turkana in Kainuk and in Baringo South along a shared border between the counties over livestock theft¹³¹ and land encroachment.¹³² Subsequent violence has led to the disruption of movement between the Lodwar and Kitale highway, the loss of lives, and the destruction of property.¹³³ Perennial violent inter-communal clashes have also been reported between the Turkana and Samburu communities along the Turkana and Samburu County borders, between Borana and Meru communities along the Meru-Isiolo common border, between the Samburu and Maasai communities living on the border of Laikipia and Isiolo Counties, between the Borana and Gabbra communities in Marsabit County, and between the Pokomo and Somali communities living along the Tana River and Garissa County border.¹³⁴ The politics of anticipation and possible fear, tension and conflict in relation to Kenya's Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) project is projected to cause conflict.¹³⁵ The Isiolo-Meru County boundary has been identified as a source of conflict at political and community level between Meru farmers and Isiolo-based pastoralists (Borana and Turkana) as a result of land disputes. The conflicts arise as a result of livestock theft, killings and displacement among the communities.

The main drivers of conflict in Kenya are electoral politics, cattle raiding, and local fighting over resources and boundaries. For instance, the frequent conflicts between the Turkana and Pokot have been attributed to fighting over pasture and water (grazing field) and border disputes. The prolonged droughts in the northern parts of the country due to climate change has resulted into scarcity of water and animal feeds. This makes the affected communities to encroach the neighborhood lands resulting into conflict among the communities. Furthermore, as a result of drought due to climate change, coupled with poverty, conflict between communities in West Pokot and Marsabit has increased in the recent past.¹³⁶ The conflict in Marsabit County has been between

¹³¹ Omondi, I. (February 2019). Boinnet orders Rift Valley police to end Turkana-West Pokot border clashes. <https://citizentv.co.ke/news/boinnet-orders-rift-valley-police-to-end-turkana-west-pokot-border-clashes-231990/>. (Accessed 20 July 2020)

¹³² Turkana County. (2019). Governor Nanok calls for immediate security intervention to end Turkana South attacks. <https://www.turkana.go.ke/index.php/2019/02/14/governor-nanok-calls-immediate-security-intervention-end-turkana-south-attacks/> (Accessed 20 July 2020)

¹³³ Ibid, 8

¹³⁴ NCIC. (2018) Briefing Memo. https://www.cohesion.or.ke/images/docs/downloads/NCIC_BriefingMemo_2018.pdf (Accessed 20 July 2020)

¹³⁵ Mkutu Kennedy, Marie Müller-Koné & Evelyne Atieno Owino (2021) Future visions, present conflicts: the ethnicized politics of anticipation surrounding an infrastructure corridor in northern Kenya, *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 15:4, 707-727, DOI: 10.1080/17531055.2021.1987700. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2021.1987700>

¹³⁶ Muigua, K. (2021). Towards Effective Peace-building and Conflict Management in Kenya. <http://kmco.co.ke/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Towards-Peacebuilding-and-Conflict-Management-in-Kenya.docx-Kariuiki-Muigua-MAY-2021x.pdf>

Borana and Gabra along the border of Saku and North Horr Constituency. The conflict is mainly as a result of competition over resource use, territorial claims and control over Marsabit politics.¹³⁷ According to Minority Right Group (MRG) partners report 2021, several peace efforts have been put in place but little has been achieved.

Conflicts in the arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya take the form of cattle rustling, displacements, and cycles of revenge attacks. Cattle raids are carried out for bride price purposes, prestige and financial gains, and to replenish livestock reserves. In most cases, cattle raiding conducted for financial benefits involve excessive violence exacerbated by the proliferation of arms.¹³⁸ Kimani et al. (2021) analyzed trends of armed conflict in Kenya from 1997 to 2021. They found that in Kenya, armed conflict is more likely to increase towards, during and after election years: previous peaks in armed conflicts were in 2007, 2013 and 2017. The commonly noted form of conflict during the election period includes violence against civilians (VAC), riots and protests. Competition over natural resources such as water, pasture and land, poverty, illiteracy and Al-Shabaab infiltration are the main causes of conflict between the clans in Garissa County.¹³⁹ They suggest that to improve peace and security, a peace committee which is inclusive of different peace-building stakeholders and collaboration between community and security agencies should be considered. This should bring together peace actors such as County peace committees, Nyumba Kumi, County Policing Authority, National Police reservists among other key players in the conflict management and peace-building process.

Since the colonial period, the peripheral (frontier) regions in Kenya have been marginalized in terms of development, resulting in grievances founded on group-based exclusion and ethnic divisions. Even though the devolved system of government was aimed at addressing these structural conflict factors it is also argued to exacerbate others. Devolution of power and resources has contributed to conflicts between or among clans,¹⁴⁰ widespread corruption, and heightened

¹³⁷ Mokku J. and Prech D. (2020): Information Brief: Beyond Intractability Facilitating Inter-communal Cohesion and Reconciliation in Marsabit County. <https://www.dlci-hoa.org/assets/upload/briefs-and-leaflets/20201102120834336.pdf>

¹³⁸ Okumu, W. (2013). *Trans-local Peace Building among Pastoralist Communities in Kenya. The Case of Laikipi Peace Caravan* (Doctoral dissertation, Universität zu Köln).

¹³⁹ Rotich, Stephen K, and Warfa o Ahmed. "Drivers of Clan Conflicts: A Perspective of the Role of AlShabaab in Garissa County, Kenya." *Journal of Religion, Social, Cultural and Political Science* 4, no. 3 (July 2020): 16–22.

<https://scholar.archive.org/work/pmkp4im2kzekfinucgsoxl6zsm/access/wayback/https://siasatjournal.com/index.php/siasat/article/download/65/63>.

¹⁴⁰ World Bank Report (2020). "Boosting Prosperity, Improving Equity in North and North Eastern Kenya."

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/05/08/boosting-prosperity-improving-equity-in-north-and-north-eastern-kenya>

politicization of ethnicity.¹⁴¹ For example, in Mandera County there exists a long history of conflict and clashes between two Somali sub-clans - the Garee and Murale - over pasture and water as well as local power.¹⁴² Moreover, Fisher et al. (2019) found that in Mandera County, the choice of leaders in ethnic conflict-prone areas has fueled conflict due to an increased dissatisfaction among the people. This is because weak leadership gives an opening to corruption, misappropriation and embezzlement of public resources, which denies other communities the rights and privilege to use the resources.

Elections-related violence in Kenya can be traced to the onset/inception of multi-party politics in the country in 1992, with the 2007/08 election described as the one with the “severest bloodshed”¹⁴³ and deadliest in the history of the country. The 2007/8 post-election violence led to more than 1100 deaths, 650,000 internal displacements, and a deeply divided country.¹⁴⁴ Electoral violence in Kenya often manifests itself through political assassinations, threatened or attempted murder, physical harm, hate speech and intimidation, vandalism, and voter bribery.¹⁴⁵ Risks of election violence in Kenya have contributed to heightened tensions and an atmosphere of anxiety around political campaigns and the voting period.¹⁴⁶ The country’s history of electoral violence is attributed to numerous underlying conflict drivers, such as the perception of historic marginalization and inequality by certain ethnic groups, high levels of youth unemployment, political power centered on the executive, a culture of impunity,¹⁴⁷ claims of election rigging,

¹⁴¹ Mkutu, K., Müller-Koné, M., and Owino, E. A. (2021). Future visions, present conflicts: the ethnicized politics of anticipation surrounding an infrastructure corridor in northern Kenya. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 15(4), 707-727.

¹⁴² Menkhaus, K. (2015) Conflict assessment: Northern Kenya and Somaliland. Copenhagen: Danish Demining Group.

¹⁴³ Ombeck, R., Okoth, P., and Matanga, F. (2019). Causes and types of conflicts during the electioneering process in Kenya with reference to Kisumu County.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338885474_Causes_and_types_of_conflicts_during_electioneering_process_in_Kenya_with_reference_to_Kisumu_County (Accessed July 12, 2020, p. 80)

¹⁴⁴ Dialogue Africa Foundation (2009) *Kriegler and Waki Reports on 2007 Elections – Summarised version*. Nairobi: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung., pp. 53, 56

¹⁴⁵ Elder, C., Stigant, S., and Claes, J. (2014). *Elections and Violent conflict in Kenya: Making Prevention Stick*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace. <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/184626/PW101-Elections-and-Violent-Conflict-in-Kenya-Making-Prevention-Stick.pdf>. (Accessed 12 July 2020).

¹⁴⁶ Taylor, C. (2018). “Shared security, shared elections: Best practices for the prevention of electoral violence.” AFSC.

<https://www.afsc.org/sites/default/files/documents/Electoral-violence-report-web-version.pdf>, pp. 35 - 47

¹⁴⁷ Seong Y. C., Erin C., Faizaa F., and Utku Y. (2015): *Preventing Post-Election Violence Based on the Kenyan Experience*, Stanford Law School: Law and Policy Lab (March 13, 2015). <https://www-cdn.law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Cho-Connors-Fatima-Yalim-Preventing-Post-Election-Violence-Based-on-the-Kenyan-Experience.pdf>.

perceptions of Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) bias,¹⁴⁸ and highly centralized ethno-politics.¹⁴⁹

Subsequently, opposition-led mass demonstrations have caused a surge in disorder in Kenya, stemming from a disputed election and allegations of vote rigging. Last year, former Deputy President William Ruto of Kenya Kwanza Alliance won the presidency, defeating opposition leader Raila Odinga of Azimio La Umoja One Kenya Coalition Party. Odinga rallied supporters to address election and living cost issues within 14 days, leading to protests that turned violent, leaving several dead and businesses paralyzed. After negotiations were initiated, Odinga temporarily suspended protests, yet renewed calls for demonstrations emerged.¹⁵⁰

These demonstrations unfolded in nearly 80 locations spanning 28 counties, predominantly organized by the Azimio Coalition.¹⁵¹ The core issues driving the unrest included soaring living costs and election concerns. The turmoil was characterized by instances of violence, clashes between law enforcement and protestors, and the involvement of opposition leaders. ACLED's records indicate that between March 25 and April 21, 2023, Kenya experienced an alarming surge in political violence, with over 80 documented incidents that resulted in more than 50 reported fatalities.¹⁵² The epicenter of these events was Nairobi County, where the highest number of both violence-related occurrences and fatalities was reported, largely due to mob-related activities. The impact also extended to regions such as West Pokot and Samburu counties, each registering eight fatalities. Notably, around 40% of the fatalities were linked to conflicts involving pastoralist militias. Rioting emerged as the predominant event category, transpiring over 90 times, followed by protests that transpired more than 50 times. The opposition faction Azimio la Umoja (Resolution for Unity) One Kenya Coalition Party orchestrated protests across more than 40 locations nationwide.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ Seong Y. C., Erin C., Faizaa F., and Utku Y. (2015), 18

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 18

¹⁵⁰ ACLED. (28 April 2023). *Kenya: Rise in Disorder as Opposition Stages Mass Demonstrations*,

<https://acleddata.com/2023/04/28/kenya-situation-update-april-2023-rise-in-disorder-as-opposition-stages-mass-demonstrations/>

¹⁵¹ Ibid,

¹⁵² Ibid,

¹⁵³ Ibid.

From April 22 to June 2 2023, ACLED recorded 110 instances of political violence resulting in many fatalities.¹⁵⁴ Accordingly, Nairobi County experienced the highest concentration of these events, primarily marked by riots, while Marsabit County recorded the highest fatality count with nine deaths during this timeframe. Turkana and Samburu counties followed with seven fatalities each, and ethnic militia participation contributed to over 30% of the reported deaths. Riots dominated as the most frequent event type, exceeding 100 occurrences, closely followed by protests that numbered around 90 instances. Notably, the opposition group Azimio la Umoja (Resolution for Unity) One Kenya Coalition Party orchestrated a second wave of demonstrations on May 2, aiming to address persistent high living costs and alleged election irregularities.¹⁵⁵

In July 2023, ACLED documented more than 70 instances of political violence, resulting in around 75 reported fatalities across Kenya. Notably, Nairobi and Kisumu experienced the forceful suppression of opposition-led protests addressing high living costs and taxes. Mandera reported the highest death toll, with at least 28 deaths, followed by Garissa with seven, primarily due to clashes between al-Shabaab militants and security forces. This period saw a significant number of protests (125 events) and riots (117 events).¹⁵⁶ In July 2023, in a separate incident, security forces clashed with protesters during a three-day demonstration against high living costs and tax hikes, with several individuals reportedly shot, some possibly fatally. The protests resulted in violent confrontations, including rock-throwing by protestors and tear gas deployment by security forces. Over 300 people, including nine senior opposition figures, were arrested, and schools closed in Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kisumu.¹⁵⁷ Critics blamed President William Ruto's administration for rising commodity prices and tax increases, leading to public discontent.¹⁵⁸ In Nakuru, reports indicated seven people sustained gunshot wounds, with two fatalities, while another fatality occurred in Makueni. Protesters decried the government's response as a violation of their right to peaceful assembly.¹⁵⁹ Despite the economic impact and appeals for dialogue, protests persist, supported by churches and civil rights groups advocating for peaceful resolution. While prior

¹⁵⁴ ACLED. (2023). *Kenya at a Glance: 22 April-2 June 2023*, <https://acleddata.com/2023/06/09/kenya-situation-update-june-2023/>

¹⁵⁵ Ibid,

¹⁵⁶ ACLED. (2023). *Kenya: Government Operation Brings Calm to North Rift Region*, <https://acleddata.com/2023/08/04/kenya-situation-update-august-2023-government-operation-brings-calm-to-north-rift-region/>

¹⁵⁷ Mukoya, T. and Mwangi, M. (July 19, 2023). *Kenya protest: Several reported shot during tax hikes unrest*. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/protesters-hurl-rocks-kenyan-police-three-day-tax-protest-begins-2023-07-19/>

¹⁵⁸ Ibid,

¹⁵⁹ Ibid,

protests have led to fatalities and arrests, experts believe that the ongoing unrest is unlikely to escalate into widespread ethnic violence.¹⁶⁰

In addition to the aforementioned factors, Al-Shabaab activities and banditry attacks in the coastal and northern regions have significantly impacted Kenya's security situation. According to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), Al-Shabaab's political violence events increased by 66% compared to 2021, primarily in counties bordering Somalia such as Mandera, Lamu, Garissa, and Wajir, with Mandera witnessing the highest number of such events in both 2021, 2022 and 2023.¹⁶¹ To counter pastoralist militia violence, the Kenyan government launched Operation Maliza Uhalifu North Rift in February 2023, which has shown some success in reducing militia activity and improving security, albeit with concerns about long-term effectiveness and strain on government forces.¹⁶² Counterterrorism efforts against Al-Shabaab and suppression of protests against high living costs have also been initiated. However, reports of militia regrouping in forests suggest potential future threats. The operation, involving police, military, and National Police Reserve forces, aims to disarm militias and implement curfews, resulting in over 30 clashes, supported by military airstrikes.¹⁶³ Challenges like community mistrust and resource limitations could impact its long-term success. Efforts such as medical camps, school rebuilding, and cooperation with local leaders address underlying issues, but limited resources hinder comprehensive peace initiatives.¹⁶⁴ While violence has decreased, lingering militia presence poses a threat, as evidenced by rising attacks in neighboring areas. An operation to target militia hideouts in Kamologon forest aims to counter these threats, highlighting the need for sustained efforts. The government's complex security challenges could strain resources, and economic struggles might hinder revitalization plans, potentially disrupting the current calm in the region.¹⁶⁵

The drought situation experienced in 2022 and 2023 was termed as one of the worst that affected the Horn of Africa hence instigated violence in Kenya's arid and semi –arid areas.¹⁶⁶ In search of

¹⁶⁰ Ibid,

¹⁶¹ ACLED. (2 March 2023). *Increasing Security Challenges in Kenya*, <https://acleddata.com/2023/03/02/kenya-context-assessment-increasing-security-challenges-in-kenya/>

¹⁶² ACLED. (2023). *Kenya: Government Operation Brings Calm to North Rift Region*, <https://acleddata.com/2023/08/04/kenya-situation-update-august-2023-government-operation-brings-calm-to-north-rift-region/>

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.,

¹⁶⁶ International Crisis Group (2023), *Absorbing Climate Shocks and Easing Conflict in Kenya's Rift Valley*. Available at: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/east-and-southern-africa/kenya/b189-absorbing-climate-shocks-and-easing-conflict-kenyas-rift>

pasture for their cattle, pastoralists and land owners have been pitted against each other in scramble for the limited available resources. While the conflict between pastoralists and land owners has existed for decades, other factors including politicization, historical injustices and proliferation of illicit firearms has fueled the conflict.¹⁶⁷ As observed by International Crisis Group, “Kenyan herders lost at least 2.5 million head of cattle between 2020 and 2022, decimating incomes and pushing some to let livestock graze on land belonging to commercial farms and conservancies’ hence gradual impoverishment has made young pastoralists particularly vulnerable to recruitment by crime rings, especially in Baringo County.”¹⁶⁸

Among the other Eastern African countries involved in the 2023 CMT research, Kenya remains relatively peaceful despite the call for demonstrations in the previous month by opposition chief Raila Odinga on issues including the high cost of living, reconstitution of a panel by the President to recruit new electoral officials among other demands. The demonstrations were characterized by destruction of property and injury of people within and without the demonstrations. The demonstrations were however called – off by Raila Odinga following President Ruto’s extension of an olive branch to the opposition to address their concerns through bi-partisan talks in Parliament. The commencement of the talks have been able to ease the tension in the country that had started building up in Nairobi and some of the opposition’s “strongholds”. The opposition and the government were actively engaged in bipartisan talks to help address issues of the cost of living, accusations of election rigging and the government interference of members of parliament who belong to opposition parties. Furthermore, Kenya is the only country among the four countries that was ranked in the middle category at position 152 in the UNDP’s HDI 2022 report as Ethiopia, DRC and South Sudan being placed in the low human development category at positions 175, 179 and 191 out of 191 respectively.

Amid these circumstances, Kenya's recovery from a historic drought is ongoing, with Crisis (IPC Phase 3) conditions persisting. According to UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), pastoral areas are struggling, aided by humanitarian food assistance during the dry season.¹⁶⁹ Though recent rains improved some conditions, milk access remains low due to prior

¹⁶⁷ Ibid

¹⁶⁸ Ibid

¹⁶⁹ OCHA. (2023). *Kenya Food Security Outlook, June 2023 - January 2024*. Relief Web. <https://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/kenya-food-security-outlook-june-2023-january-2024>

drought impacts. Limited livestock, high maize prices, and low income continue to hinder households.¹⁷⁰ Improvements are anticipated with upcoming rains and livestock birthing, but low income, high food costs, Rift Valley Fever risk, and floods pose challenges. In marginal agricultural regions, below-average inputs have led to poor crop planting, resulting in below-average harvests. Off-farm income and market reliance persist due to low household income and high food prices, causing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes. Short-term rains might enhance labor and crop production, but debt and living costs will sustain stress. High maize and bean prices, due to production issues, demand, and costs, limit purchasing power, affecting market-dependent households.¹⁷¹

According to the HIPSIR CMT 2022 study, domestic violence, cattle rustling and resource-based violence were among the prevalent conflict situations in Kenya. Consequently, Kenya was at the confrontational level of conflict of 2.31.

South Sudan

For several decades, the people of South Sudan united to fight for their freedom. They had been exploited, subjected to slavery, abused, and discriminated against, not only on racial but also on religious grounds.¹⁷² Before secession, South Sudan marginalized and development indicators, such as health, infant mortality, maternal mortality, drinking water, sanitation, or food security, were among the worst in the world.¹⁷³ Hence, South Sudan's clamor for change could not be suppressed or ignored. With different rebel groups engaged in guerrilla warfare with the government based in Khartoum, South Sudan demanded autonomy and self-determination. This rebellion was considered the only way to confront the oppressive and dictatorial leadership based in Khartoum. Consequently, Sudan suffered an intra-state protracted conflict that had diverse effects on the human population and the economy of the country. Between 1983 and 2005, about two million people lost their lives, over four million were internally displaced (IDPs), and over eight hundred thousand were displaced as refugees.¹⁷⁴ Through struggle and persistence in the

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.,

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Hilde F., Johnson (2018), *South Sudan: The Untold Story From Independence to Civil War*, London: Bloombury Academic p. xiii

¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁷⁴ Arnold, M., & LeRiche, M. (2013). *South Sudan: from revolution to independence*. New York: Oxford University Press,.

pursuit of independence, the South Sudanese remained firm in adopting the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Their dream was actualized on 9th July 2011 when South Sudan became the world's newest country through its secession from Sudan.¹⁷⁵ Basic changes were embodied in the terms of separation. Fundamental interests like border demarcation, control of oil extraction, and the tariffs for use in the Sudanese pipeline, transitional financial arrangements, citizenship, currency, and other issues had to be addressed.¹⁷⁶ Additionally, the international community helped and coordinated various programs of the CPA to help in building the state of South Sudan.¹⁷⁷

The adverse effects of the civil war attracted the attention of the international community. As a result, there were different attempts to end the violence through dialogue and negotiation in a mediation process spearheaded by the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) and funded by the United States, the United Kingdom, and Norway (the Troika Nations). It is through such mediation that a peace agreement was reached leading to “the referendum on unity versus separation.”¹⁷⁸ However, the government of Khartoum was not committed to fully implementing the reforms which they had agreed upon. Due to pressure from the United States and the international community, there was a referendum that saw over ninety percent of the southerners vote in favor of secession. The 2011 independence referendum and 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) were thought to be the solution for South Sudan after obtaining independence from Sudan. However, the power struggle between Nuer and Dinka ethnic groups has rendered the nation a peace insecure region. The main drivers of war between the two groups have been fragile state structure, oil revenue control by powerful countries like the USA and unprofessionalism in the country's army. The fragility of the South Sudan as a state is characterized by food insecurity, political instability, inter-border conflicts, and violence between communities as well as weak systems of governance.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁷⁷ Okoye, E (2021). Exploring the Underlying Causes of the Conflict in South-Sudan.

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Emeka-](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Emeka-Okoye/publication/350923734_EXPLORING_THE_UNDERLYING_CAUSES_OF_THE_CONFLICT_IN_SOUTH-SUDAN/links/607a125e881fa114b409ff69/EXPLORING-THE-UNDERLYING-CAUSES-OF-THE-CONFLICT-IN-SOUTH-SUDAN.pdf)

[Okoye/publication/350923734_EXPLORING_THE_UNDERLYING_CAUSES_OF_THE_CONFLICT_IN_SOUTH-SUDAN/links/607a125e881fa114b409ff69/EXPLORING-THE-UNDERLYING-CAUSES-OF-THE-CONFLICT-IN-SOUTH-SUDAN.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Emeka-Okoye/publication/350923734_EXPLORING_THE_UNDERLYING_CAUSES_OF_THE_CONFLICT_IN_SOUTH-SUDAN/links/607a125e881fa114b409ff69/EXPLORING-THE-UNDERLYING-CAUSES-OF-THE-CONFLICT-IN-SOUTH-SUDAN.pdf)

¹⁷⁸ F.H., Johnson, *South Sudan: The Untold Story From Independence to Civil War*, p. 13.

The people of South Sudan were relieved of a long period of oppression and denial of development. They were optimistic that their independence, the constitution, and cooperation between their new leaders would set a precedent for unity, peace, and prosperity. This hope was short-lived when violence broke out in South Sudan in 2013. As a result, it is estimated that over fifty thousand people have been killed and possibly as many as 383,000, according to recent estimates, and nearly four million people were internally displaced or fled to neighboring countries.¹⁷⁹ There have been various peace initiatives and interventions by the local, regional, and international community to address this conflict. However, a peace agreement signed in August 2015 failed to offer a resolution to the conflict. In 2016, immediately after signing a peace agreement (Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan) another factor that fueled conflict in South Sudan was failure of initial peace efforts. Although a new agreement was signed in September 2018 with the goal of creating conducive environment for offering humanitarian assistance as well as permanent ceasefire reinforcement, sub-national conflicts still persist across the country¹⁸⁰. This has disrupted economic growth and development through labor markets, investments and spillover effects on both intra and international trade.

According to Conflict Research Programme (CRP) report by McCrone, gubernatorial conflict (i.e. allocation of certain states to the military parties and how governors are appointed) has also triggered conflict in South Sudan¹⁸¹. Moreover, South Sudan's ten-state system under decentralized governance is another factor that has made the country peace insecure. On February 22, 2020, President Salva Kiir and his former deputy turned foe, Riek Machar, signed an agreement to form a coalition government, raising hopes for peace in this troubled country. On 16th January 2022, President Salva Kiir entered into another a pair of agreements with two powerful opposition commanders who had broken away from Riek Machar. The main deal was to unify the armies from the two sides, with the parties agreeing that the national army would absorb fighters loyal to the two commanders within 3 months¹⁸². However, the exclusion of Riek Machar from the deal

¹⁷⁹ Council on Foreign Relations, Accessed June 7, 2019, url: <https://www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/civil-war-south-sudan>.

¹⁸⁰ Mawejje, J., & McSharry, P. (2021). The economic cost of conflict: Evidence from South Sudan. *Review of Development Economics*, 25(4), 1969-1990. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/rode.12792>

¹⁸¹ McCrone, F. (2021). The war (s) in South Sudan: local dimensions of conflict, governance and the political marketplace. http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/108888/1/McCrone_the_wars_in_South_Sudan_published.pdf (accessed on May 2, 2022)

¹⁸² Global conflict tracker 2022- <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/civil-war-south-sudan>

laid the ground work for bitter inter-communal fighting between forces loyal to Salva Kiir's deal and Riek Machar's men.

According to Dowd and Kumalo (2022), failure to establish links between peace-building initiatives have significantly undermined their sustainability and impact in peace restoration. The delay in implementation of the R-ARCSS has also increased sub-national and inter-communal violence related to national political actors. Challenges such as climate change and food security, cattle raiding, revenge killings, as well as harassment of humanitarian workers have delayed the peace restoration process.

Despite the dire security situation in the country, progress has been made in the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) signed in 2018. On 21st February 2020, President Salva Kiir dissolved the Transitional Government of National Unity with the appointment of Riek Machar as First Vice -President and Taban Deng Gai, James Wani Igga, and Rebecca Nyandeng de Mabior as Vice - Presidents. The pre-transitional period came to an end following the inauguration of the new presidency of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity on 22 February 2020.¹⁸³ In June 2020, President Salva Kiir and First Vice- President Riek Machar reached an agreement on the distribution of state governorship between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Government (SPLM-IG) and the SPLM in Opposition.¹⁸⁴

Although there is notable progress in the implementation of R-ARCSS, there remain setbacks that are worth noting. The R-ARCSS has remained behind schedule in regard to security arrangements, the constitutional process and transitional¹⁸⁵. The risk of escalation of widespread violence in South Sudan is attributed to economic downturn, military factions' competition and subnational sources of conflict tensions. There is increased fragmentation among the opposition parties such as within South Sudan Opposition Alliance (SSOA), SPLM/A-IO as well as within the Office of the President (OP). President Salva Kiir has been accused of encouraging and facilitating defections and desertions within the SPLM/A-IO whereas some members of the OP accuse the

¹⁸³ UNSC, 15 June 2020

¹⁸⁴ UNSC. June 2020b

¹⁸⁵ Human Rights Council Report (2022): Conflict-related sexual violence against women and girls in South Sudan https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/A_HRC_49_CRP_4.pdf. (Accessed on April 7, 2022)

president of failing to consult in key decision-making issues.¹⁸⁶ The internal discord within SPLM/A-IO caused by internal leadership tensions and the perception of marginalization along ethnic identity continues to instigate instability.¹⁸⁷

The Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWSNET) report showed that in mid-December 2023, conflict confrontations have shifted back towards eastern Upper Nile and northern Jonglei, with clashes reported occurring between the white army, Agwelek, and the South Sudan People's Defense Forces (SSPDF) and between the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA)-Kitwang forces and Gawaar civilians. The increase in insecurity as a result of the clashes have hindered the supply of food assistance and humanitarian supports resulting into food insecurity among the affected people. The attacks in these regions mainly involve the use of sexual and gender-based violence, looting of cattle, and pillaging of crop harvests. This has caused deaths and displacement of civilians, and relocation of humanitarians. However, increase in intensity of the violence in Upper Nile and northern Jonglei have presented bigger challenge in implementation of the peace process. Thus, the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangement Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM) has warned that continued clashes in Upper Nile and northern Jonglei areas, as well as further joint SSPDF-Agwelek operations against the white army forces and their mobilization towards Fangak and Canal/Pigi, could interfere with the implementation of the peace agreement in South Sudan.¹⁸⁸

The South Sudanese conflict situation is dire, UNCHR data from May 2023 revealed that there were 2.3 million internally displaced people and 308,374 registered refugees.¹⁸⁹ Recent conflicts have been attributed to the elites' continued ethnopolitical tensions, feuding over power and control of natural resources, as well as their support for past human rights violators. To add to the problem, there is a lack of political goodwill and good governance from political actors and ordinary citizens, hindering sustainable peace in South Sudan. A report by the United Nations Human Rights Commission in South Sudan identified a lack of accountability for human rights violations

¹⁸⁶ UNSC, 15 June 2020, p. 3

¹⁸⁷ UNSC, 15 June 2020

¹⁸⁸ FEWSNET, Food Security Outlook Update (Dec. 2022) Surge in conflict in western Upper Nile displaces thousands, driving Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcome :<https://fews.net/east-africa/south-sudan/food-security-outlook-update/december-2022>

¹⁸⁹ *Situation South Sudan*. (n.d.-b).

<https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/southsudan#:~:text=By%20the%20end%20of%20March,further%20846%2C345%20refugees%20fro...>

by all actors and the involvement of senior government officials as key drivers of violence in South Sudan. Shockingly, the UN's News Report on Peace and Security 2023 revealed that at least 3,469 civilians reported having been affected by violence during 2022, including killings, injuries, abduction, and conflict-related sexual violence.

South Sudan has never held any credible elections since independence. The R-ARCSS peace agreement stipulated that elections would be held in 2022, but the transitional government pushed the election to December 2024, casting doubts on their ability to guarantee a legitimate government after the transition.¹⁹⁰ The transition regime has failed to put in place an institutional and regulatory framework to facilitate free, fair, and peaceful elections¹⁹¹ because they lack the capacity and political will to put in place such infrastructure. The key players in the electoral processes are the same political rivals engaged in the ongoing conflict (Salva Kiir, Riek Machar, and tribal leaders) which casts doubt on the possibility of a stable, legitimate government taking over. This development could lead to more political violence, and the aspirations of the revitalized peace agreement would not be achieved.

The conflict in Sudan has caused a ripple effect of political instability throughout the region, with South Sudan bearing the brunt of its consequences. The political instability has made it nearly impossible to implement peace agreements and rebuild peaceful communities in South Sudan. Adding to the already complex situation is the displacement of refugees from Sudan, which has put a heavy strain on the country's limited resources and infrastructure as they return back home. The cross-border insecurity has resulted in armed groups from Sudan infiltrating South Sudan to carry out attacks, leading to increased violence and instability in certain areas.¹⁹² Additionally, the conflict has diverted the attention and resources of regional and international organizations away from the peace processes in South Sudan.¹⁹³ The African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental

¹⁹⁰ Deng, D., Dawkins, S., Oringa, C., & Pospisil, J. National Survey on Perceptions of Peace in South Sudan. <https://peacerep.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/South-Sudan-Policy-Report-Elections.pdf>

¹⁹¹ *South Sudan Not Ready for Free, Fair Elections Given Failure to Implement Peace Agreement, Human Rights Activist Tells Security Council | UN Press.* (March 7, 2022). <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc14821.doc.htm>

¹⁹² Nashed, M. (2023, May 12). Clouds gather over South Sudan as battles rage next door. *Conflict News | Al Jazeera.* <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/12/clouds-gather-over-south-sudan-as-battles-rage-next-door>

¹⁹³ *Outbreak of Violence in Sudan Impeding Political Progress on Abyei, Border Issues, Assistant Secretary-General Tells Security Council | UN Press.* (2023, May 9). <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15278.doc.htm>

Authority on Development (IGAD), and other organizations have been actively mediating both conflicts, leading to a diversion of resources and attention from South Sudan. The conflict in Sudan has made the situation in South Sudan even more challenging, and a solution seems far from sight.

On July 6, 2023, Nicholas Haysom, who leads the UN mission in South Sudan, stated that the country is presently unprepared to conduct credible elections in 2024. He underscored the importance of a favourable political and security environment for the elections' success. Haysom's comments were given during the 30th plenary session of the Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (R-JMEC) in Juba. Despite the existing challenges, he highlighted the potential for South Sudan to move forward and achieve the aim of holding elections in December 2024. According to him, this progress would hinge on political resolve, adequate resources, and the establishment of a suitable political climate. Additionally, Haysom echoed the Intergovernmental Authority on Development's (IGAD) appeal for the prompt reestablishment of the National Elections Commission (NEC) and the Political Parties Council (PPC) by the national legislature.¹⁹⁴

On the July, 7th of 2023, South Sudan's President, Salva Kiir, affirmed that the elections, which were delayed, will occur as planned in the coming year, and he has disclosed his intention to seek re-election. The election postponement was linked to difficulties in enacting a peace agreement, leading to a two-year extension of the transitional government's term. President Kiir conveyed optimism that these issues would be resolved before the December 2024 elections. The nation, previously scarred by a brutal five-year civil war that caused substantial casualties, has encountered further adversities such as floods, scarcity of food, persistent violence, and political instability. The United Nations has repeatedly accused South Sudanese leaders of both fomenting violence and human rights violations, as well as mismanaging public finances.¹⁹⁵

According to the Voice of America (VOA) report on ongoing situation, Sudan's conflict has significantly hurt Northern South Sudan's economy, causing border region price hikes and

¹⁹⁴ *Sudan Tribune*. (May 4 2023). South Sudan "not yet ready" for credible elections, says UN envoy, <https://sudantribune.com/article274916/>

¹⁹⁵ *Africa News*. (5th July, 2023). South Sudanese president promises first elections since independence, <https://www.africanews.com/2023/07/05/south-sudanese-president-promises-first-elections-since-independence//>

disrupting the production and export of South Sudanese oil through Sudan, which makes up about 90% of the country's revenue, per the World Bank.¹⁹⁶

In 2022, South Sudan had a conflict level of 2.78, just slightly higher than the 2021 conflict level which was at 2.62. This shows that South Sudan has experienced persistent confrontational level of conflict in the past two years. The 2020 CMT on the other hand ranked South Sudan to be at level 0.9 which classified the conflict at latent phase.¹⁹⁷ This shows the unpredictable nature of conflict, since 2019 to 2022 where the level of conflict has moved from confrontational phase to peace and again back to confrontational phase. Moreover, there are also frequent occurrence of inter-communal conflicts that renders South Sudan insecure. The nature of the conflict curve in South Sudan can be attributed to factors such as unresolved historical grievances, failure of peace agreements and revenge killings among the communities.

¹⁹⁶ VOA. (August 17, 2023). *Northern South Sudan's Economy 'Decimated' by Sudan Conflict*, <https://www.voanews.com/a/northern-south-sudan-s-economy-decimated-by-sudan-conflict-/7229419.html>

¹⁹⁷ <http://www.conflictmonitoring.com/>

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study applied a cross-sectional research design by comparing diverse perceptions and analyses from different contexts. The design was important in understanding the actual context of conflicts, their multi-level perspectives, as well as the cultural influences involved. The research also applied a mixed-method approach, which accommodated quantitative as well as qualitative methods of data collection that helped in formulating the CMT using a holistic approach of interpretation.¹⁹⁸The mixed-method approach was also important in the rigorous use of quantitative research that helped in examining the magnitude of conflict and the frequency in which the conflict indicators were observed.

Target Population

The target population was mainly individuals with informed levels of knowledge of the prevailing security situation from the general public, civil society organizations, NGOs, and key informants from the DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Sudan. Examples of professions represented by respondents included peace practitioner, political/community leaders, security personnel, media practitioners, teachers, the business sector, and religious leaders. The population also included people involved in peace processes within the targeted four countries. The research only included participants over the age of 18 years who gave their verbal informed consent to participate in the study. The age brackets considered under this study were 18-26 years, 27-35 years, 36-50 years and above 50 years.

Sampling Procedure

Convenience and purposive methods of non-probability sampling were used. First, four countries (Ethiopia, DRC, South Sudan and Kenya) were selected purposively to represent countries with various conflict situations in Eastern Africa. Secondly, the participants were selected based on their availability and willingness to take part in the study. Inclusion criteria were used to ensure that only those people who had the desired attributes and experience participated in the study. The minimum targeted sample size for each country was 120 respondents totaling to 480 respondents for the four countries.

¹⁹⁸ University of Southern California, "Research guides," <https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/researchdesigns>

Data Collection Tool

A questionnaire was designed based on the objectives of the study as well as the findings of the literature review. The questionnaire included both the open-ended and closed-ended questions designed for measuring conflict levels. To test the validity and reliability of the tools, the questionnaire was pre-tested before the actual data collection. This was done to test the relevancy of the questions and validity of the questionnaire in achieving the research objectives. From the pre-test, different indicators were validated as appropriate for measuring different stages of conflict in a given country. A final draft questionnaire was developed and translated from English to French for DRC, and from English to Amharic for the case of Ethiopia to ensure easier data collection in DRC and Ethiopia respectively.

Data Collection Procedure

A total of 596 questionnaire copies were filled and returned across the four countries (DRC-120 copies, South Sudan-120 copies, Ethiopia-123 copies and Kenya-233 copies). In DRC, Ethiopia and South Sudan, data was collected using hard copies due to limited internet connectivity and the response rate was 100%. In Kenya, the data was collected online. Two separate group discussions were carried out in Kenya, specifically in Kisumu and Nairobi, and additional group discussions took place in Juba, South Sudan, and Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Data collection for this research was conducted between June and August 2023. For the data collection we used conflict monitors (a person contracted on the ground to assist in data collection, conflict situation updates, and mobilization of FGDs and KIIs participants) in each of the 4 countries. These conflict monitors were informed on conflict scenarios in each country and could therefore select and mobilize our target respondents. In addition to questionnaires and focused group discussions, we also collected in depth data on conflict in Kenya, DRC, Ethiopia and South Sudan through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).

Limitations of the Research

The CMT in 2023, encountered some limitations. Firstly, accessing various regions within each of the four countries to collect data on the conflict situations was not possible. Therefore, in South Sudan, data was collected predominantly in Juba, in Ethiopia, the data was collected in Addis-Ababa while in DRC, and the data was mostly collected in Kivu. As such, while the CMT 2023

may have a conflict level for the entire three nations, the data mostly reflects the happenings in the areas where data was collected and in only a few instances can the data be generalized to the entire nation. However, in Kenya, data was collected as per regions and is reflective of the happenings of those regions.

Secondly, the CMT 2023 gathers opinions and comments from the various stakeholders that were identified by the criterion set forth by the CRTP team. As such, the conflict level for the four countries is based on the perception of the various respondents who either filled the questionnaire, participated in the KII's or took part in the FGD. Nonetheless, perception can sometimes be based on stereotypes and assumptions. To ensure that the CMT findings were not skewed based on the respondents' stereotypes and assumptions, validation exercises were conducted across the four countries to ensure that the conflict levels and other findings were accurate.

DATA ANALYSIS

Application of Conflict Monitoring Tool and Data Analysis

Below is a summary of the data analysis procedure and report for the four countries. Data analysis for Kenya was undertaken as per regions within the country, while the data analysis for DRC, Ethiopia and South Sudan was analyzed as a country. For DRC data collection only took place in the Eastern part of the country where the conflict is more concentrated.

Data analysis was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods. Content analysis was applied for open-ended questions while statistical descriptive analysis was applied to close-ended questions. Below is the specific procedure for analyzing the level of conflict.

Step 1: Identification of Indicators of Conflict

Fifty-four (54) indicators were used to calculate the statistical rating of the severity of the conflicts. Each level had a unique group of indicators. A full list of the indicators under each of the six levels of conflict is listed in the Appendix section.

Step 2: Rating Participants' Responses

The indicators were presented to the participants of the study who rated them using a four-point Likert scale. The Likert scale measured whether these indicators were observed and if so, the frequency of their occurrence. In this case, the ratings of the scale were '*Not observed*', '*Rarely Observed*', '*Sometimes Observed*', and '*Consistently Observed*'.

Step 3: Summarizing Participants' Responses

The primary data from each country were summarized using frequencies for each indicator under the four choices of the Likert scale. The more such indicators for category one [levels zero (0), negative two (-2), and a negative one (-1)] are observed, the higher the chances that the region or country is either enjoying relative peace or moving towards the realization of peace. On the contrary, the more consistent indicators for category two [levels one (1), two (2), and three (3)] are observed, the higher the chance that the conflict situation is escalating.

Step 4: Weighting the Responses

Weights were introduced for the four categories of the Likert Scale because a ‘Not observed’ case of an indicator contributes differently in determining the conflict level compared to another case of ‘Consistently observed’ response of the same indicator. However, the weighting for the responses for indicators levels zero (0), negative two (-2), and a negative one (-1) and those for levels one (1), two (2), and three (3) were rated in reverse order. This was meant to maintain consistency in calculating the conflict levels. In other words, the weighting of the ‘**Not observed**’ indicators in category one was meant to mirror the ‘**Consistently observed**’ category two indicators and vice versa.

Example:

The first indicator in conflict Level zero (**L₀I₁**) states:

[L₀I₁]: There is reduced number of conflicts resolved through community elders/court system
(The consistent observation of this indicator means that the country is experiencing peace.)

The first indicator in conflict Level one (**L₁I₁**) states:

[L₁I₁]: There is increase of access of light weapons by ordinary citizens
(The consistent observation of this indicator means that the conflict situation is escalating.)

In this example, a ‘**Consistently Observed**’ response for **L₀I₁** implies a ‘**Not Observed**’ response for **L₁I₁**. Theory indicates that it is less likely that a reduced number of conflicts resolved envisioned in **L₀I₁** will be accompanied by consistently observed increase of access of light weapons by ordinary citizens as stated in **L₁I₁**. Therefore, the weighting of the responses for the two categories of indicators was based on the following interpretations.

- (i) An increase in the frequency in which category one indicators are observed means that the conflict is de-escalating and vice versa.
- (ii) An increase in the frequency in which category two indicators are observed means that the conflict is escalating and vice versa.

Table 4 below shows the weights that were assigned for the responses for each conflict level.

Table 4: Weighting of Participants' Responses

Level	Not observed	Rarely observed	Sometimes observed	Consistently observed
Level 0	3	2	1	0.01
Level 1	0.01	1	2	3
Level 2	0.01	1	2	3
Level 3	0.01	1	2	3
Level -2	3	2	1	0.01
Level -1	3	2	1	0.01

(Source: CRTP Research)

Table 5 presents a summary of country-weighted means per each of the 54 indicators. In this case, the interpretation is that a greater weighted mean depicts a case of a higher conflict level. To build lasting peace, actors should seek to ensure that these weighted means are as close to zero as possible. In this case, zero is the ideal weighted mean where the region or country enjoys absolute peace. For example, all indicators in level zero, negative two, and negative one should be consistently observed for the region to have absolute peace. On the contrary, none of the indicators in levels one, two, and three of the CMT should be observed in an ideal situation of absolute peace. Since the utopian situation of absolute peace cannot be practically achieved, the levels of conflict under the CMT are expected to oscillate between negative two and positive three.

Table 5: Conflict Level Constants in DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan

	Indicators	SOUTH SUDAN	ETHIOPIA	DRC	RIFT VALLEY	KENYA
	There is reduced number of conflicts resolved through community elders/ court system	2.15075	0.649153	1.301833	1.129574	1.262146
	There is increased inter-ethnic peaceful coexistence and marriage	1.984833	0.875847	1.2605	0.854043	1.062146
LEVEL 0	There is reduced revenge killings and crime activities (e.g., cattle raiding and theft)	2.051083	1.009915	1.576833	1.448723	1.508813
	There is an observed increase in youth and women employment	2.25925	1.019322	2.158583	1.724894	1.909909

	There is an enabling environment that allows economic activities to prevail without interruption	2.25075	0.883898	1.868	1.363191	1.380913
	There is perceived equitable resource distribution and services by the government	2.408917	0.934407	2.051083	1.511915	1.745114
	There is perceived low level of corruption	2.508833	0.926864	1.751583	1.980213	2.174384
	Level Total	2.230631	0.899915	1.709774	1.430365	1.577632
	There is increase of access of light weapons by ordinary citizens	2.525667	2.252793	2.1175	1.588696	1.5025
	There is increase in political-based hate speeches and demonstrations	2.4175	2.108288	1.867667	1.93587	1.878585
	There is rise in the level of criminal activities/gang groups e.g. cattle raiding	2.517333	2.144775	1.958917	2.196087	2.165896
Level 1	There are cases of ethnic social discrimination and exclusion by government authorities	2.383667	2.108288	1.75075	1.65413	1.812689
	Increased cattle rustling activities	2.383583	2.090721	2.083917	1.828261	1.625519
	Lack of gender inclusion and social groups (women, youth, labour/workers association) in conflict management process	2.383833	1.973153	2.225417	1.97913	1.803113
	Disappearance of men and young people in the community	2.2755	2.081532	1.776333	1.545	1.427217
	Unresolved historical grievances/revenge attack and killings	2.458667	2.00018	1.959167	1.762391	1.84566
	Lack of full implementation of Peace Agreements	2.473108	0.01	0.01	1.848913	1.615377
	There is an increased complaints of economic hardships e.g., High cost of living	2.508583	2.045766	2.375333	2.586957	2.500472
	Level Total	2.432744	1.88155	1.8125	1.892543	1.817703
	There is occasional low key armed conflict in the country (between different armed groups/government forces, etc.)	1.766471	2.432203	3	1.724255	1.488472
	There is frequent acquisition of small arms and light weapons by residences.	2.219244	2.228814	1	1.639574	1.350046
	There are reported cases of police brutality in the process of enforcement government orders such as disarmament process	2.23605	2.118644	1	1.958085	1.811481
	There are community demonstrations/riots against insecurity in the country	1.934706	2.034068	2	1.872979	1.76963
	There is an increased movement of people displaced by conflict	2.303529	1.949661	3	1.830638	1.530139
LEVEL 2	There were observed cases of criminal activities (theft and robbery) due to hard economic situations	2.085126	1.941102	2	2.383191	2.204167
	There is an increased political incitement /negative propaganda that tend to generate violence	2.093277	2.043051	2	2.170851	1.918009
	There is existence of inter-ethnic/cross-border clashes	2.109832	2.10178	3	1.724468	1.483796

	There are cases of people being pushed out of their homes for political reasons (e.g., 'ethnic cleansing')	2.093277	1.941186	2	1.363404	1.216111
	There is increased reports on violation of human rights e.g. armed robbery, gender and sexual based violence, police brutality	2.403866	2.093475	1	1.95766	1.875741
	There is disruption of economic activities due to conflicts/violence (such as trading, food supply, market activities etc.)	2.44605	2.093559	3	1.95766	1.709722
	Level Total	2.153766	2.088867	2.090909	1.871161	1.668847
	There is increased deployment of government armed security officers on the affected region.	2.101083	2.225083	1.784583	1.978222	1.700142
	There are increased cases of armed conflicts in some parts of the country	2.334	1.975167	2.051417	2.133556	1.751415
	There is rise in violence and killing of innocent citizens	2.400417	1.82525	2.36725	2.111333	1.751509
Level 3	There is increased inter-communal conflict (ethnic, religious or political)	2.33375	1.908333	2.00025	1.978	1.521179
	There is media information blackout	2.184	1.791917	1.518333	1.27	1.126462
	There is displacement of communities and refugees' influx into neighbouring communities	2.45875	1.941917	1.65125	1.447333	1.121981
	There is inter-border movement restriction in conflict affected areas	2.284	1.8	1.709583	1.668	1.253255
	There is presence of international peace keeping bodies such as UN, AU & EU in the affected regions	2.425333	1.650583	1.992417	1.403111	1.1175
	Level Total	2.315167	1.889781	1.884385	1.748694	1.41793
	There are increased conflict intervention activities to end the conflict (mediation, negotiation, peace talks, sanctions)	0.78875	0.526891	0.994583	0.87	1.294906
	There is evidence of reduced conflict in the country due to agreement between the rival groups	0.721833	0.785462	1.408833	1.268444	1.492123
	The active participants of the conflict have agreed to have peace talks	0.754833	0.802185	1.24375	1.158	1.473255
	People are seen as slowly taking on normal daily activities like resumption of business	0.829083	1.119496	1.30975	0.958667	1.054953
Level -2	Reconciliation and peace building programs have been initiated	0.82925	0.96042	0.985583	0.758889	1.181415
	There is ceasefire (the parties from both sides have agreed to suspend their aggressive actions)	0.804667	1.13605	1.576	1.357333	1.666226
	The protagonist have agreed to sign a peace agreement	0.84575	0.877647	1.426583	1.601111	1.864104
	The citizens holding arms illegally are surrendering to the government in a demilitarization/disarmament program	1.186667	1.085966	0.969333	1.201556	1.656698

	There is presence of international peace keeping bodies such as UN, AU & EU in the affected regions	0.581083	0.976303	0.612833	1.535333	1.892925
	Level Total	0.815769	0.918936	1.169694	1.189926	1.508512
	There is evidenced full resumption of daily activities by the residence	1.204118	0.588167	1.468	0.979535	1.161587
	The parties to the conflict have agreed to demobilize their forces	1.120504	0.827917	1.642333	1.443023	1.770096
	There is a wider inclusion in the peace-building process/activities (includes women, youth, different ethnic groups, religious group)	1.095462	1.018333	1.30125	1.072093	1.304808
	There is reduced tension and fear between different ethnic/religious/armed groups	1.178992	0.927667	1.601	1.187907	1.233173
Level -1	The refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are returning to their homes	1.715042	1.01075	1.161	1.72186	1.947933
	There is an improved security in the region with more police posts and security camps established	1.421765	1.02725	1.402083	0.979535	1.338413
	There is improved economic situation for citizens (resumption of economic activities, opening of markets/shops)	1.50605	0.935833	1.542917	1.141628	1.62149
	The causes of conflict are currently being addressed	1.330168	1.127083	1.643333	0.98	1.458558
	Government justice processes have been initiated to address conflict crime	1.372185	0.985263	1.185833	1.165349	1.650625
	Level Total	1.327143	0.938696	1.438639	1.185659	1.49852

(Source: CRTP Research)

Step 5: Introduction of Constants

Constants were then introduced in each conflict level. The aim of introducing the constant was to uniquely identify the conflict levels on a scale between negative two (-2) and positive three (+3) as earlier stated. The constants for levels 0, 1, 2, 3, -2, and -1 were 0, 1, 2, 3, -2, and -1 respectively. In other words, all the values in the data summary were multiplied by constants respective to their conflict level. Also, the total frequencies were also multiplied by the constants.

Step 6: computation of the Conflict Level

From the results from step 5 above, the level of conflict was calculated using the following formula.

Figure 1: Formula for Calculating the Conflict Level

$$CI = \frac{\sum c_{ij}[(f_{ij})w_{ij}]}{\sum(c_{ij}f_{ij})}$$

Where

CI = the conflict level

c_{ij} = the constant of the i^{th} row in the j^{th} column

f_{ij} = the frequency for the i^{th} row under the j^{th} column

w_{ij} = the weighting for the i^{th} row under the j^{th} column

i = the indicator number listed from level 0 to level -1 and appearing as rows.

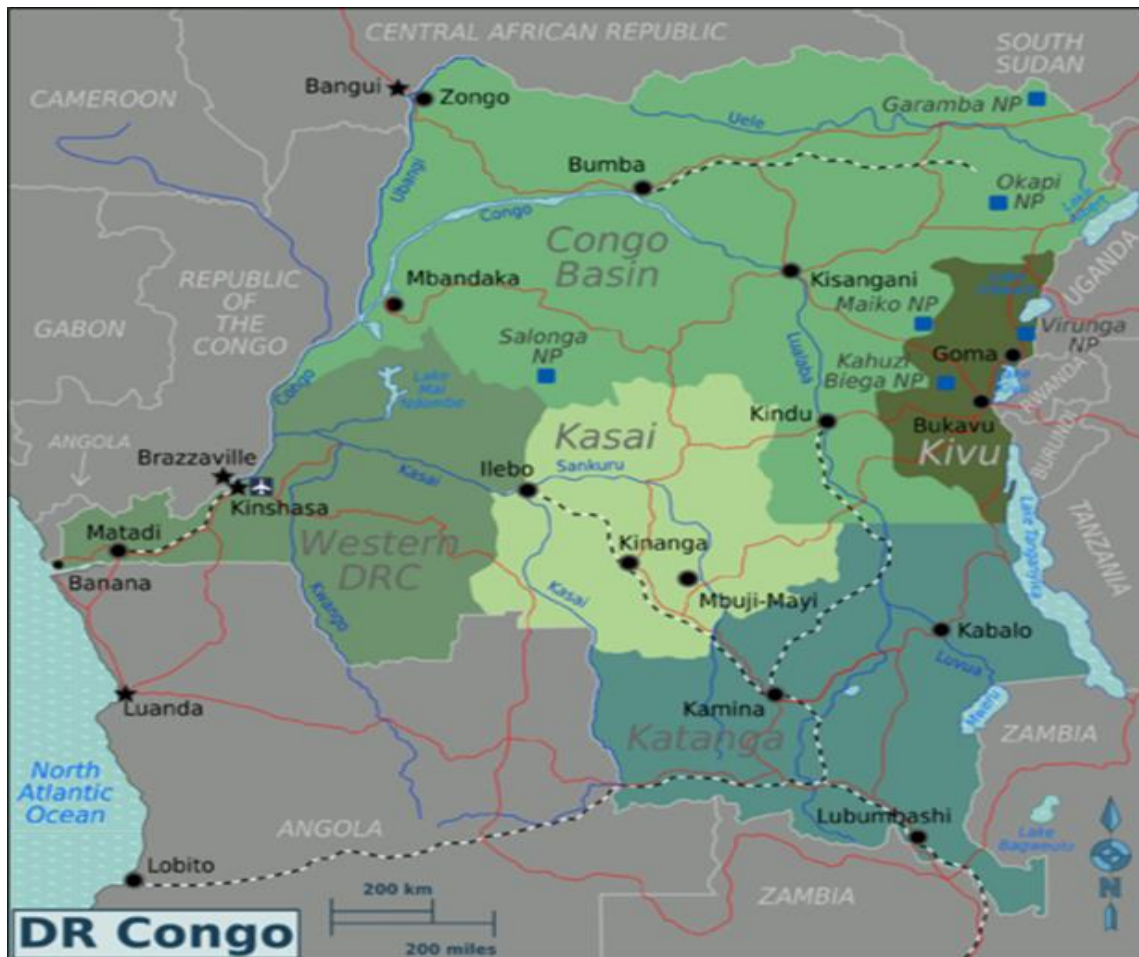
j = Likert scale options that are listed in four columns as 'Not observed', 'Rarely observed', 'Sometimes observed', and 'Consistently observed.'

(Source: HIPSIR Research)

RESEARCH FINDING REPORTS

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

The conflict level for DRC is **2.6** (2.570917), which means that the country is at the confrontational stage of conflict. This relates to escalating rivalry between opposing conflict parties. Displayed by incidences of open conflict. If left unaddressed there could be an escalation in the frequency and intensity of conflict.



The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is not new to conflict having experienced it for many especially in the Eastern regions of the country. Taking advantage of a weak security structure as well as widespread underdevelopment, armed groups have proliferated in the region, leading to increased instability, the loss of lives, the destruction of property and the displacement of hundreds

of thousands of people, in addition to rising food insecurity for millions in the country.¹⁹⁹ The M23 crisis escalated in late 2022 and early 2023, leading to a significant number of people being displaced and creating urgent humanitarian requirements. Based on the third crisis analysis assessment released on March 23, 2023, by the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), more than 904,829 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were compelled to flee from the conflict-affected regions. Among them, 60% were women and 11% were children under the age of five. This figure is a significant increase compared to the 180,000 individuals displaced in November 2022.²⁰⁰

In March 2023, an attack carried out by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels in the village of Mukondi, located in the Beni territory of North Kivu province, resulted in the deaths of more than 40 people and caused injuries to several others. The eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have been plagued by armed group attacks and inter-communal violence for almost three decades. With over 120 active groups operating in the region, a notable upsurge in attacks targeting civilians has been observed.²⁰¹ These armed conflicts have resulted in extensive and recurrent displacement of the population, causing over 5.8 million individuals to be displaced within the country. This has established the country as having the largest displaced population in Africa. Internally Displaced People (IDPs) endure extremely harsh living conditions, including a lack of shelter, clean water, sanitation, food, and inadequate healthcare.

Subsequently, this section provides an overview of the conflict landscape in DRC, offering insights into the ongoing and pervasive conflicts, their underlying drivers, the key actors involved, and the persistent challenges that hinder conflict resolution efforts. Additionally, it presents the recommendations put forth by respondents, offering potential solutions to address the complex conflicts in DRC. But just before delving into the conflict situation of DRC, this section first presents a detailed demographic profile of the respondents of this study. The profile of the respondents offers valuable insights into the characteristics of the individuals who participated in the CMT study. It includes information such as age, gender, occupation, geographical location, and affiliations. This comprehensive demographic analysis serves as a foundation for

¹⁹⁹ European Commission, “Democratic Republic of the Congo – Increasing Violence,” June 02, 2021, <https://erccportal.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ECHO-Products/Echo-Flash#/daily-flash-archive/4209> (accessed August 18, 2021).

²⁰⁰ IOM. (2023). Democratic Republic of the Congo Crisis Response Plan 2023. <https://crisisresponse.iom.int/response/democratic-republic-congo-crisis-response-plan-2023>

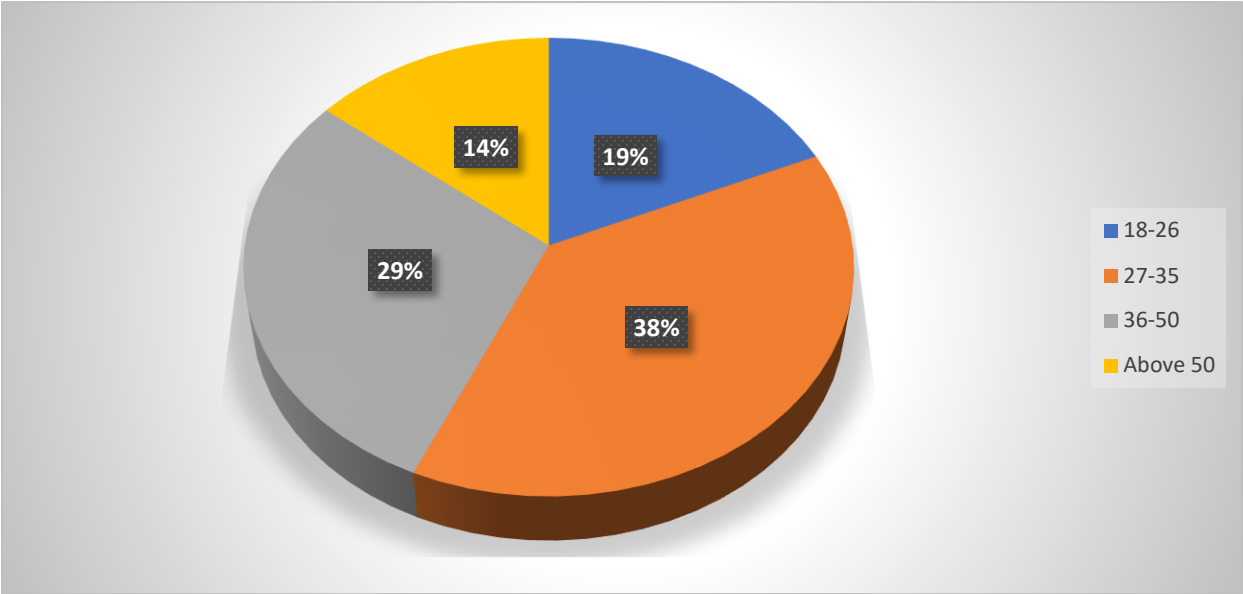
²⁰¹ OCHA. (2023). *Democratic Republic of the Congo - Conflict, displacement and Humanitarian Air Bridge (DG ECHO) (ECHO Daily Flash of 10 March 2023)*. Relief Web. <https://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/democratic-republic-congo-conflict-displacement-and-humanitarian-air-bridge-dg-echo-echo-daily-flash-10-march-2023>

understanding the diverse perspectives and backgrounds of the respondents, enriching the context of the CMT study and providing a deeper understanding of their viewpoints and experiences.

Age Bracket of Respondents

The analysis of the age-bracket of the respondents who participated in the CMT research from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) reveals a distribution of participants across different age groups. The age group of between 27-35 years had the highest representation, with 46 respondents, accounting for 8.33% of the total participants. The age group between 36-50 years also had substantial participation, with 35 respondents, making up around 29.17% of the total participants. The age group of between 18-26 years had 22 respondents, representing approximately 18.33% of the total participants while the age group of above 50 years had 17 respondents, accounting for approximately 14.17% of the total participants. Thus, the respondents of the CMT research from DRC are distributed across various age groups. As such, the diversity in age groups contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the conflict dynamics and perspectives in DRC. Figure 10 below shows the distribution of the respondents’ age-bracket in percentage.

Figure 10: Age-bracket of respondents from DRC

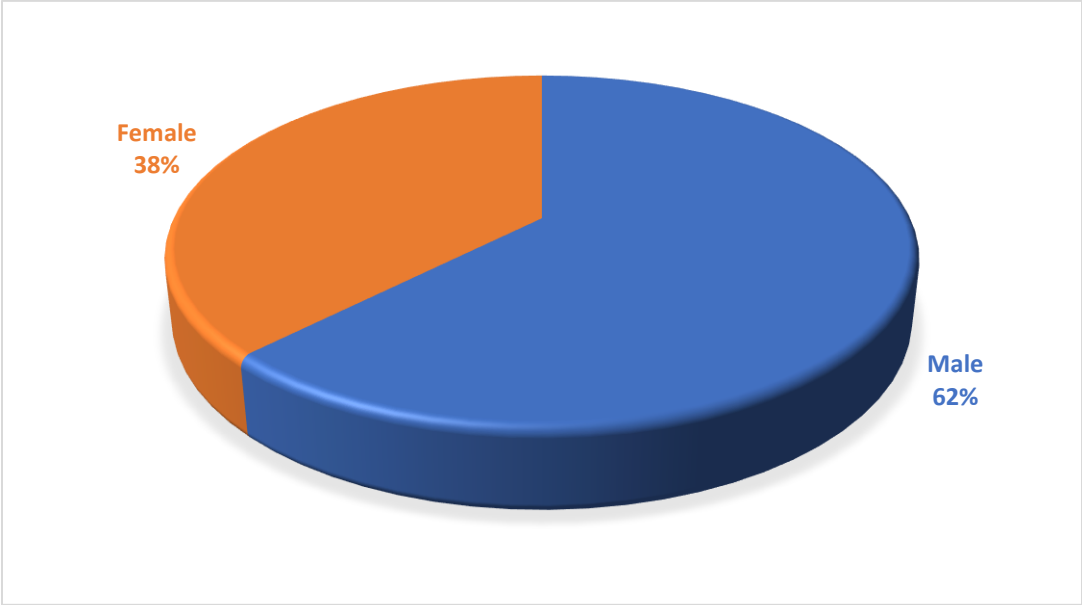


Source: CMT Research Findings

In terms of gender, the male respondents constituted 75 respondents, accounting for 62.5% of the total participants while the female respondents constituted 45 respondents representing 37.5% of

the total participants. Consequently, the gender distribution of the CMT respondents from DRC shows a higher representation of males compared to females. Nonetheless, the diversity in gender distribution and participation is important for capturing a comprehensive range of perspectives and experiences of the conflict situations in the country. Figure 11 below shows the distribution of the respondent's gender in percentage.

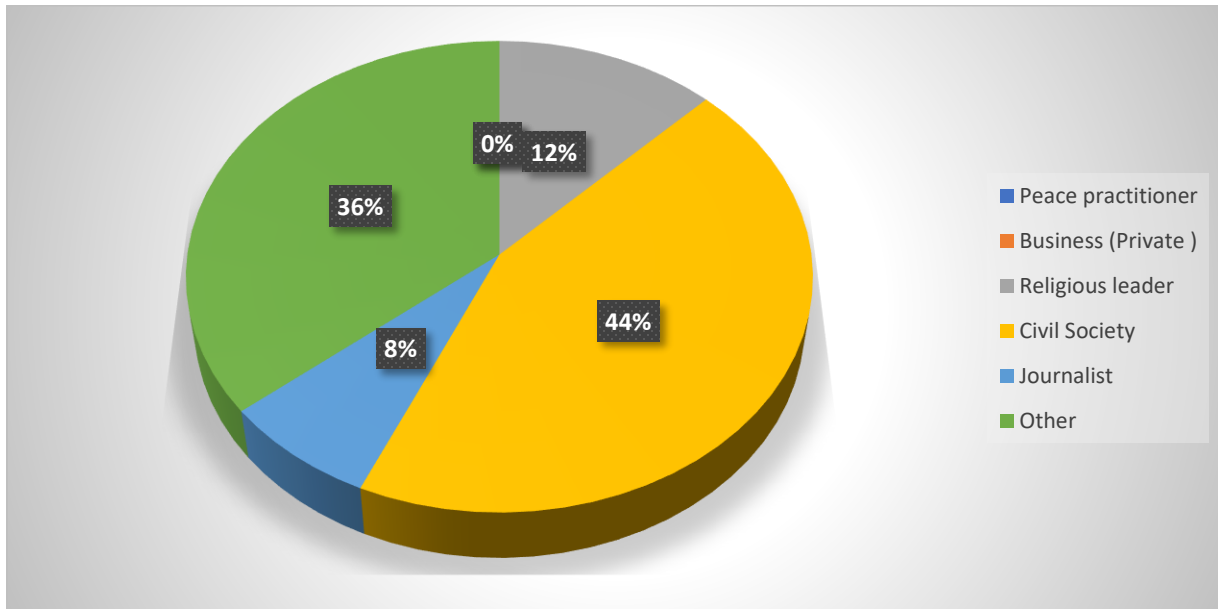
Figure 11: Gender of the respondents from DRC



Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to the occupation of the respondents who filled the questionnaire, those from the civil society were the most prominent category, with 53 participants, accounting for approximately 44.17% of the total. Respondents who are religious leaders were the next most significant category, with 15 respondents, representing approximately 12.5% of the total participants. Other respondents identified themselves as medical professionals, students, teachers, and service providers like taxi drivers. Consequently, the data on the occupation of the respondents reflects a diverse mix of professionals from the civil society members, religious leaders, and individuals from various other professional backgrounds. This diversity is essential for capturing a comprehensive range of perspectives of conflict situations in the DRC. Figure 12 below shows the distribution of the respondent's occupation in percentage.

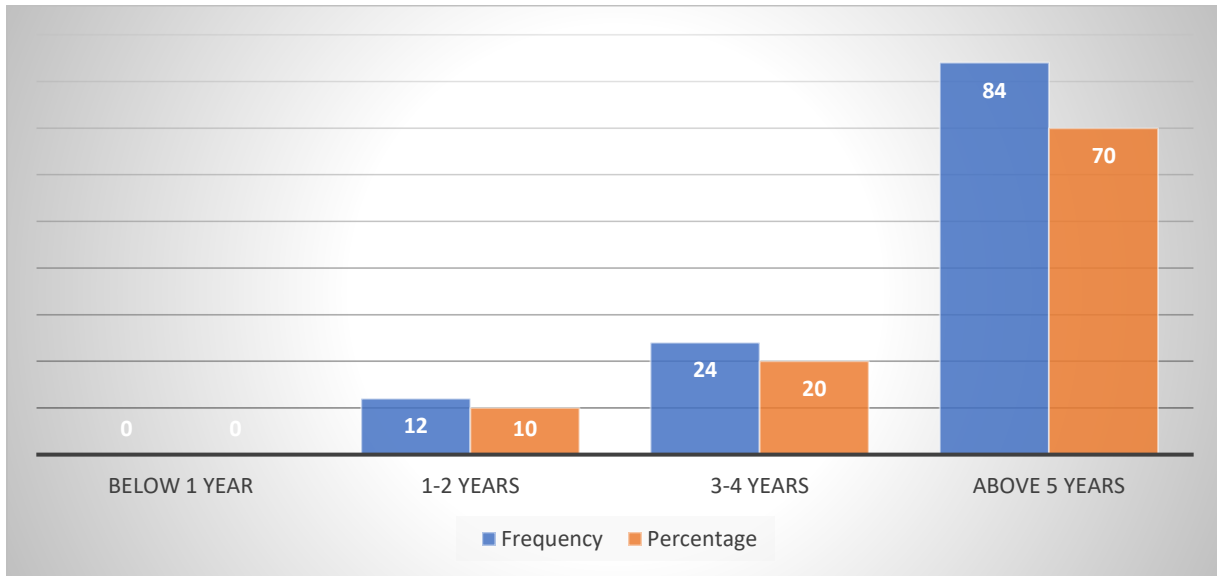
Figure 12: The occupation of the respondents from DRC



Source: CMT Research Findings

This study also sought to understand the level of experience of the respondents in order to have a clear understanding of various perspectives, behaviour, decision-making processes and expertise that informs various conflict intervention mechanisms in DRC. Respondents who have over 5 years of work experience were the majority, with 84 respondents, accounting for approximately 70% of the total. The respondents with 3-4 years of work experience on the other hand were 24 individuals, representing 20% of the total number of respondents while the respondents with 1-2 years of work experience accounted for 12 participants making up 10% of the total. Figure 13 below shows the distribution of years of work experience of the respondents from DRC in percentage.

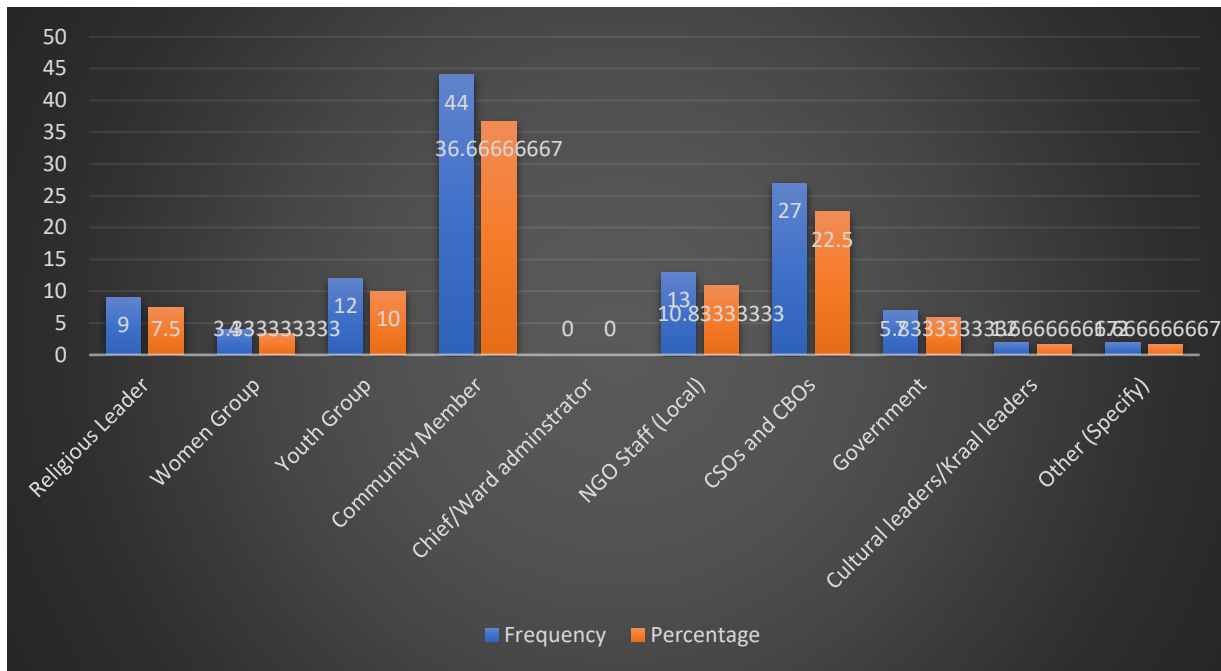
Figure 13: Years of work experience of the respondents from DRC



Source: CMT Research Findings

Additionally, the research aimed to comprehend the affiliations of the respondents who completed the CMT questionnaire with various stakeholders. 44 of the respondents - 36.67% of the total participants indicated that they are community members. Individuals who belong to CSOs and CBOs also had a notable presence, with 27 respondents, accounting for 22.5% of the total. Another 12 respondents, representing approximately 10% of the total indicated that they belong to youth groups. Religious leaders and local NGO Staff had moderate representations, with 9 and 13 respondents respectively. The government and women groups categories on the other hand had lower representations, with 7 and 4 respondents, respectively. In summary, the data reflects a diverse range of stakeholders who filled the CMT questionnaire in the DRC. This diversity is valuable for comprehensive conflict analysis and the development of inclusive conflict resolution strategies. Figure 14 below shows the distribution of stakeholders who were engaged in the CMT research.

Figure 14: Stakeholders engaged in the CMT research from DRC



Source: CMT Research Findings

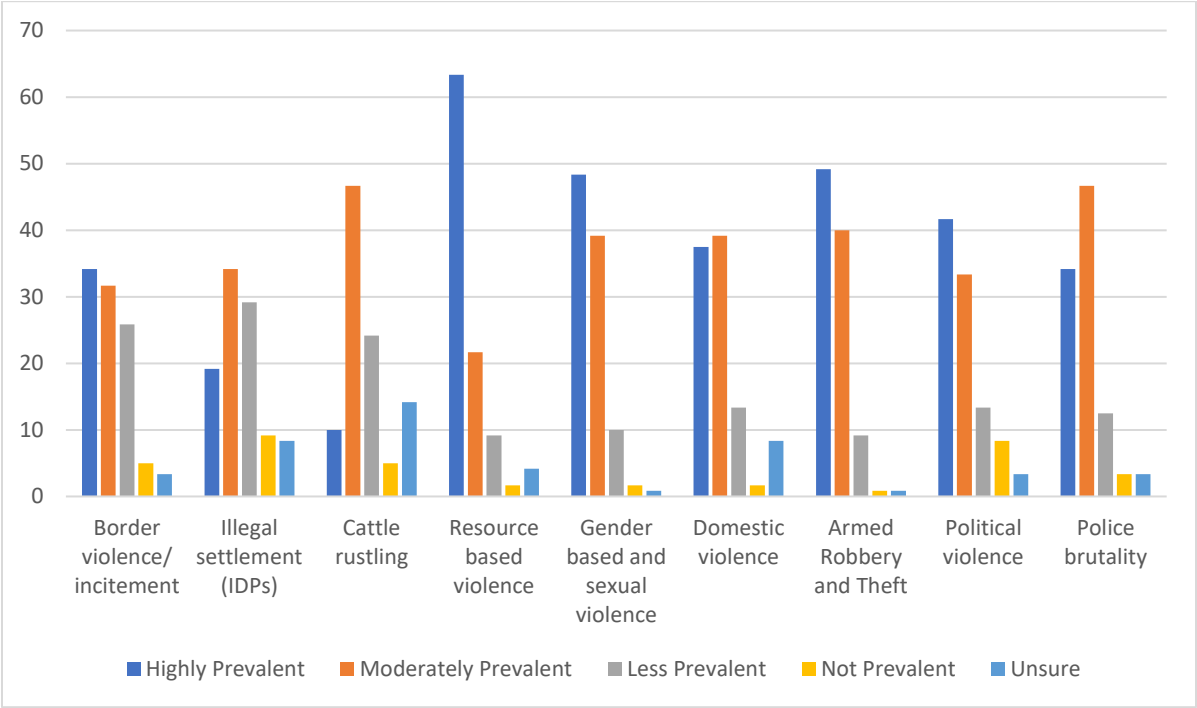
Understanding Conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

From the CMT data analysis, the conflict level for DRC is **2.6** which means that the country is experiencing confrontational level of conflict. Resource-based violence was identified as the highly prevalent conflict with 63.33% of respondents. This suggests that disputes over natural resources, such as land, water, and minerals are a major driver of conflicts in DRC. Another prominent conflict in DRC is armed robbery and theft as identified by 49.17% of respondents. This indicates a widespread problem of criminal activities that contribute to incidences of conflicts and violence in the country. Additionally, gender-based and sexual violence was another highly prevalent conflict in the DRC with approximately 48.33% of respondents acknowledging its significance. Political violence was also identified as a moderately prevalent conflict in the country with 46.67% of respondents acknowledging its significance. The focused group discussion on the other hand highlighted internal and cross-border conflicts that are fueled by foreign and internal armed groups who are fighting over the control of the country’s natural resources.

Subsequently, the CMT research highlights a complex landscape of conflicts in the DRC, with resource-based violence, gender-based violence, domestic violence, armed robbery, political violence, and police brutality being prominent concerns. These findings provide valuable insights

for addressing these conflicts and developing strategies for conflict resolution and peacebuilding in DRC. Figure 15 below shows the distribution of the prevalent conflicts in DRC in percentage.

Figure 15: Prevalent Conflicts in DRC

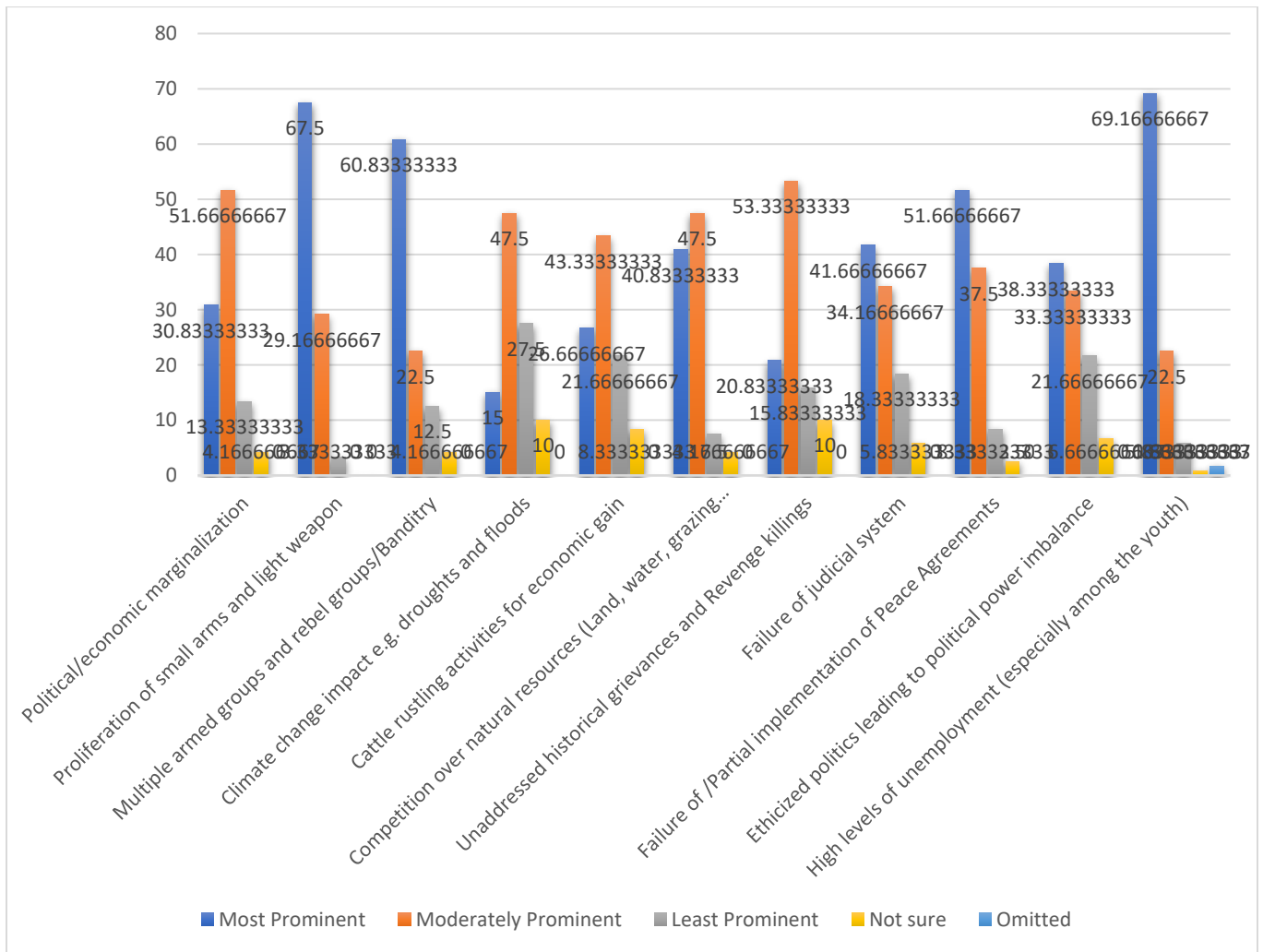


Source: CMT Research Findings

Drivers of Conflict in the DRC

On the other hand, the CMT study also sought to understand the key drivers of the ongoing conflicts in DRC as explained in Figure 16. High levels of unemployment especially among the youth was identified by approximately 69.17% of the respondents as the prominent driver of conflicts. The widespread availability of small arms and light weapons was another highly prominent driver, with 67.5% of respondents recognizing its significance. Indeed, the easy access to weapons exacerbates conflict and insecurity. Additionally, multiple armed groups and rebel activities was identified as a highly prominent conflict driver by 60.83% of the respondents. Figure 16 shows the distribution of the prominent conflict drivers in the DRC in percentage.

Figure 16: Conflict Drivers in DRC



Source: CMT Research Findings

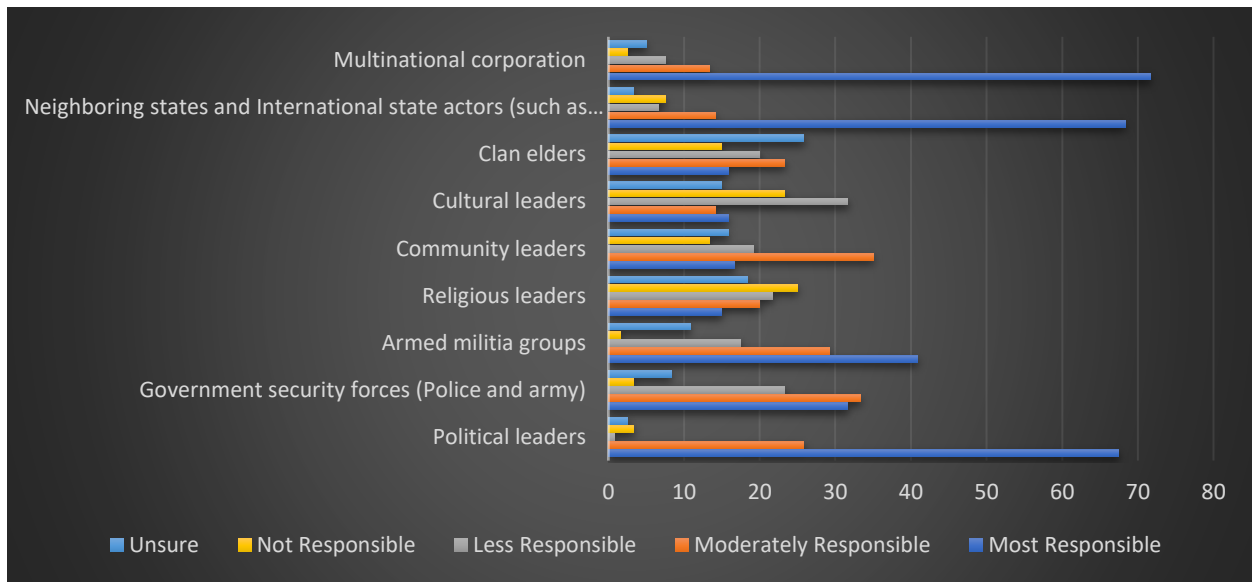
The focused group discussion respondents reiterated that the presence of various armed actors, some who are foreigners, in the DRC has often contributed to conflicts and violence in the nation. The failure of the judicial system was also identified as a highly prominent conflict driver by 51.67% of respondents. This finding shows that the lack of access to fair and effective justice can exacerbate conflicts and lead to violence. In summary, the findings highlight a complex landscape of conflict drivers in the DRC, including high levels of unemployment, the proliferation of small arms, failure in the implementation of peace agreements, political and economic marginalization, and the presence of multiple armed groups. These insights are essential for understanding the root causes of conflicts in DRC and developing effective strategies for conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Actors in the Conflicts in DRC

Having established that DRC is at the confrontational level of conflict at 2.6, the CMT also sought to understand the actors responsible for the ongoing conflicts in the nation. Multinational corporations were identified as the most responsible actors for conflicts occurring in the DRC with approximately 71.67% of respondents, considering them highly accountable. This suggests that economic interests and resource exploitation are significant drivers of conflicts in DRC. Additionally, the neighboring states and international state actors, such as neighboring countries, the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN), and the European Union (EU), among other were identified as highly responsible for conflicts in DRC, with approximately 68.33% of respondents highlighting their significance. Indeed, regional and international involvement in the DRC's affairs has had a substantial impact on the conflict dynamics in the nation. The political leaders were also identified as highly responsible for conflicts in DRC, with 67.5% of respondents indicating their prominence.

In summary, the findings reveal a complex network of actors involved in conflicts in the DRC, including multinational corporations, political leaders, neighboring states, government security forces, armed militia groups, and community leaders. The involvement and accountability of these actors vary, and understanding their roles is essential for addressing the root causes of conflicts and promoting peace and stability in the DRC. Figure 17 below shows the distribution of the actors of conflicts in DRC in percentages.

Figure 17: Actors of the Conflicts in DRC

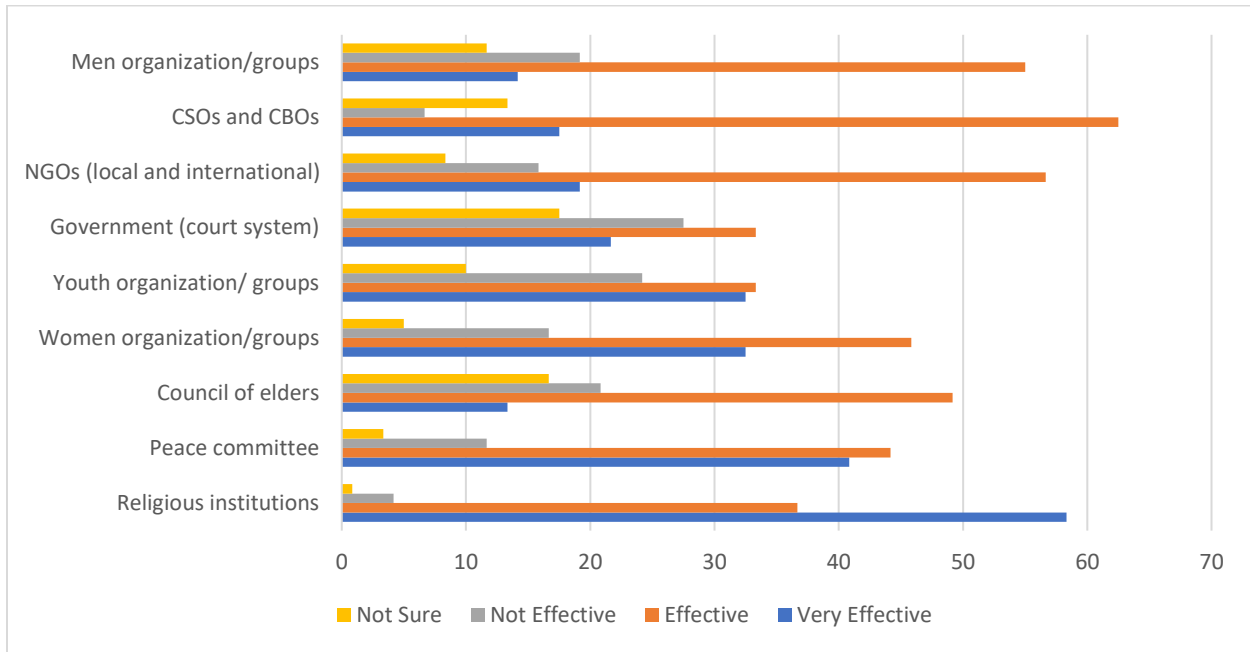


Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to the effective resolution of conflicts in the DRC in the past, 58.33% of respondents recognized the value of religious institutions, which they argue are extremely efficient in resolving conflicts. Indeed, the religious organizations and authorities have been instrumental in resolving disputes and advancing peace in the country. The peace committees were also viewed as very effective, with 40.83% of respondents recognizing their role in conflict resolution in the DRC. The local peace committee bodies often play a crucial role in community-level peace initiatives. On the other hand, the council of elders were perceived as effective in conflict resolution, with 49.17% of respondents considering them valuable contributors while women organizations and groups were deemed effective by 45.83% of respondents.

In summary, religious institutions, peace committees, and certain community-based organizations, including council of elders, women groups, youth groups, government court systems, and various NGOs, were seen as effective contributors to conflict resolution in the DRC. However, there are differing opinions regarding the effectiveness of some institutions. Consequently, understanding the roles and effectiveness of these institutions is essential for promoting sustainable peace and stability in DRC. Figure 18 below shows the distribution of the institutions responsible for effective resolution of conflicts in the DRC.

Figure 18: Institutions responsible for resolving conflicts in the DRC



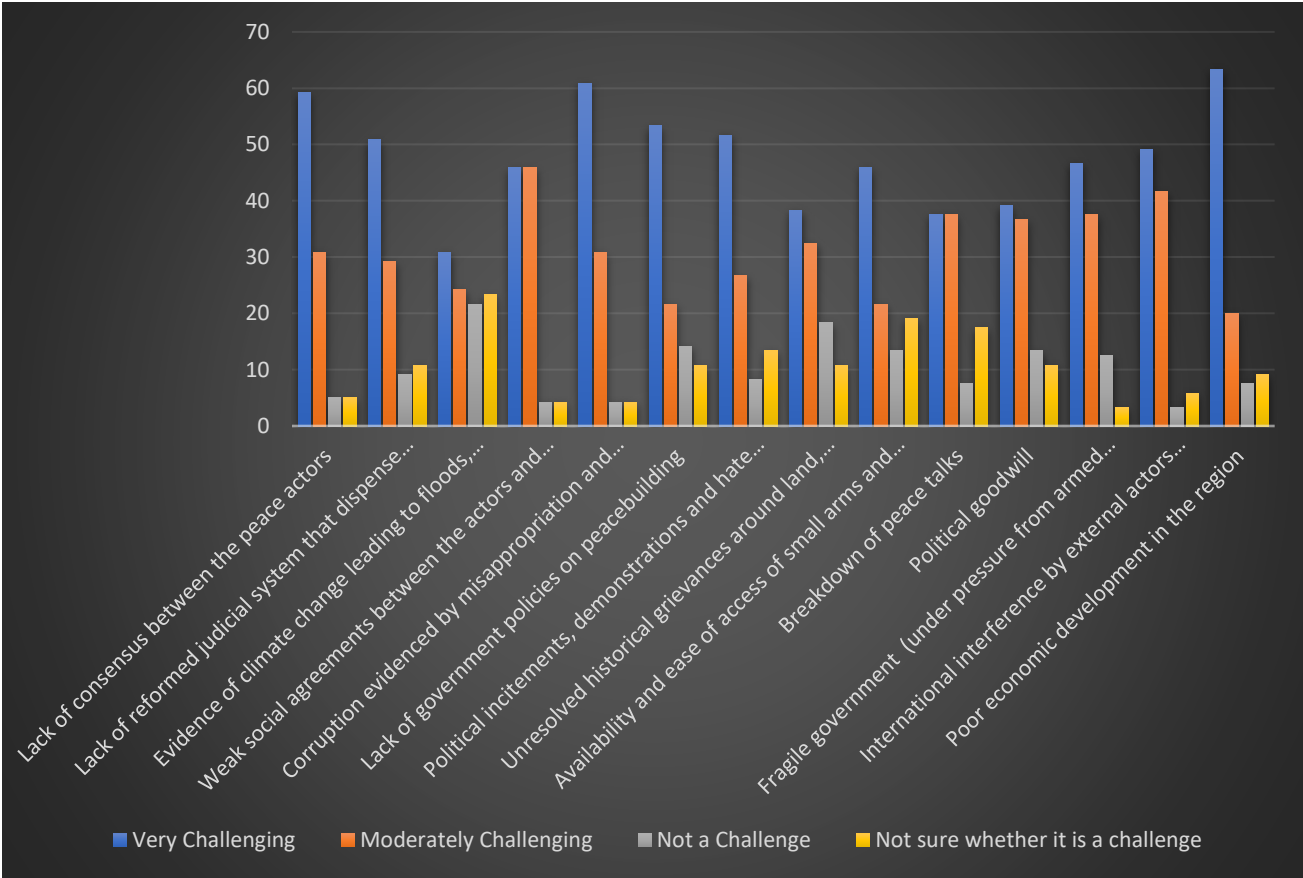
Source: CMT Research Findings

Challenges to Resolving Conflict in the DRC

This CMT research also sought to understand the challenges to resolving conflicts in the DRC. Poor economic development was identified by 63.33% of the respondents as the most significant challenge to resolving the ongoing conflicts. Indeed, poor economic development will result to lack of employment opportunities which then becomes a driver of conflict in the nation. Corruption within the government, demonstrated by misappropriation and embezzlement of resources was also viewed as a very challenging obstacle to resolving conflicts with 60.83% of respondents recognizing its significance. It is evident that corruption erodes public trust in the institutions mandated with efforts to ensure peace and economic development. A lack of consensus between peace actors was also perceived as the most challenging issue in the country, with 59.17% of respondents acknowledging its difficulty. The lack of agreement among key stakeholders can impede effective conflict resolution. The absence of a reformed judicial system that dispenses fair justice was considered moderately challenging, with 50.83% of respondents recognizing its impact. Political incitements, demonstrations, and hate speeches were also viewed as moderately challenging issue, with 51.67% of respondents acknowledging their relevance. Figure 19 below shows the various challenges of resolving conflicts in DRC distributed in percentage.

In summary, the DRC faces significant challenges in achieving effective conflict resolution, with issues related to governance, corruption, climate change, and historical grievances recognized as very challenging. Addressing these challenges and fostering consensus among stakeholders is essential for lasting peace and stability in the DRC.

Figure 19: Challenges to resolving conflict in DRC



Source: CMT Research Findings

Recommendations for Resolving Conflict in the DRC

The respondents gave the following recommendations that could be adopted to help resolve the ongoing conflicts in DRC:

To the Government

The respondents noted that most of the young people who join armed groups often do so due to lack of employment. As such, the respondents suggested the need for the government to prioritize the creation of economic and employment opportunities that can make the youth earn sustainable

income. Thus, the government should invest in economic development and poverty reduction programs to alleviate one of the drivers of conflict, high levels of unemployment, especially among the youth.

Additionally, the respondents noted that the ease of access to small arms and light weapons was making it easier for armed groups to engage in conflict and threaten the security forces who are defending life and protecting the people's business. Consequently, the respondents suggested the need for the government to implement stringent measures to control the availability and access to small arms and light weapons in the DRC. Further, the respondents emphasized on the need for the government and other multi-lateral peace keeping missions to promote disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs for former combatants.

To the INGO's, CSO's and other Multinational Agencies

The respondents highlighted the fact that in as much as peacebuilding activities have been ongoing in Eastern DRC for several years, the initiatives were more militaristic. Additionally, the respondents pointed out to the fact that the local community who have been affected by conflict in Eastern DRC were not engaged in the peacebuilding initiatives by the International and National Non-Governmental organizations, the Civil Societies and other players such as the UN and the AU. Subsequently, the respondents suggested the need to use soft power, particularly when trying to address the key drivers of conflict in Eastern DRC. Further, the respondents stressed on the need to have participatory community led peacebuilding initiatives that was more inclusive, involving all relevant stakeholders, including women, youth, religious groups, and representatives from different regions and communities. Inclusivity can help build trust and address diverse concerns.

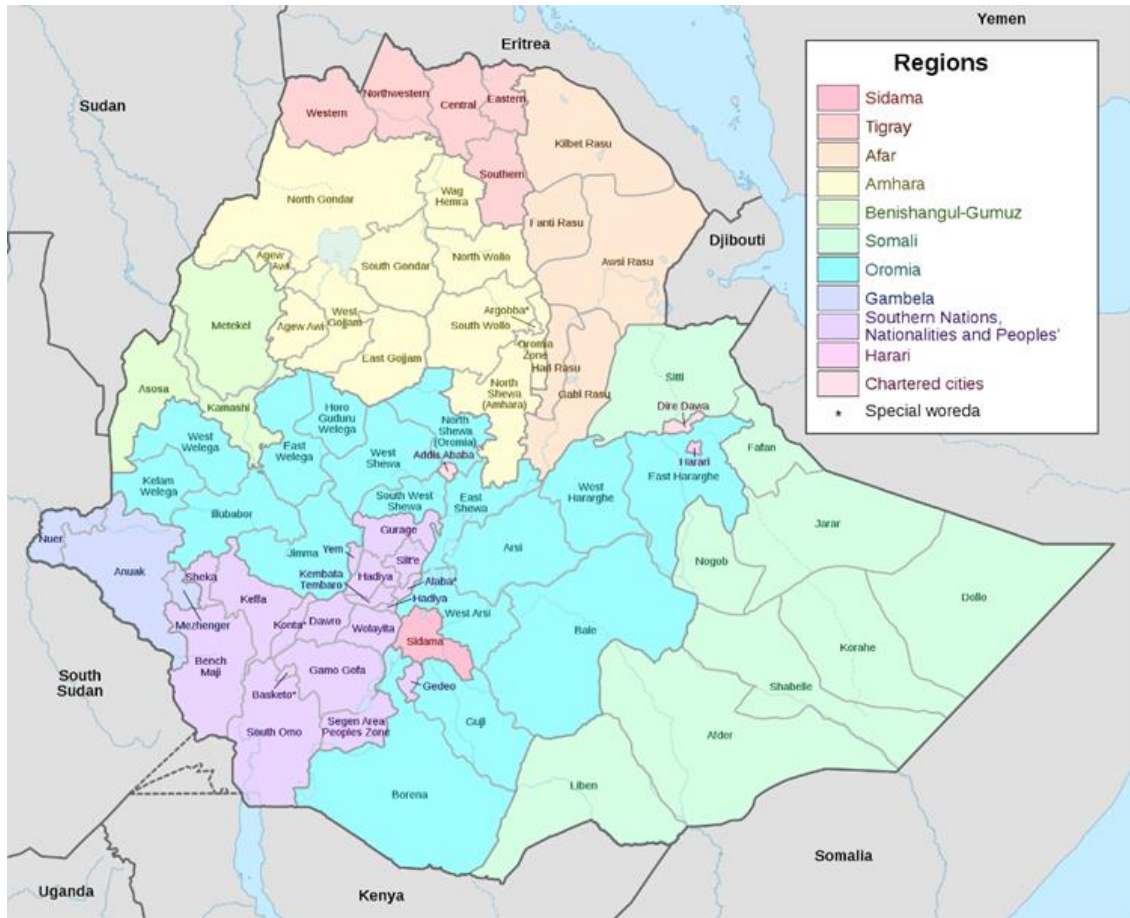
General Recommendations

The respondents also noted that historical grievances were a major driver of conflict in Eastern DRC. Some individuals had been displaced from their lands while the issue of the sharing of revenue from resource exploitation was also a major issue of concern. As such, the respondents called out on all the stakeholders engaged in peacebuilding in DRC to champion for the necessity to address historical grievances related to land, compensation, and restoration through transparent and fair processes.

Finally, competition for natural resources was also identified by the respondents as a major driver of conflict in the Eastern DRC. Consequently, the respondents empathized on the need for the relevant stakeholders to advocate for the implementation of environmental and natural resource management laws and programs to help reduce resource-based conflicts.

ETHIOPIA

The conflict level for Ethiopia is **2.4**. This stage of conflict is characterized by incidences of open conflict, there is also increased intolerances by rival actors. If no interventions take place there is the likelihood of widespread escalating open conflict.



Ethiopia continues to face humanitarian challenges caused by both the recently concluded war and drought. As stated by the Centre for Disaster Philanthropy, the merger of conflicts, climate change, outbreak of diseases and the impacts of the COVID-19 has led to the decline of humanitarian conditions in the country.²⁰² In partnership, the government of Ethiopia and the international humanitarian community, came up with the 2023 Ethiopia Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) which “seeks \$3.99 billion to target 20.1 million people across the country, including

²⁰² Centre for Disaster Philanthropy, , 2023, “Ethiopian Humanitarian Crisis.” <https://disasterphilanthropy.org/disasters/ethiopia-tigray-crisis/>

an estimated 4.6 million internally displaced people (IDPs).”²⁰³ According to the HRP, its tactical intent is to address quick lifesaving needs, provision of safety, provision of essential basic services to people and contribute to support and build linkages towards recovery and resilience.²⁰⁴ The HRP also seeks to ensure that gender, protection, accountability to the affected people (AAP), and the prevention from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) are well segregated cross the different components of the response plan.²⁰⁵

Although, violent incidents have decreased in Ethiopia, challenges persist in implementing the peace deal, including transitional justice and foreign troop withdrawal. In fact, in April 2023, Abiy Ahmed made an announcement of integrating regional forces into the national army.²⁰⁶ According to Global Conflict Tracker report of July 2023, this decision led to protests in Amhara and a mix of negotiation and use of force to achieve his objective. As result, peace talks began with the Oromo Liberation Army, despite concerns about paramilitaries' impact on national unity. However, by June 2023, the humanitarian crisis in Tigray remains severe, with the UN seeking four billion dollars to aid millions affected. USAID and WFP suspended aid due to food misappropriation by Ethiopian forces, causing hunger-related deaths and requiring new aid distribution strategies.²⁰⁷

Subsequently, this section provides an overview of the conflict landscape in Ethiopia, offering insights into the ongoing and pervasive conflicts, their underlying drivers, the key actors involved, and the persistent challenges that hinder conflict resolution efforts. Additionally, it presents the recommendations put forth by respondents, offering potential solutions to address the complex conflicts in Ethiopia. But just before delving into the conflict situation of Ethiopia, this section first presents a detailed demographic profile of the respondents of this study. The profile of the respondents offers valuable insights into the characteristics of the individuals who participated in the CMT study. It includes information such as age, gender, occupation, geographical location, and affiliations. This comprehensive demographic analysis serves as a foundation for

²⁰³ Humanitarian Response Cycle, February 2023, “Humanitarian Response Plan, Ethiopia.”

²⁰⁴ *ibid*

²⁰⁵ Humanitarian Response Cycle, February 2023, “Humanitarian Response Plan, Ethiopia.”

²⁰⁶ Global Conflict Tracker. (2023). *Conflict in Ethiopia*. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-ethiopia>

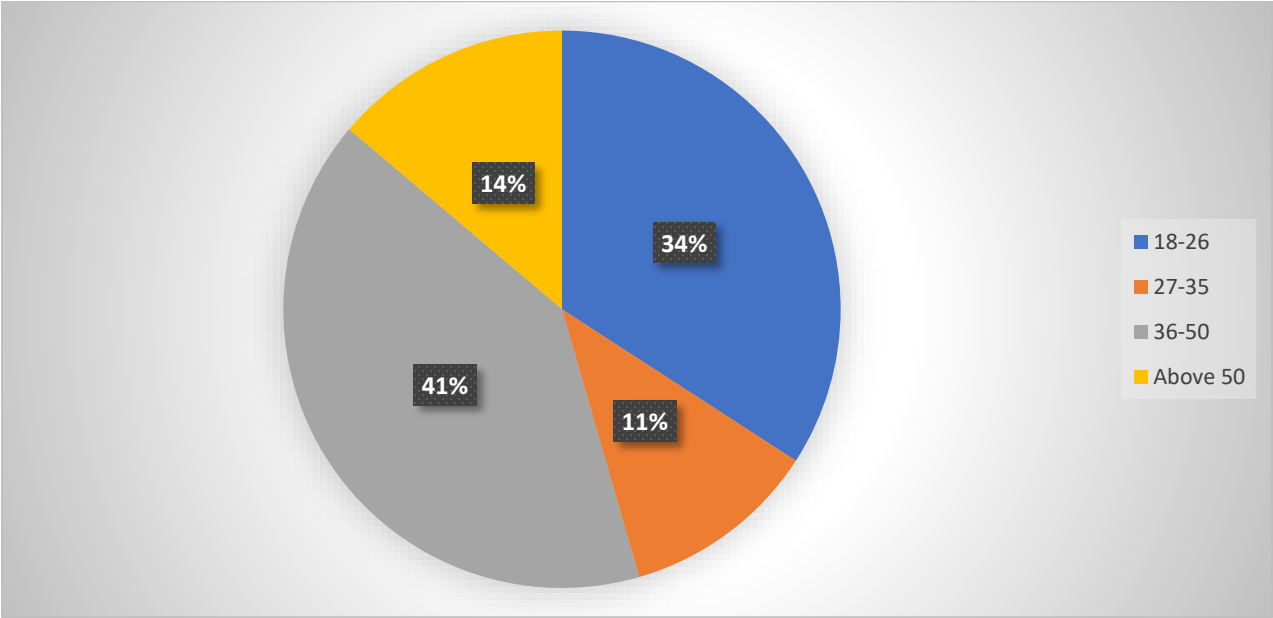
²⁰⁷ *Ibid*,

understanding the diverse perspectives and backgrounds of the respondents, enriching the context of the CMT study and providing a deeper understanding of their viewpoints and experiences.

Age-Bracket of the Respondents

The analysis of the age bracket of the CMT respondents who filled the questionnaire from Ethiopia reveals a diverse distribution across various age groups. The largest group of the respondents who filled the questionnaire falls in the age range of 36-50, comprising approximately 40.65% (50) of the total participants. The age group of 18-26 also exhibited substantial individuals who filled the questionnaire, with approximately 34.15% (42) of respondents falling within this bracket, indicating a notable participation of young adults and early-career professionals in the CMT study. The age category of 27-35 constituted a smaller percentage, accounting for around 11.38% (14) of the respondents while age group of persons above 50 made up approximately 13.82% (17) of the total respondents. Figure 20 below shows the distribution of age-bracket of the respondents from Ethiopia who filled the questionnaire.

Figure 20: The Age-Bracket of Respondents from Ethiopia

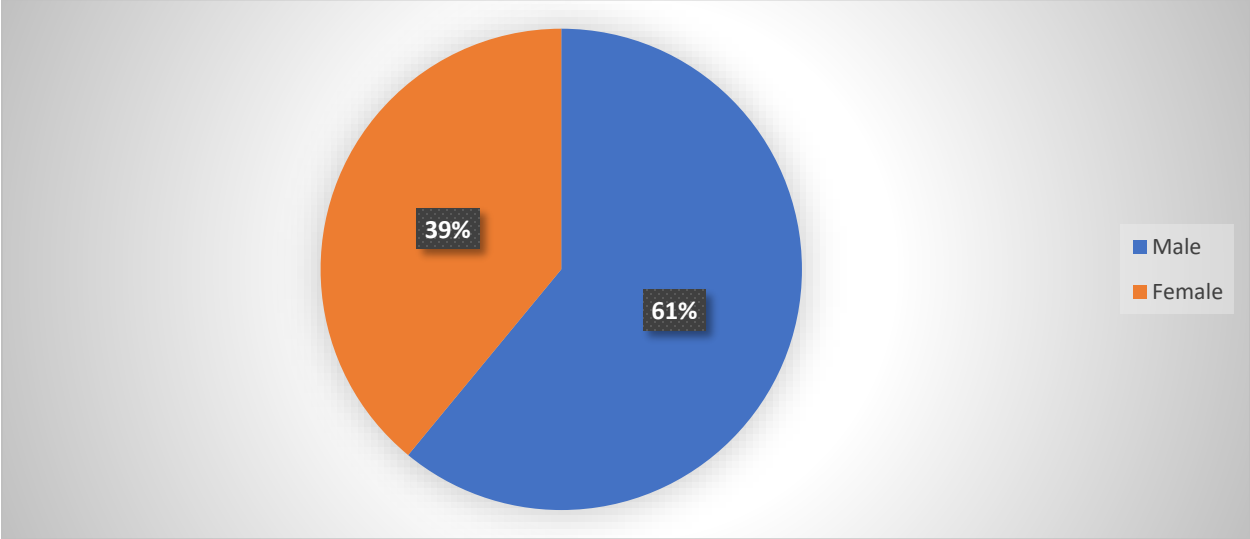


Source: CMT Research Findings

In terms of gender distribution, male respondents who filled the questionnaire were the majority, making up approximately 60.98% of the total respondents. On the other hand, the female respondents constituted 39.02% of the CMT study's respondents. Consequently, even though the male respondents were more than the female respondents, the gender distribution in the CMT

research appears to be relatively balanced, with both male and female participants playing essential roles in contributing to the insights of conflict situations in Ethiopia. Figure 21 below shows the representation of the gender of the respondents who filled the questionnaire from Ethiopia.

Figure 21: Gender distribution of the respondents

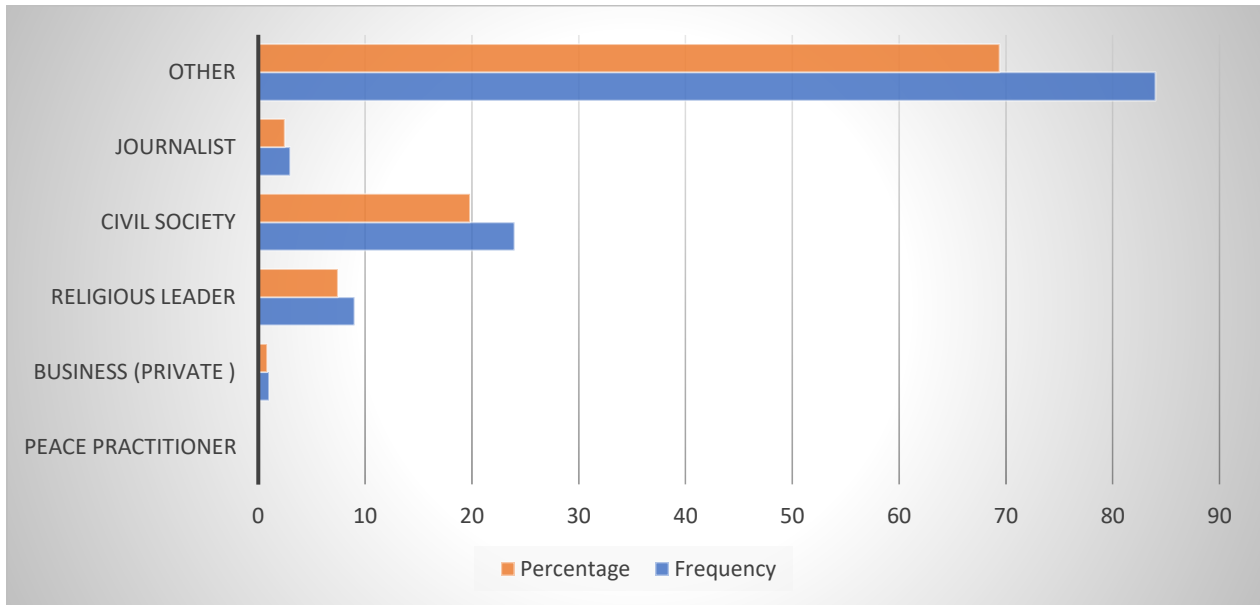


Source: CMT Research Findings

The Occupation of the Respondents from Ethiopia

The CMT questionnaire also sought to understand the occupation of the respondents in order to understand the context of the study participants' daily experiences of conflict in their nation. Civil society had a substantial number of individuals who filled the CMT questionnaire, with 24 respondents, accounting for about 19.83% of the total participants. Religious leaders were represented by nine respondents, making 7.44% of the study's participants. Journalist were only three respondents, making up approximately 2.48% of the participants. Respondents from the business community had a minimal representation, with just one respondent, constituting approximately 0.83% of the total participants. It's interesting to note that the peace practitioner's category received no responses, suggesting that no particular respondent was explicitly recognized as peace practitioner. The category "Other" showed the most substantial presence, with 84 respondents, constituting the majority at approximately 69.42%. This broad category encompasses a diverse range of occupations identified by the respondents including teachers, students, lawyers and those working in the government. Figure 22 below shows the distribution of the occupation of the respondents from Ethiopia.

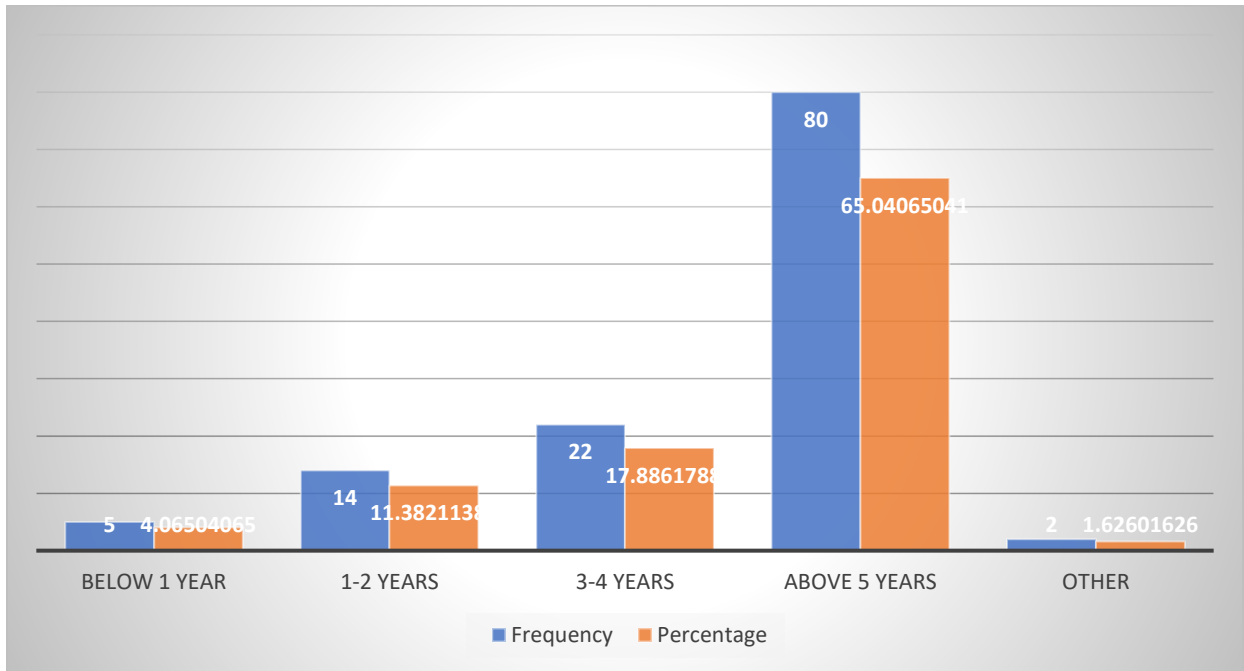
Figure 22: Occupation of the respondents from Ethiopia



Source: CMT Research Findings

This study also sought to understand the level of experience of the respondents in order to have a clear understanding of various perspectives, behaviour, decision-making processes and expertise that informs various conflict intervention mechanisms in Ethiopia. As figure 4 below shows, a significant proportion of respondents of 65.04% reported to having above 5 years of work experience while 22 respondents, making up 17.89% of the respondents indicated they had 3-4 years of work experience. The respondents who had 1-2 years of work experience were 14, constituting 11.38% of the study's participants. Those who had only one year of work experience had five respondents, accounting for 4.07% of the total respondents. Figure 23 below shows the years of work experience of the respondents distributed in percentages and frequency.

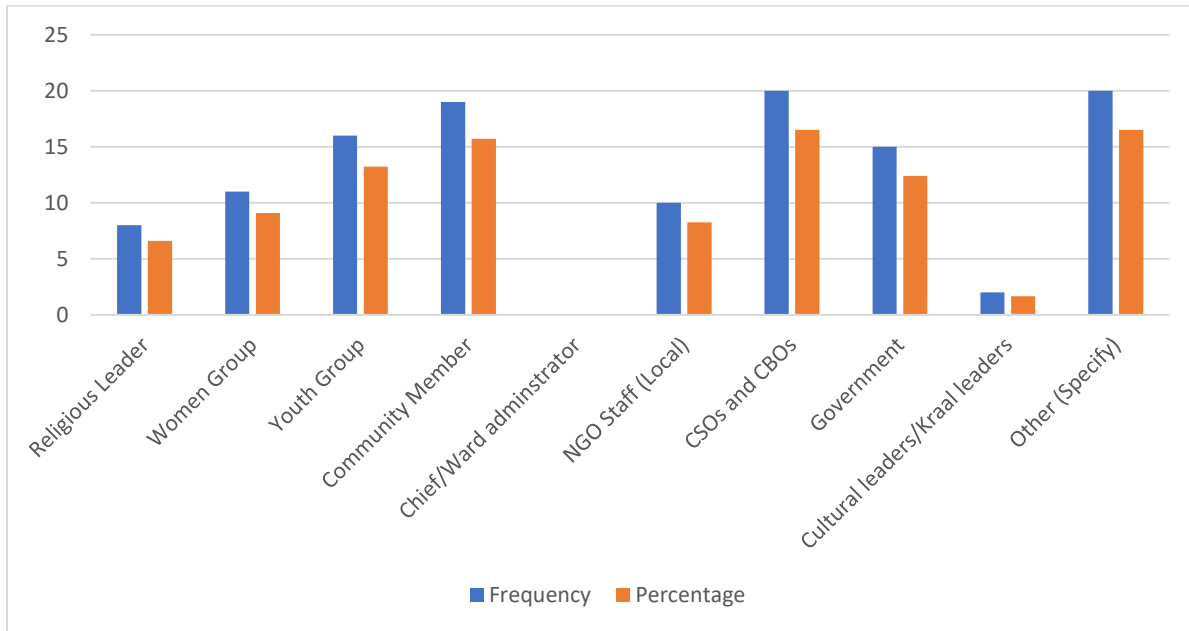
Figure 23: Years of Work Experience of the Respondents from Ethiopia



Source: CMT Research Findings

Additionally, the research aimed to comprehend the affiliations of the respondents who completed the CMT questionnaire with various stakeholders. The CSOs and CBO were the most prominent stakeholders with 20 respondents, constituting approximately 16.53% of the study's participants indicating they belonged to the category. Another substantial number of the respondents, 19 respondents, accounting for approximately 15.70% of the total participants indicated that they are community members. This highlights the fact that individuals directly affected by ongoing conflict situations in Ethiopia filled the CMT questionnaire bringing in rich local perspectives to the findings. Youth Groups were another significant stakeholder, with 16 respondents, making up around 13.22% of the participants who indicated they belonged to the category. Other notable stakeholders identified by the respondents include the Government (12.40%), Women Groups (9.09%), NGO Staff (Local) (8.26%), and Religious Leaders (6.61%), each highlighting the collaborative nature of the CMT research in engaging diverse stakeholders. Figure 24 below shows the distribution of the CMT research stakeholders in frequency and percentage.

Figure 24: Stakeholders of the CMT research

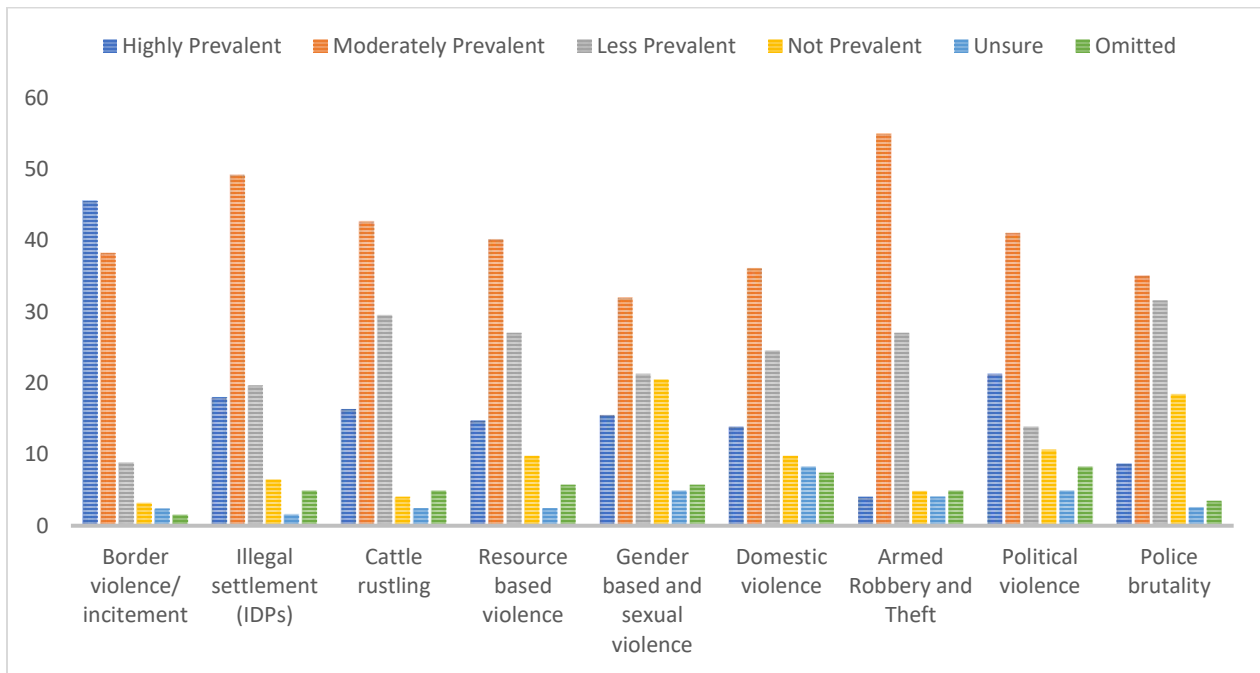


Source: CMT Research Findings

Understanding Conflict in Ethiopia

From the CMT data analysis, the conflict level for Ethiopia is **2.4** which means that the nation is experiencing confrontational level of conflict. Border violence and incitement was identified by 56 respondents (45.53%) as the most prevalent conflicts occurring in Ethiopia. Indeed, territorial disputes have been the key issues resulting to political violence in Ethiopia with some of the federal states like the Tigray demanding for cessation from the federal government of Ethiopia. Other notable conflicts in Ethiopia identified by the respondents include political violence (21.31%), the illegal settlement of internally displaced persons (18.03%), cattle rustling (16.39%), gender-based and sexual violence (15.57%), resource-based violence (14.75%) and domestic violence (13.93%). Figure 25 below shows the distribution of the prevalent conflicts in Ethiopia in percentages. Consequently, the CMT findings provide valuable insights into the key areas where conflict monitoring and intervention efforts may be needed in Ethiopia to address the diverse range of challenges and conflicts faced by the population.

Figure 25: Prevalent conflicts in Ethiopia

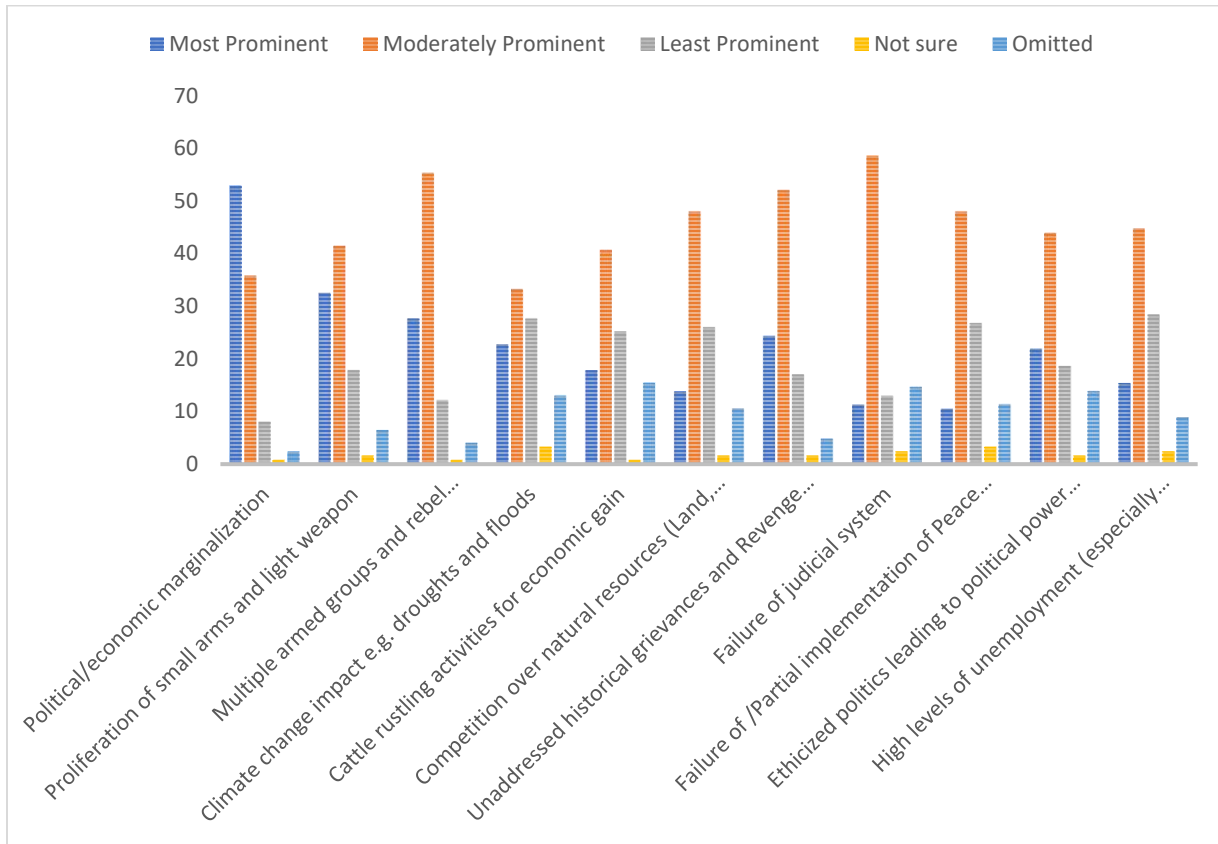


Source: CMT Research Findings

Drivers of Conflict in Ethiopia

The CMT research also sought to understand the key drivers of the ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia. The most prominent driver of conflict in Ethiopia is political and economic marginalization, with approximately 52.85% prevalence. This indicates that a significant portion of conflicts in Ethiopia are driven by the marginalization of certain groups or regions from political and economic participation. The second most prominent driver of conflict in Ethiopia is the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, with 32.52% prevalence. Indeed, the easy availability of weapons can escalate conflicts and violence. The failure of or partial implementation of peace agreements was identified by 58.54% of the respondents as a moderate driver of conflicts in Ethiopia. Additionally, ethnicized politics was identified by 55.28% of the respondents as a moderately prominent driver of conflict in Ethiopia. Subsequently, the data reveals a complex web of conflict drivers in Ethiopia, with political and economic marginalization, the proliferation of small arms, and the presence of multiple armed groups being among the most prominent factors that trigger conflicts in the nation. As such, understanding the prevalence and impact of these drivers is crucial for conflict resolution and peace-building efforts in Ethiopia. Figure 26 below shows the distribution of conflict drivers in Ethiopia in percentages.

Figure 26: Conflict drivers in Ethiopia



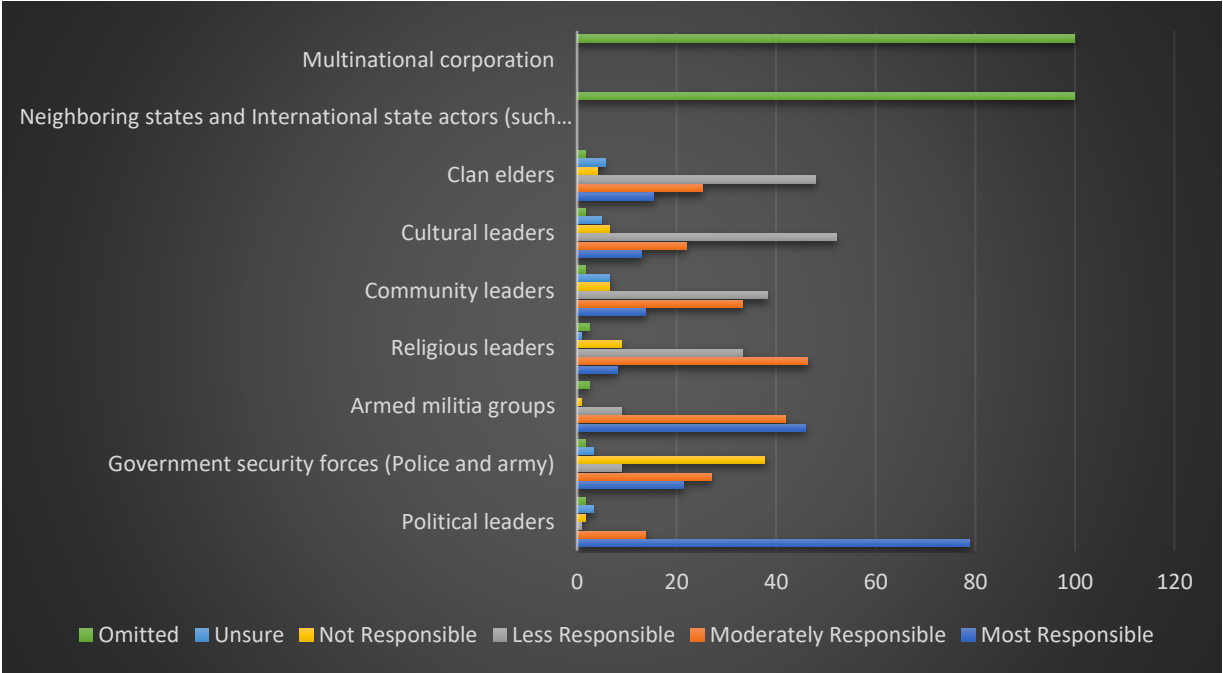
Source: CMT Research Findings

Actors of Conflict in Ethiopia

Having established that Ethiopia is at the confrontational level of conflict at 2.4, the CMT also sought to understand the actors who are responsible for the ongoing conflicts in the nation. As shown in figure 28 below, political leaders are perceived as the most responsible for conflicts, with 78.86% of respondents pointing out at them as the key actors who are involved in the ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia. This suggests that political leaders hold a significant role in the conflict situations in Ethiopia. Armed militia groups are the second most responsible, with 45.90% of respondents attributing ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia to these groups. This highlights the impact of armed militias in the conflict dynamics in Ethiopia. Religious leaders and Community leaders are also moderately responsible for the ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia, according to 46.34% and 33.33% of respondents, respectively. Government security forces (Police and army) on the other had been moderately responsible, with 27.05% of the respondents holding them to be key actors in the ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia. This suggests that there is a perception of the government's

role in conflicts occurring in Ethiopia. Interestingly, all the respondents did not mark the multinational corporations and neighboring or international states as responsible for the ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia. This shows that there is a degree of uncertainty on the role the multinational corporations and neighboring or international states are undertaking in the conflicts in Ethiopia. The analysis reveals a diverse range of perceptions regarding the responsibility for ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia. Political leaders and armed militia groups are seen as most responsible, while government security forces, religious leaders, and community leaders also play significant roles in conflict dynamics in Ethiopia. Figure 27 below shows the distribution of the actors responsible for conflicts in Ethiopia in percentages.

Figure 27: Actors of the Conflicts in Ethiopia

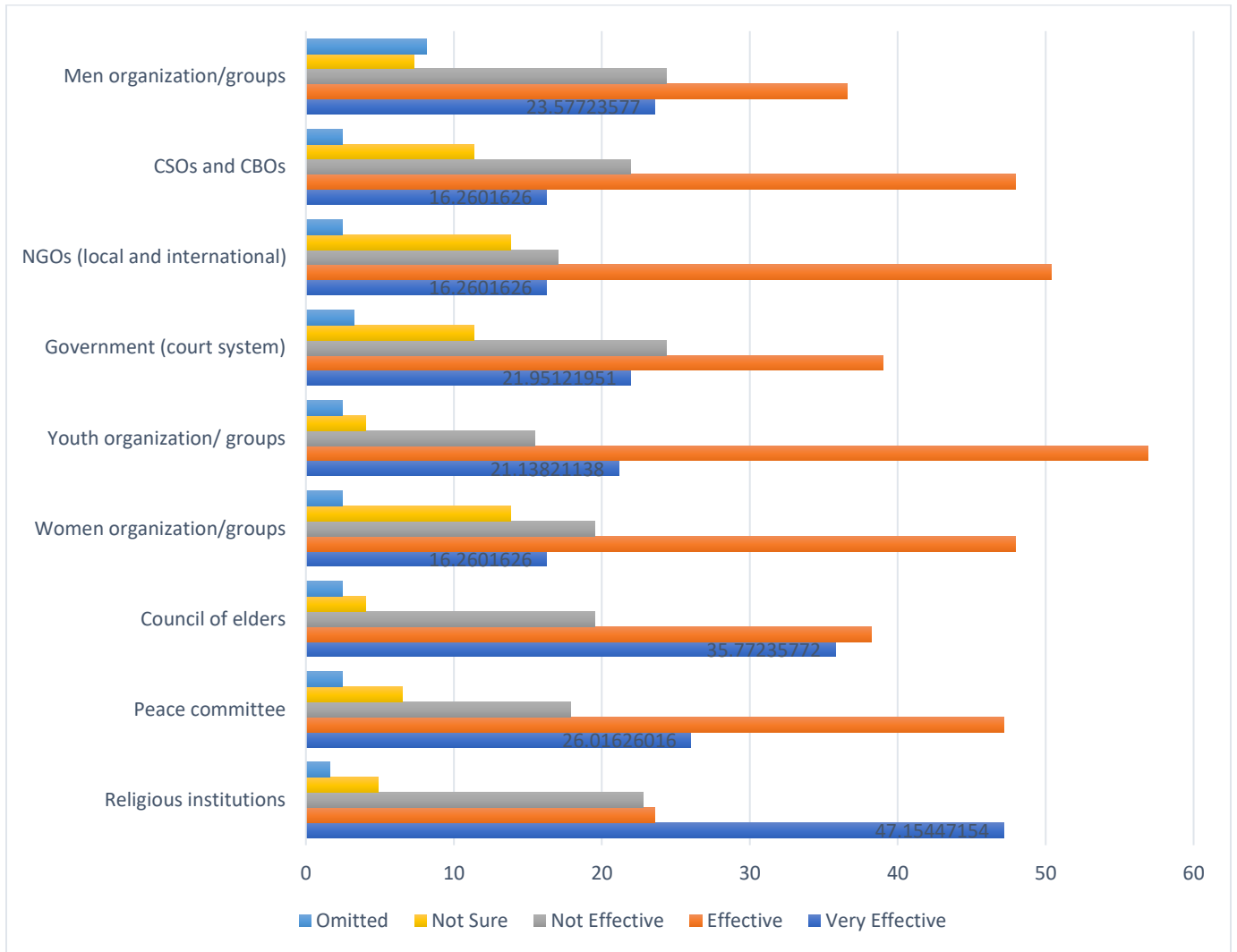


Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to the resolution of the past conflicts in Ethiopia, religious institutions are seen as very effective in resolving conflicts, with 47.15% of respondents considering them highly effective. Peace committees and the council of elders are also perceived as very effective 35.77% and 26.02% of respondents, respectively, suggesting that they play a significant role in conflict resolution in Ethiopia. Further, the government court system was identified as effective in resolving conflicts in Ethiopia, with 50.41% of respondents considering them effective in resolving

past disputes. The women organization/groups and youth organization/groups on the other had were seen as effective by approximately 47.97% and 56.91% of respondents, respectively, highlighting the positive role of these groups play in conflict resolution in Ethiopia. Figure 29 below shows the distribution of institutions considered to be effective in resolving the conflicts in Ethiopia in percentages. Consequently, the CMT finding above reveals varying perceptions regarding the effectiveness of different groups and institutions in resolving conflicts in Ethiopia. Religious institutions, peace committees, and councils of elders are seen as very effective, while government court systems, women and youth organizations, and NGOs are considered effective in conflict resolution. Understanding these perceptions is crucial for promoting effective conflict resolution efforts in Ethiopia and involving the most trusted and effective stakeholders in the process. Figure 28 below shows the distribution of institutions that were identified by the respondents to be responsible for resolving conflicts in Ethiopia in the past.

Figure 28: Institutions responsible for resolving conflicts in Ethiopia



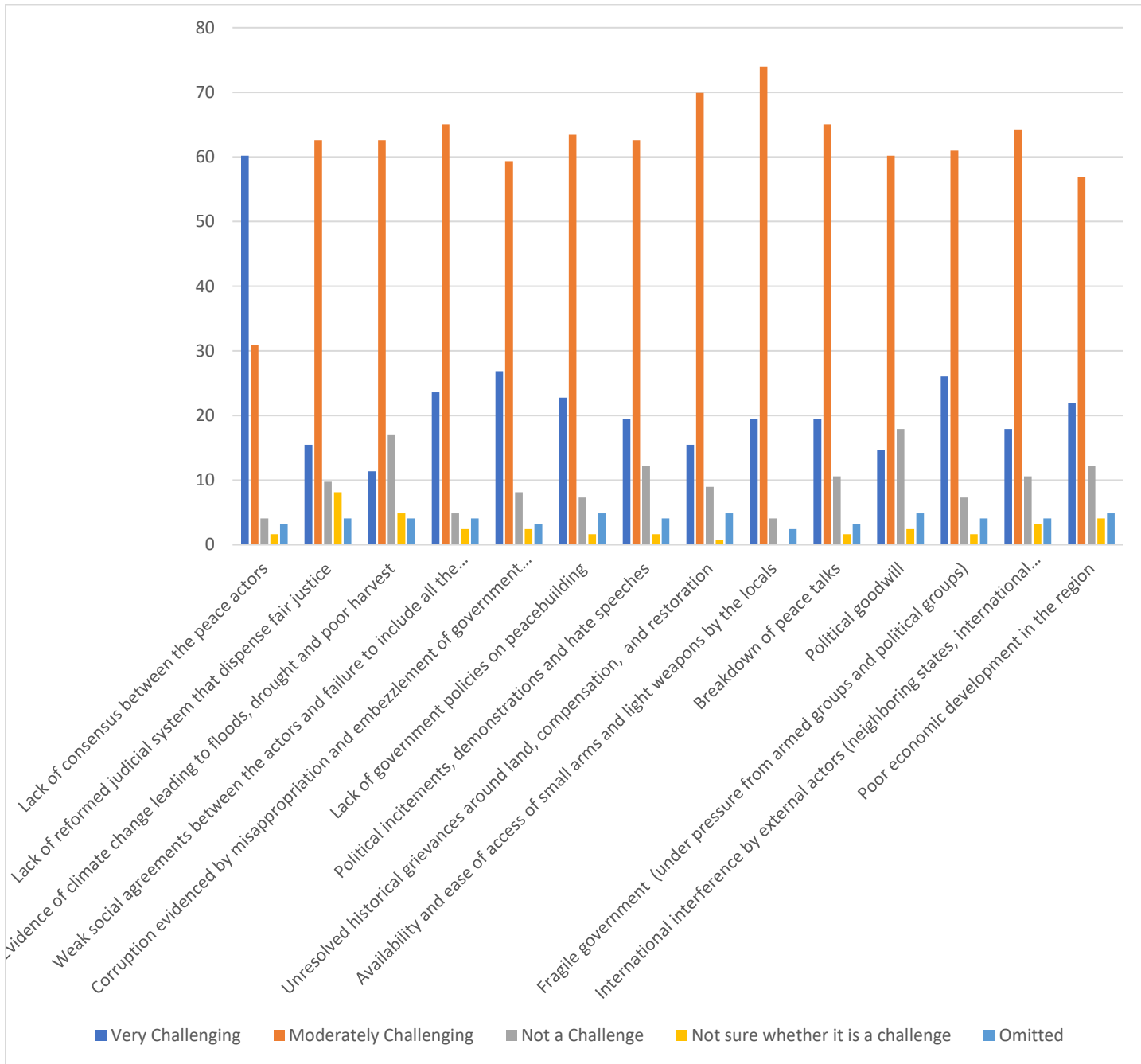
Source: CMT Research Findings

Challenges to Resolving Conflict in Ethiopia

Lack of consensus between the peace actors was seen as a significant challenge, with 60.16% of respondents considering it very challenging. This indicates the complexity of achieving agreement among various stakeholders in peace negotiations in Ethiopia. Additionally, corruption evidenced by misappropriation and embezzlement of government resources was also perceived as very challenging by 26.83% of respondents, highlighting the negative impact of corruption on peace efforts in Ethiopia. Lack of reformed judicial system that dispenses fair justice was identified as moderately challenging, with 62.60% of respondents considering it a challenge to resolving conflicts in Ethiopia. This suggests the importance of a fair legal system in resolving conflicts.

Political incitements, demonstrations, and hate speeches were also seen as moderately challenging by 60.98% of respondents, indicating the role of political tensions in conflict dynamics in Ethiopia. Figure 30 shows the distribution of the challenges to resolving conflicts in Ethiopia in percentages. Subsequently, the CMT findings reveal a diverse range of perceptions regarding the challenges of resolving ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia as shown in Figure 29. Lack of consensus among peace actors and corruption are seen as very challenging, while the reformed judicial system, political tensions, and historical grievances are perceived as moderately challenging. Understanding these challenges is crucial for addressing the root causes of conflicts and developing effective peacebuilding strategies in the Ethiopia.

Figure 29: Challenges to resolving conflicts in Ethiopia



Source: CMT Research Findings

KENYA



The conflict level for Kenya is **2.3** (This finding shows that Kenya is experiencing confrontational level of conflict. The findings of the CMT (2023) are discussed in details in the following section.

Since independence Kenya has not experienced a large-scale civil war similar to that of most of its East African neighbors. However, Kenya has overlapping conflicts ranging from cycles of election-related violence, sexual and gender-based violence, communal violence, to terrorist attacks.²⁰⁸ Most conflicts in the country are catalyzed by environmental, political, economic, competition over natural resources, ethnic identity struggles, proliferation of small arms, poverty,

²⁰⁸ Rohwerder, B. (2015). Conflict analysis of Kenya. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham).

and marginalization.²⁰⁹ Since independence Kenya has experienced several inter-communal clashes or violence. These localized ethnic conflicts are often linked to competition over land ownership and land use often triggered by the search for water and pasture, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and insecurity²¹⁰ perpetrated by identity-based communal militias.

Subsequently, this section provides an overview of the conflict landscape in Kenya, offering insights into the ongoing and pervasive conflicts, their underlying drivers, the key actors involved, and the persistent challenges that hinder conflict resolution efforts. Additionally, it presents the recommendations put forth by respondents, offering potential solutions to address the complex conflicts in the country. But just before delving into the conflict situation of Kenya, this section first presents a detailed demographic profile of the respondents of this study. The profile of the respondents offers valuable insights into the characteristics of the individuals who participated in the CMT study. It includes information such as age, gender, occupation, geographical location, and affiliations. This comprehensive demographic analysis serves as a foundation for understanding the diverse perspectives and backgrounds of the respondents, enriching the context of the CMT study and providing a deeper understanding of their viewpoints and experiences.

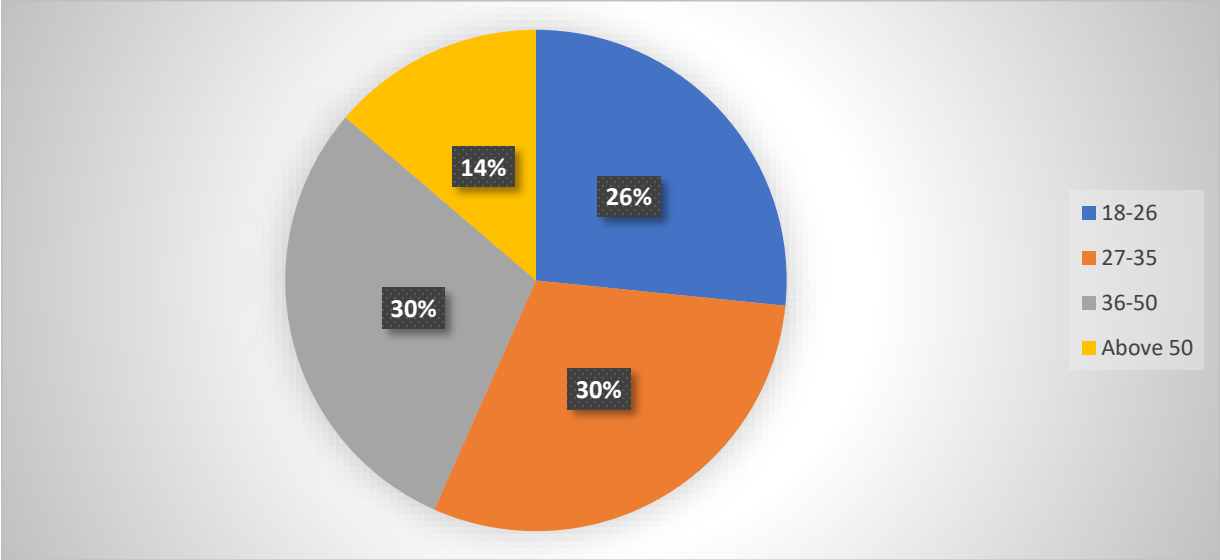
Age Bracket of Respondents

The age distribution of the respondents who filled the questionnaire from Kenya shows diverse representation of individuals of different age groups. As figure 30 below shows, the largest group of individuals who filled the questionnaire are between the ages of 27-35 years, representing approximately 30.04% of the total respondents. They are closely followed by individuals who fall under the category of 36-50 years representing 29.61% of the respondents. The individuals who fall between the ages of 18-26 years constitute 26.61% of the total respondents. The individuals who are above 50 years constituted 13.73% of the respondents, demonstrating a balanced inclusion of more experienced voices in the CMT research. This diverse age range ensures a comprehensive and multi-generational perspective are included in the CMT research, enriching the depth of insights gathered.

²⁰⁹ Elfversson, E and Höglund, K. (2019) "Violence in the city that belongs to no one: urban distinctiveness and interconnected insecurities in Nairobi (Kenya)." *Conflict, Security & Development* 19, no. 4 (2019): 347-370. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2019.1640493>

²¹⁰ Okumu, Willis. (2013). *Trans-local Peace Building among Pastoralist Communities in Kenya. The Case of Laikipia Peace Caravan. Culture and Environment in Africa Series.* https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257589456_Trans-local_Peace_Building_among_Pastoralist_Communities_in_Kenya-Case_of_the_Laikipia_Peace_Caravan, p. 13

Figure 30: Age-Bracket of Respondents from Kenya

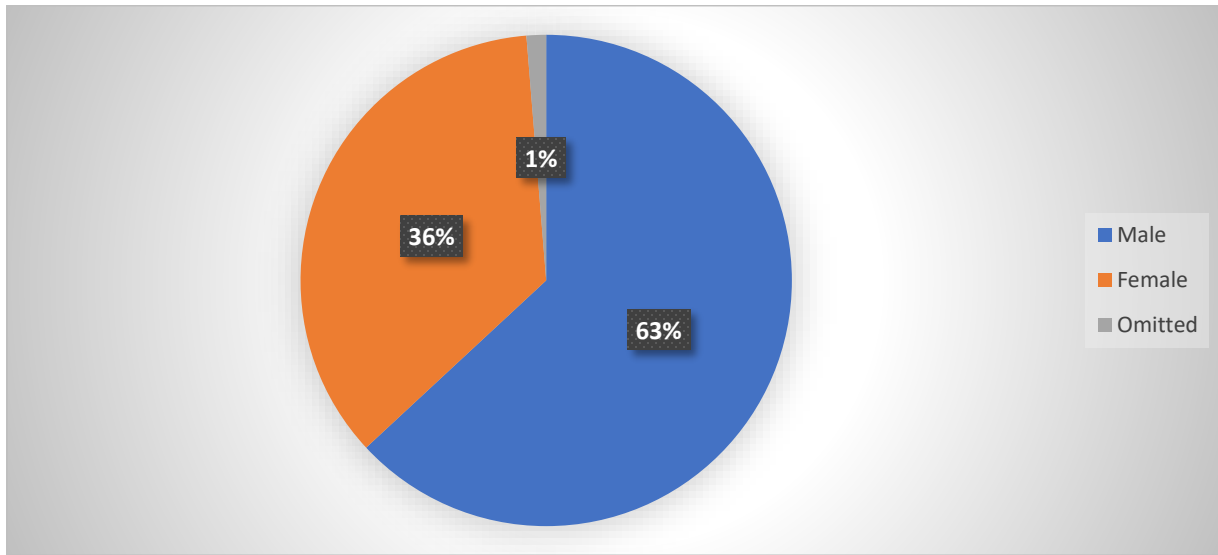


Source: CMT Research Findings

Gender of the Respondents

The gender composition of the respondents from Kenya who filled the questionnaire reveals a predominantly male representation constituting 147 respondents, 63.1% of the total. On the other hand, female respondents, while slightly fewer in number, still make up a substantial portion, with 83 individuals, accounting for 35.62% of the total. Approximately 1.29% (3) of the respondents did not indicate their gender. Figure 31 below shows the distribution of the gender of the respondents who filled the questionnaire from Kenya. This gender-diverse respondent pool ensures a comprehensive range of perspectives and experiences, enhancing the depth and inclusivity of the CMT research findings.

Figure 31: Gender of Respondents from Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

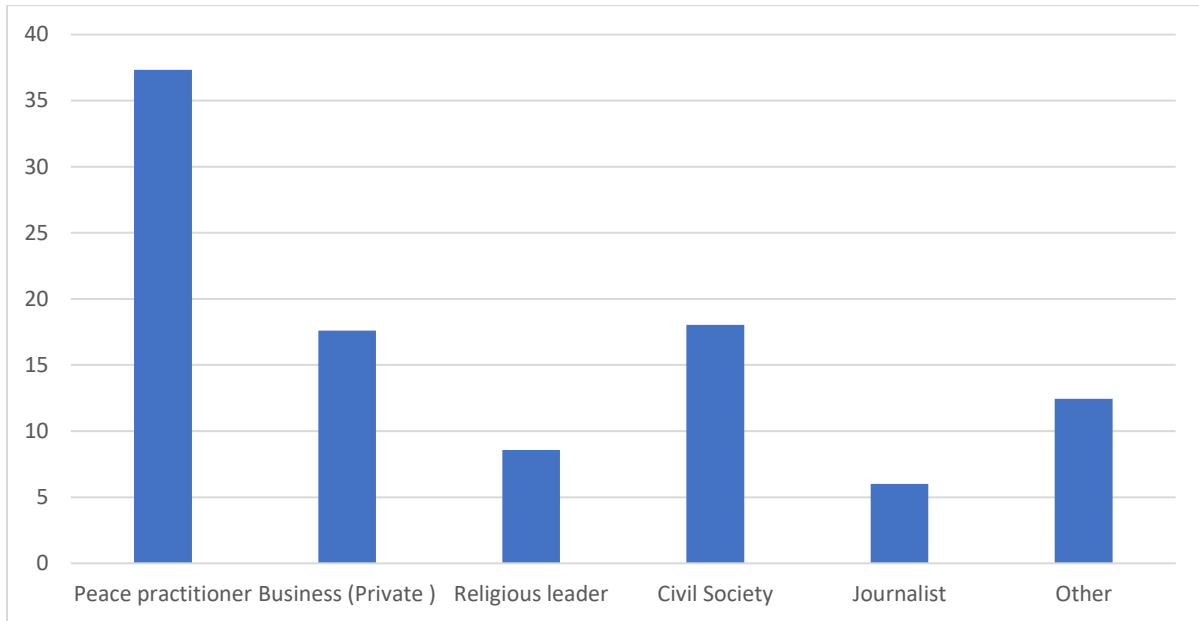
Occupation of the Respondents from Kenya

The CMT questionnaire also sought to understand the occupation of the respondents in order to understand the context of the study participant's daily experiences of conflict in their nation. The largest group of respondents who filled the CMT questionnaire identified themselves as peace practitioners, constituting 87 respondents comprising 37.33% of the total. Another portion of respondents, 42 individuals constituting 18.03% of the total were those working with the civil society in Kenya. As such, the majority of the respondents who work as peace practitioners and those from the civil society likely includes individuals actively involved in peace-building efforts, conflict resolution, and related fields. Therefore, their perspectives on the conflict situation in Kenya can provide valuable insights into the intersections of the key issues of peace and security in the nation. The private business sector constituted 41 respondents who form 17.6% of the total. These respondents' perceptions are key to the CMT study as they have unique perspectives on how conflict situations impact the business and economic environment in Kenya. Other respondents of the study included religious leaders who constituted 8.6%, journalists who constituted 6% and individuals from other various sectors who constituted 12.44% as shown in figure 32 below.

Subsequently, the CMT data reflects a diverse range of occupations among the respondents, with a significant presence of peace practitioners, civil society members, and individuals from various

other backgrounds. This diversity in occupational backgrounds ensures a broad spectrum of viewpoints and experiences are captured to help in the understanding of the conflict level of Kenya.

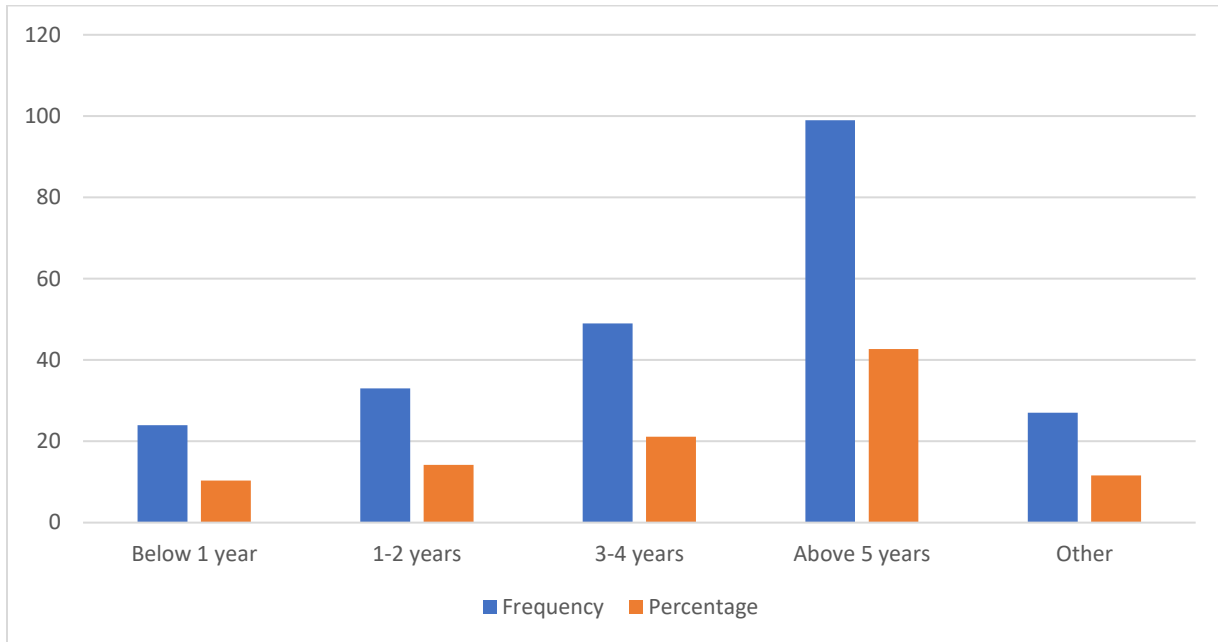
Figure 32: Occupation of CMT Respondents from Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

This study also sought to understand the level of experience of the respondents in order to have a clear understanding of various perspectives, behaviour, decision-making processes and expertise that informs diverse conflict intervention mechanisms in Kenya. As figure 34 below indicates, a significant number of respondents, 99 (41.67%) of the total indicated that they had over five years of working experience. Another portion of the respondents, 49 (21.12%) indicated that they had 3-4 years of working experience. A substantial group of respondents representing 14.22% indicated they had 1-2 years of experience. Only 10.34% of the respondents indicated that they had below 1 year of work experience. The diversity in the level of experience of the respondents from Kenya as shown in figure 33 provides a well-rounded perspective on the conflict situations and intervention mechanisms used to effectively address cases of violence in Kenya.

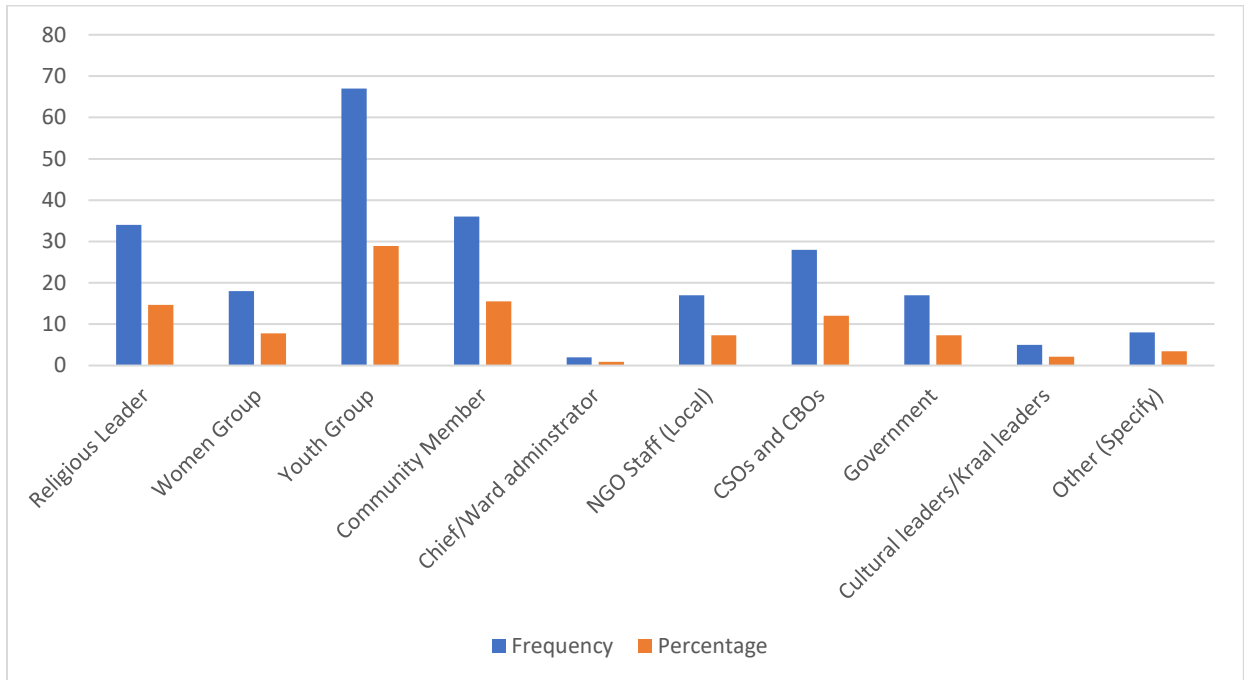
Figure 33: Years of Experience of Respondents from Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

Additionally, the research aimed to comprehend the affiliations of the respondents who completed the CMT questionnaire with various stakeholders. As shown in figure 34 below, the largest group of respondents indicated that they belonged to a youth group, and they constituted 67 respondents, comprising of 28.88% of the total. This indicates that a significant number of youths were engaged in the CMT study. The community members constituted 15.52% (36) of the respondents and they were closely followed by the religious leaders consisting of 14.66% (34) of the respondents, and the individuals from CSOs and CBOs consisting of 12.07% (28) of the respondents. Other stakeholders who were engaged in the CMT study in Kenya include individuals from women groups (7.76%), local NGO staff (7.33%), those from the government (7.33%), cultural leaders (2.16%) and ward administrators (0.86%) as shown in figure 5 below. In summary, the data reflects a diverse range of stakeholders who filled the CMT questionnaire in Kenya. This diversity is valuable for comprehensive conflict analysis and the development of inclusive conflict resolution strategies.

Figure 34: Group of Stakeholders



Source: CMT Research Findings

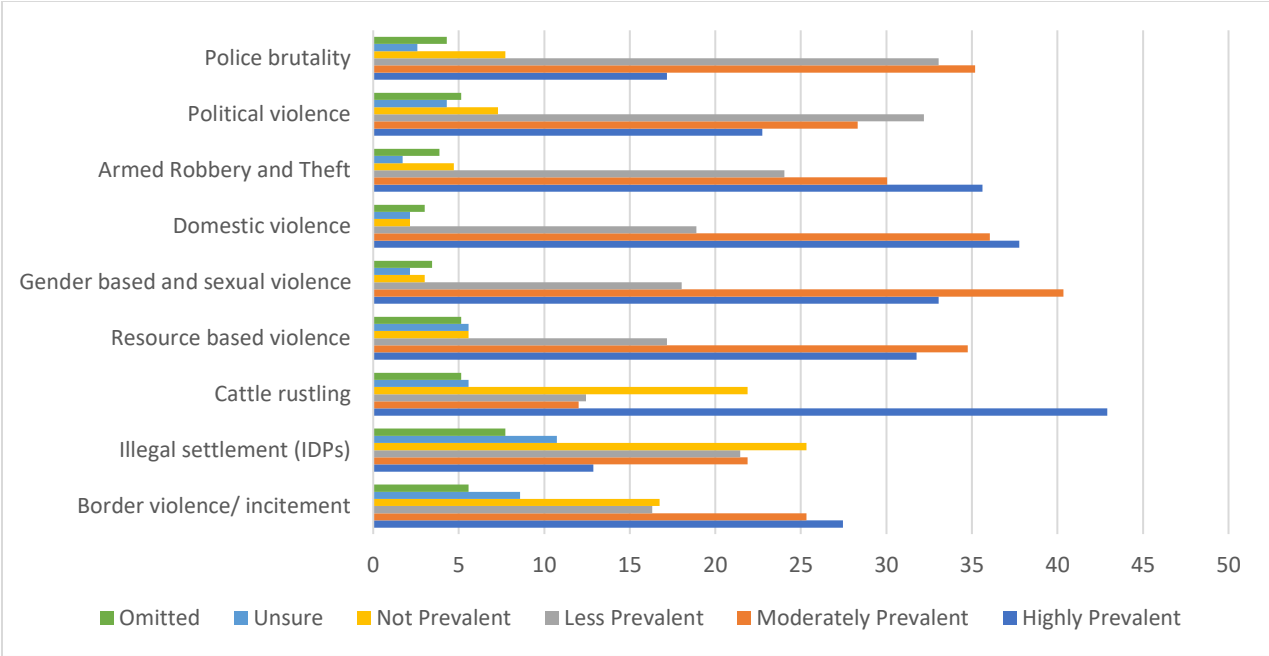
Understanding Conflict in Kenya

From the CMT data analysis, the conflict level for Kenya is **2.3** which means that it is experiencing confrontational level of conflict. The most prevalent conflicts in Kenya identified by the respondents is cattle rustling. Cattle rustling stands out with an exceptionally high prevalence rate of about 42.92%, indicating that cattle rustling is a widespread and concerning issue in Kenya. Domestic violence was also identified by the respondents as highly prevalent, with 37.77%, indicating a substantial problem within households in Kenya. The CMT study also found out that there exist a high prevalence rate of armed robbery and theft as identified by 35.62% of the respondents. This implies that armed robbery and theft are common issues of concern in Kenya. Resource-based violence was also identified to be highly prevalent by 31.76% of the respondents, signifying notable conflicts related to resource disputes.

Further, 40.34% of the respondents identified gender-based and sexual violence as moderately prevalent issue, suggesting that gender-based and sexual violence is a significant concern in Kenya. Despite demonstrations unfolding in nearly 80 locations and spanning across 28 counties in Kenya, political violence was identified by 28.33% of the respondents indicating that it is a noteworthy issue but not as widespread as some others. Additionally, police brutality exhibited a

lower prevalence rate of 17.17%, suggesting it is a concern but not as prevalent as some other forms of violence. Overall, this data highlights a range of significant prevalent conflicts in Kenya as shown in figure 35 below. The data suggests that Kenya faces a range of conflicts with varying levels of prevalence. Some conflicts, such as cattle rustling, domestic violence and armed robbery and theft are perceived as highly prevalent and of significant concern, while others, like political violence and police brutality are not significant but also raises substantial concerns.

Figure 35: Prevalent Conflicts in Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

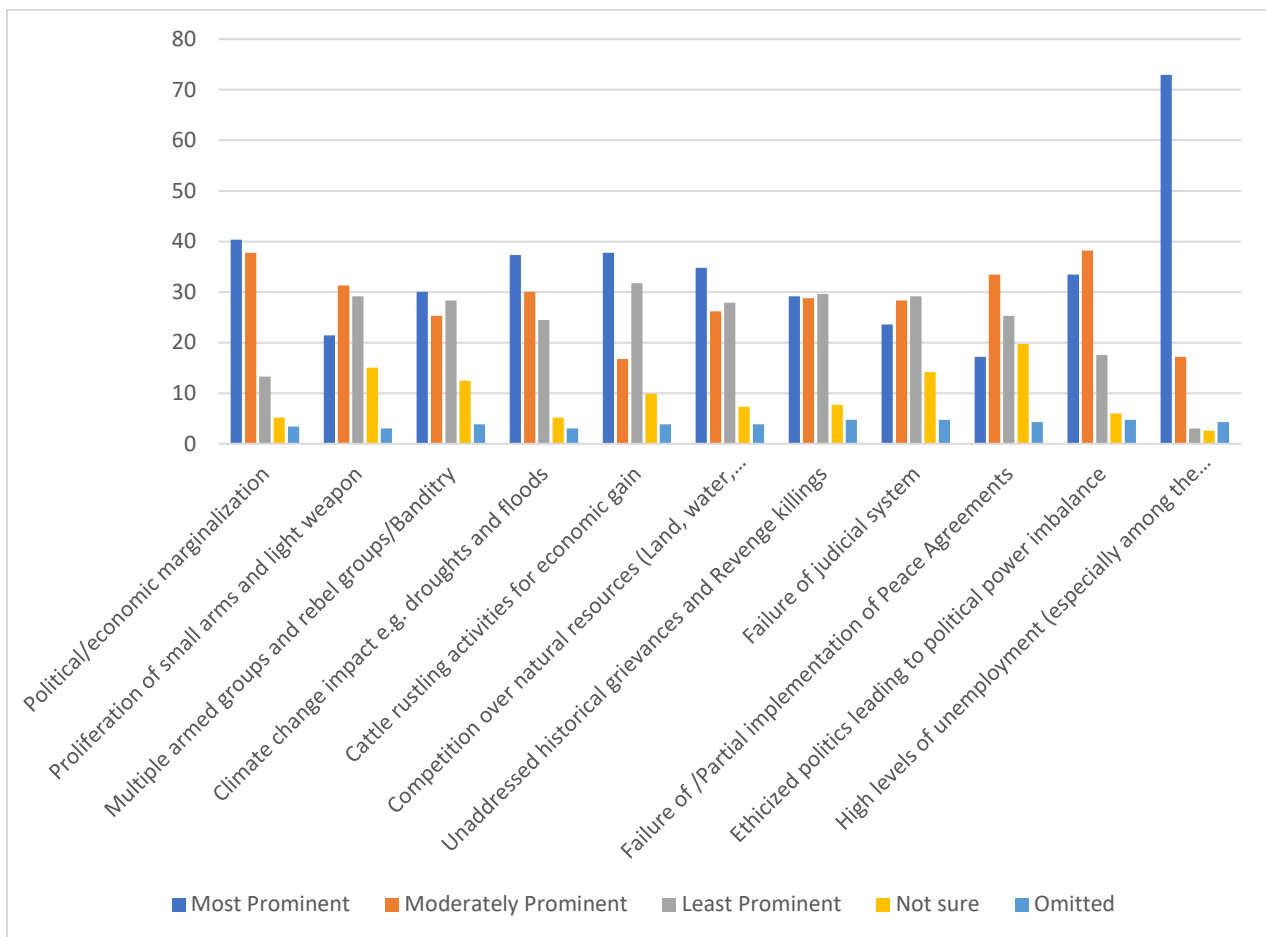
Drivers of Conflict in Kenya

On the other hand, the CMT study also sought to understand the key drivers of the ongoing conflicts in Kenya. High levels of unemployment, particularly among the youth, was identified by 72.96% of the respondents as the most prominent conflict driver, indicating the urgency of addressing unemployment-related issues to prevent conflicts. Further, political and economic marginalization was identified by 40.34% of the respondents as highly prominent conflict driver in Kenya with a significant impact on the country's stability. Cattle rustling activities for economic gain was also identified by 37.77% of the respondents as highly prominent conflict driver in Kenya, reflecting economic interests tied to livestock. Other prominent conflict drivers identified by the respondents include climate change impact (37.34%), competition over natural resources

(34.76%), multiple armed groups and rebel groups (30.04%), unaddressed historical grievances and revenge killings (29.18%) and failure of judicial system (23.61%). Figure 7 below shows the representation of the various conflict drivers in Kenya.

Consequently, the CMT data provides valuable insights into the drivers of conflicts in Kenya as shown in Figure 36 below, with unemployment, political and economic marginalization, and climate change impacts being some of the most prominent and pressing issues. Addressing these drivers effectively is crucial for achieving peace and stability in Kenya.

Figure 36: Conflict Drivers in Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

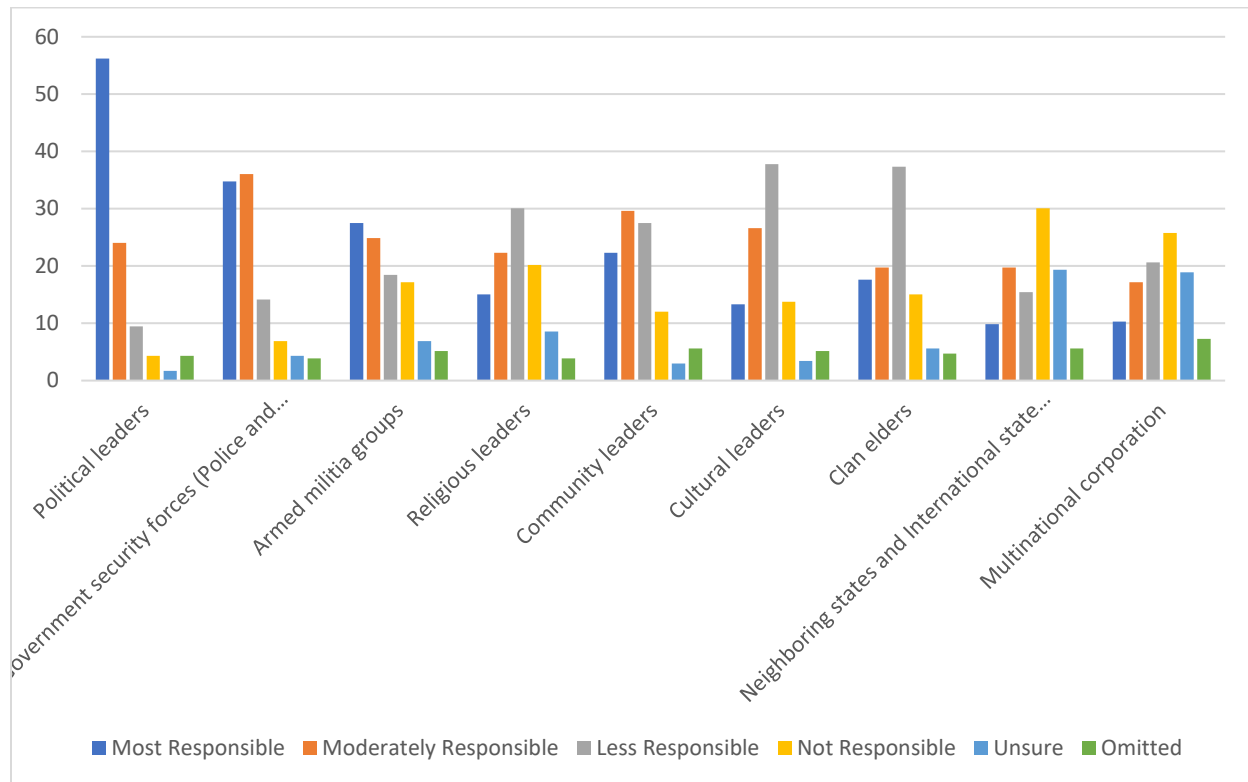
Actors in the Conflicts in Kenya

Having established that Kenya is at the confrontational level of conflict at **2.3**, the CMT also sought to understand the key factors that trigger conflicts in the nation. As shown in Figure 37, political

leaders emerged as the primary actors responsible for conflicts in Kenya, with over half 131 (56.22%) of the respondents attributing a high level of responsibility to them. This underscores the significant influence that political figures have on the country's stability. Additionally, the government security forces, including the police and army, were also considered to be a significant source of conflict, with 81 (34.76%) of the respondents attributing varying levels of responsibility. While the government security forces role in maintaining law and order is crucial, their actions can sometimes contribute to conflicts. Armed militia groups were also identified as another significant actor in causing conflicts in Kenya, with 27.47% of the respondents assigning them a high level of responsibility. Indeed, armed militia groups often operate outside the control of formal authorities and can escalate conflicts related to cattle rustling, armed robbery and theft.

The above CMT findings underscores the complexity of conflict dynamics in Kenya, with multiple actors playing diverse roles in shaping the country's stability. While political leaders are identified as the most responsible actors, various other stakeholders, including security forces, armed groups, and international actors, also have significant roles to play in addressing and mitigating conflicts. The various views regarding responsibility highlight the multifaceted nature of conflicts and the need for comprehensive strategies for conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Kenya.

Figure 37: Prominent Actors of Conflict in Kenya

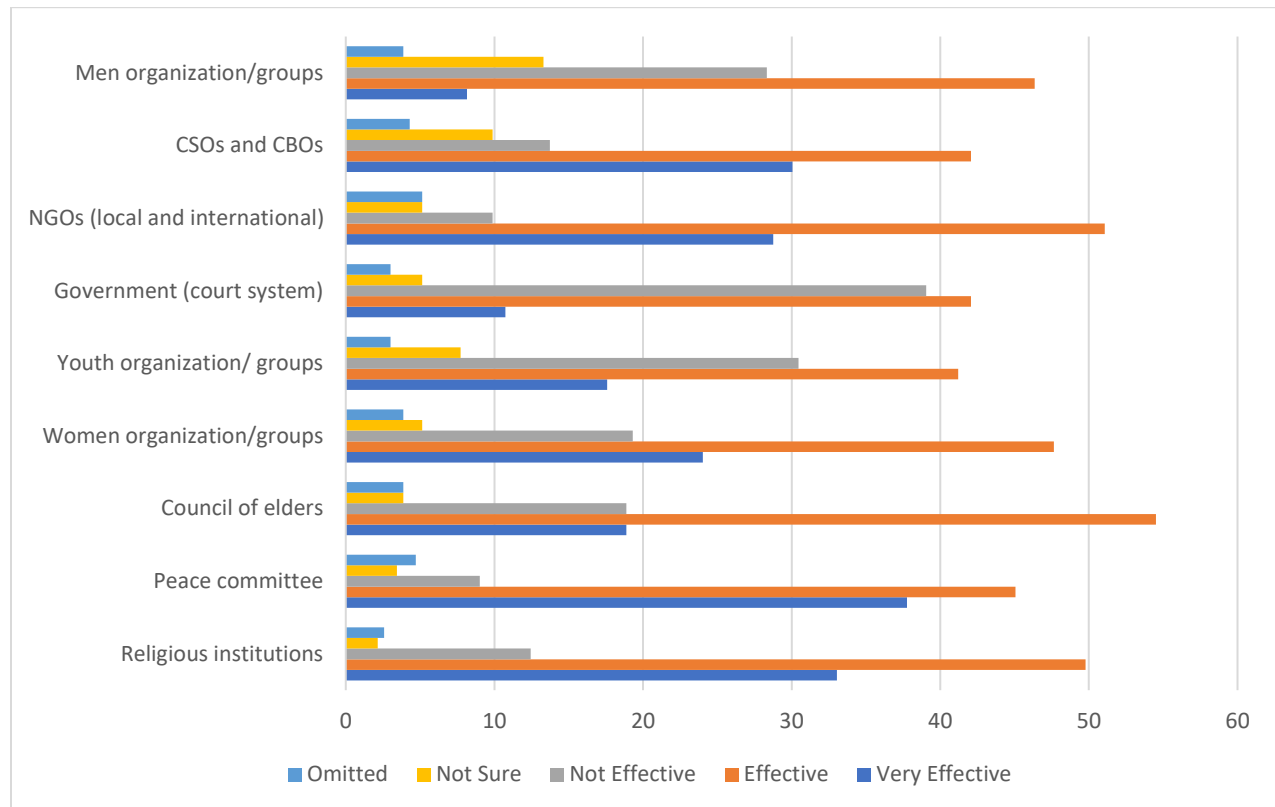


Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to the resolution of the ongoing conflicts in Kenya, religious institutions were considered effective in conflict resolution, with a substantial portion of respondents, about 193(82.83%) finding them to be both very effective and effective. Indeed, the religious leader’s role often involves promoting peace, reconciliation, and mediation within communities. Another group recognized for valuable conflict resolution efforts in Kenya were the peace committees. A majority of respondents, 193(82.83%) believed that peace committees are either very effective or effective in resolving conflicts at the community level. Additionally, the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), both local and international, were also perceived as effective actors in conflict resolution, with a significant portion of respondents, 186 (79.83%) finding them both very effective and effective. Overall, the CMT data on the institutions responsible for resolving conflict in Kenya illustrates the diverse range of institutions involved in conflict resolution in Kenya as shown in Figure 38 below, with varying levels of effectiveness as perceived by respondents. Religious institutions, peace committees, and NGOs are generally viewed as effective, while youth

organizations and government court systems face more mixed perceptions regarding their effectiveness in resolving conflicts.

Figure 38: Institutions Responsible for Resolving Conflicts in Kenya

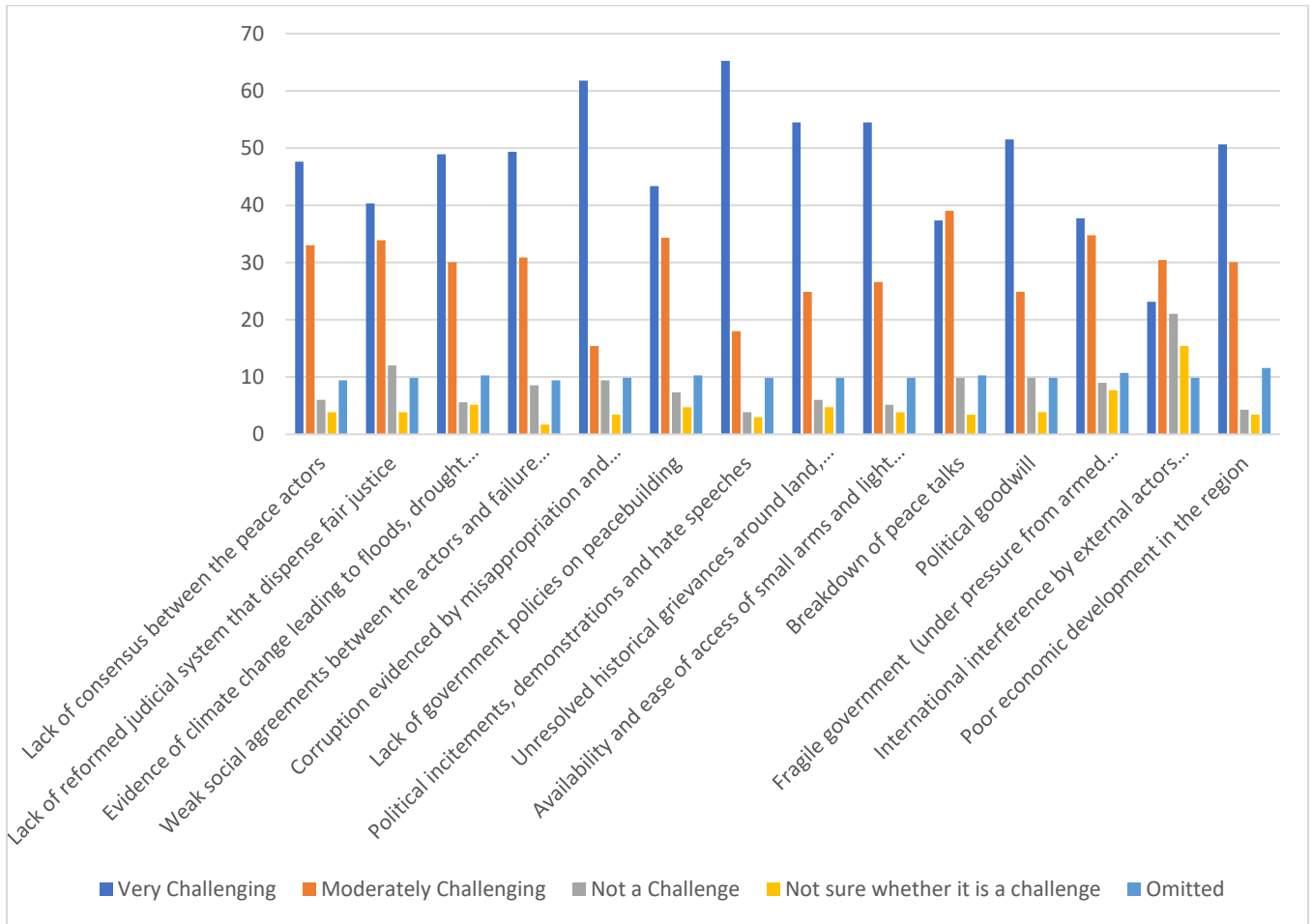


Source: CMT Research Findings

Challenges to Resolving Conflict in Kenya

Political incitements, demonstrations, and hate speeches were identified by 65.24% of the respondents as highly challenging factor contributing to conflicts in Kenya. Another factor identified by 61.8% of the respondents to hindering the resolution of conflict in Kenya is corruption, including the misappropriation of resources. The lack of political goodwill was also identified by 51.5% of the respondents as a hindrance to the resolution of conflict in Kenya. Figure 39 below shows the various challenges that affects conflict resolution in Kenya distributed in percentages. Consequently, the CMT data underscores the multifaceted nature of challenges to conflict resolution in Kenya as shown in Figure 39 below. Factors such as lack of consensus, corruption, climate change impacts, and political dynamics present significant hurdles that need to be addressed for effective peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Kenya.

Figure 39: Challenges to Resolving Conflict in Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

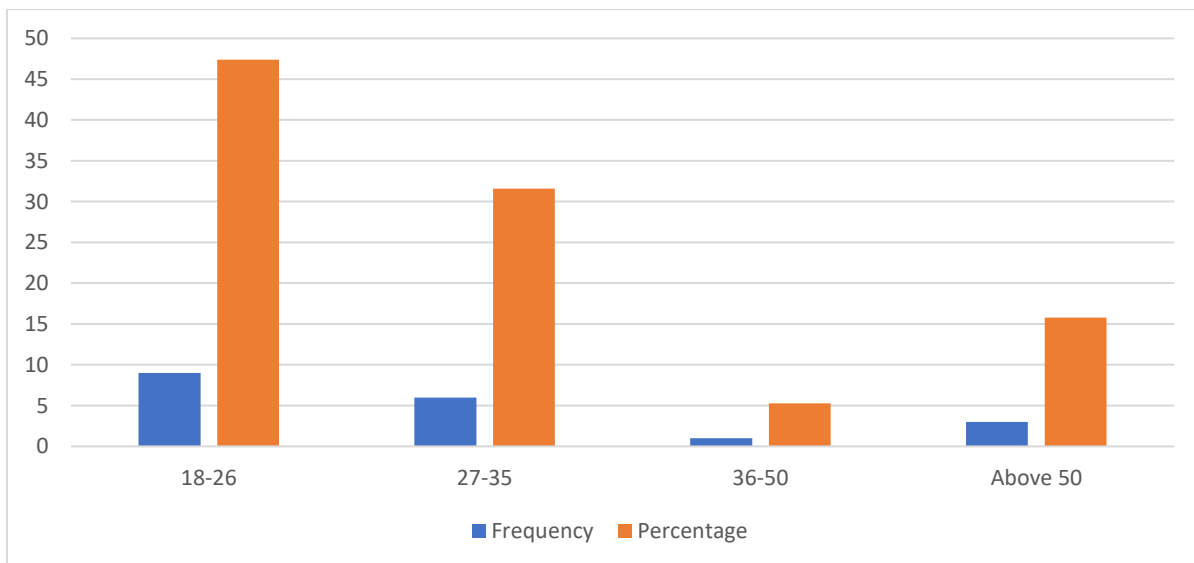
REGIONAL ANALYSIS: KENYA

In 2023, the CMT data analysis involved regional analysis for Kenya, to establish a nuanced understanding of conflict dynamics as per the existing counties and regions in Kenya. From the CMT-2020 study, it was understood that conflict drivers in Kenya are different across regions and across counties, hence the necessity to disaggregate the data in the CMT-2023 into regions.

NAIROBI

In Nairobi, a total of 19 respondents filled the questionnaire and a focused group discussion that brought together participants who are peace practitioners, individuals actively engaged with local civil society organizations and individuals from the business community. For the respondents who filled the questionnaire, 47.37% were individuals between the age of 18-26 years, 31.58% were individuals between the age of 27-35 years, 15.79% were individuals above 50 years and 5.26% were individuals between the age of 36-50 years as shown in figure 40 below. In terms of gender distribution, 63.16% were male respondents while 36.84 were female respondents. With regards to profession, 36.84% of the respondents from Nairobi were peace practitioners, 26.32% were individuals from the business community, and another 26.32% were individuals from the civil society while 5.26% of the respondents were journalist.

Figure 40: Age-Bracket of Respondents from Nairobi



Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to the years of experience, 31.58% of the respondents had between 1-2 years of experience, 26.32% had 3-4 years of experience, 21.05% of the respondents had over 5 years of experience while 15.79% had below 1 year of experience as shown in Table 6 below.

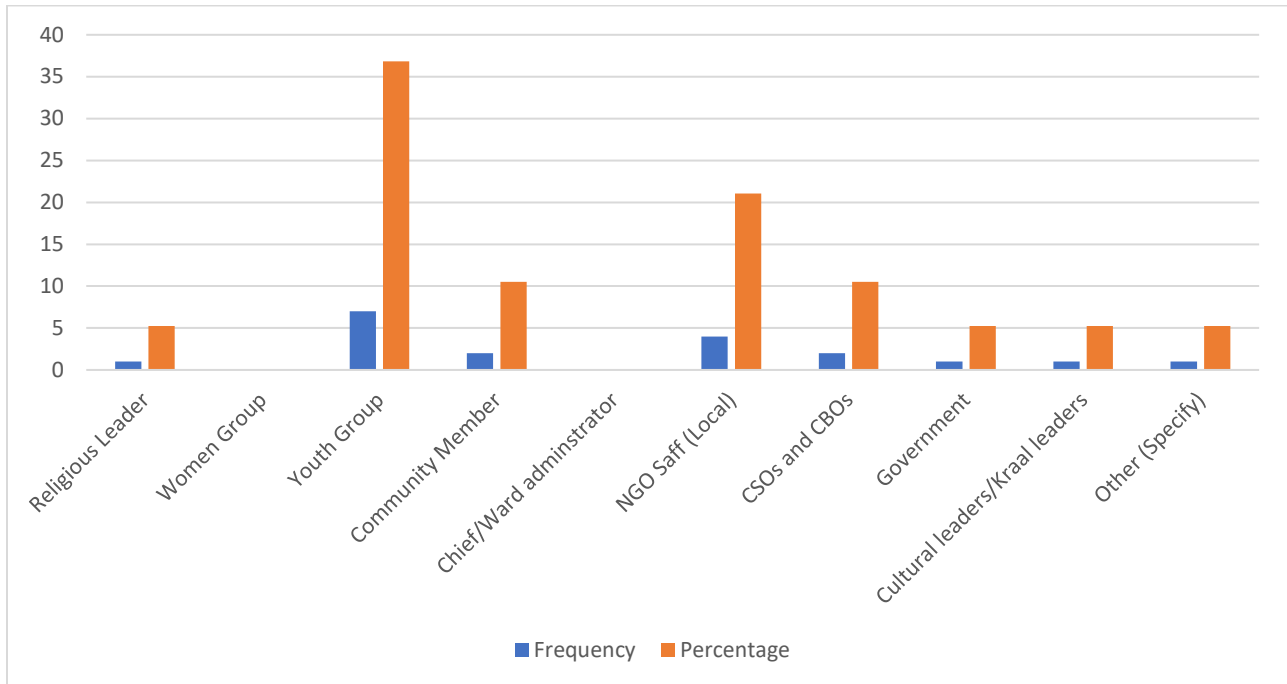
Table 6: Years of Experience of Respondents from Nairobi

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
Below 1 year	3	15.78947368
1-2 years	6	31.57894737
3-4 years	5	26.31578947
Above 5 years	4	21.05263158
Omitted	1	5.263157895

Source: CMT Research Findings

The majority of the respondents from Nairobi indicated that they belonged to the youth group as shown in Figure 41 below. Other respondents from Nairobi were also local NGO staff while others worked with the government, CSOs and CBOs. There was also a cultural leader and a religious leader who were part of the respondents who filled the questionnaire from Nairobi.

Figure 41: Stakeholder of Respondents from Nairobi



Source: CMT Research Findings

Understanding Conflict in Nairobi

The conflict level for Nairobi is at **2.5** which indicates that the region is at confrontational level of conflict. At the confrontational level, the conflict is more open. There could be intolerance that may lead to a confrontational behaviour, and if no intervention mechanisms are employed, the situation may be polarized leading to a crisis.

Among the most prevalent conflicts identified by the respondents from Nairobi include domestic violence (52.63%), armed robbery and theft (42.12%), cattle rustling (31.58%) and border violence (31.58%) as shown in Figure 42 below. Cattle rustling was reiterated by one of the FGD participant who pointed to the fact that the migration of stolen cattle from the ASALs region to Nairobi often brought about conflict between the cattle herder and farmers. This was because the cattle herders let their animals graze in the cultivated fields. Another respondent who was part of the FGD pointed to the fact that there are many cases of domestic violence that sometimes lead to death that have been reported in Nairobi.

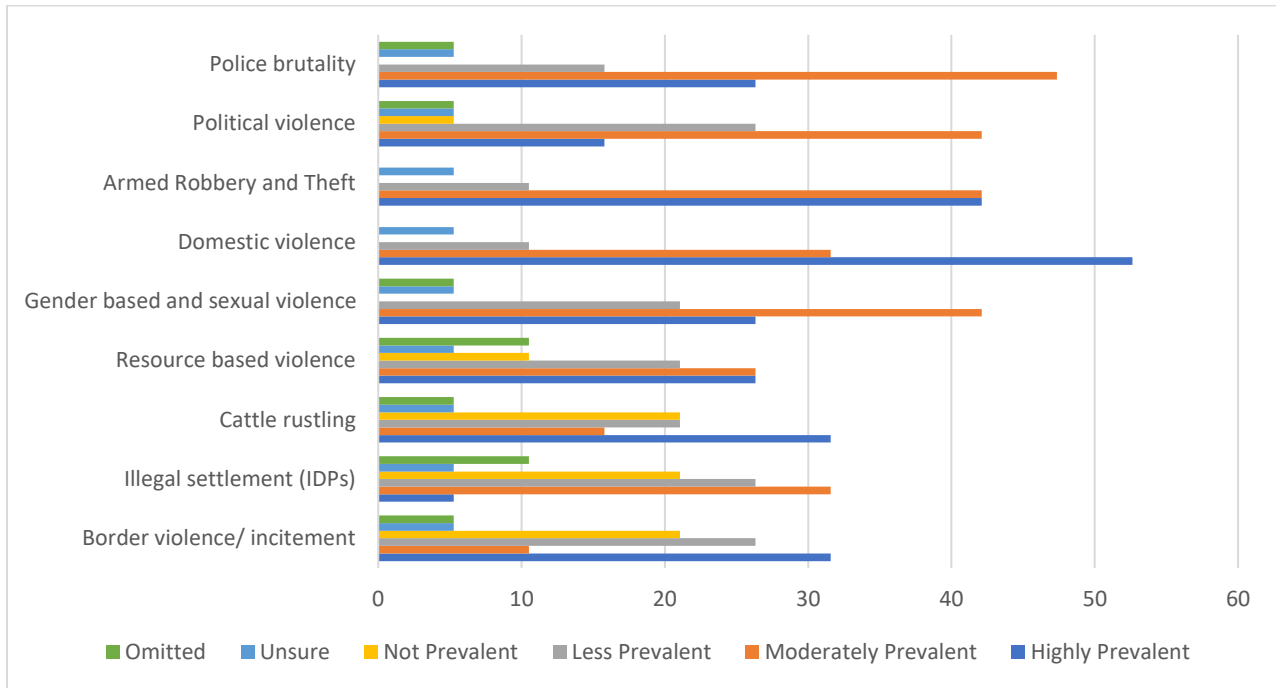
The respondent noted that:

There has been a high number of homicide cases in Nairobi right now. This includes mothers murdering children, women murdering husbands and vice versa. The main drivers of this type of violence include poor mental health issues, substance abuse and most importantly gender-based violence.

Conflicts arising from political related activities was also highlighted by the respondents who were part of the FGD in Nairobi. The respondent pointed out to the fact that the ethnic based political affiliations in Kenya often resulted to tensions between people from various ethnic divides at the community level. The FGD respondents also pointed out that the manner in which the government handles issues of religious extremism brought about tension between the Muslim and Christian communities particularly in Kamkunji. One of the respondents from a CBO based in Kamkunji noted that the Islam felt that the government was using soft power when handling terrorism cases stemming from the Christian faith but used tough and harsh techniques while dealing with terrorism cases arising from the Islamic faith. This made the youths feel that the Christians were more special citizens than them. As a result, extremists used the weak link to further develop narratives that divides the faith communities more.

Another conflict that was highlighted by the FGD respondents in Nairobi was that of clashes between the motor-cyclist famously referred to as “boda-boda riders” and the police. One of the FGD respondents who is a boda-boda chairperson at Pumwani reiterated the fact that some rogue police officers often harassed riders who were unable to pay bribes while favouring those who often gave in to the demands of bribing the police. The respondent further explained that there were foreign nationals who were riders in Pumwani area and often paid the police officers not to be harassed while the riders who were citizens often refused to pay for bribes, but rather insisted in following the laid down laws. As a result, there was often conflict and tension between the foreign boda-boda riders and the riders who were citizens.

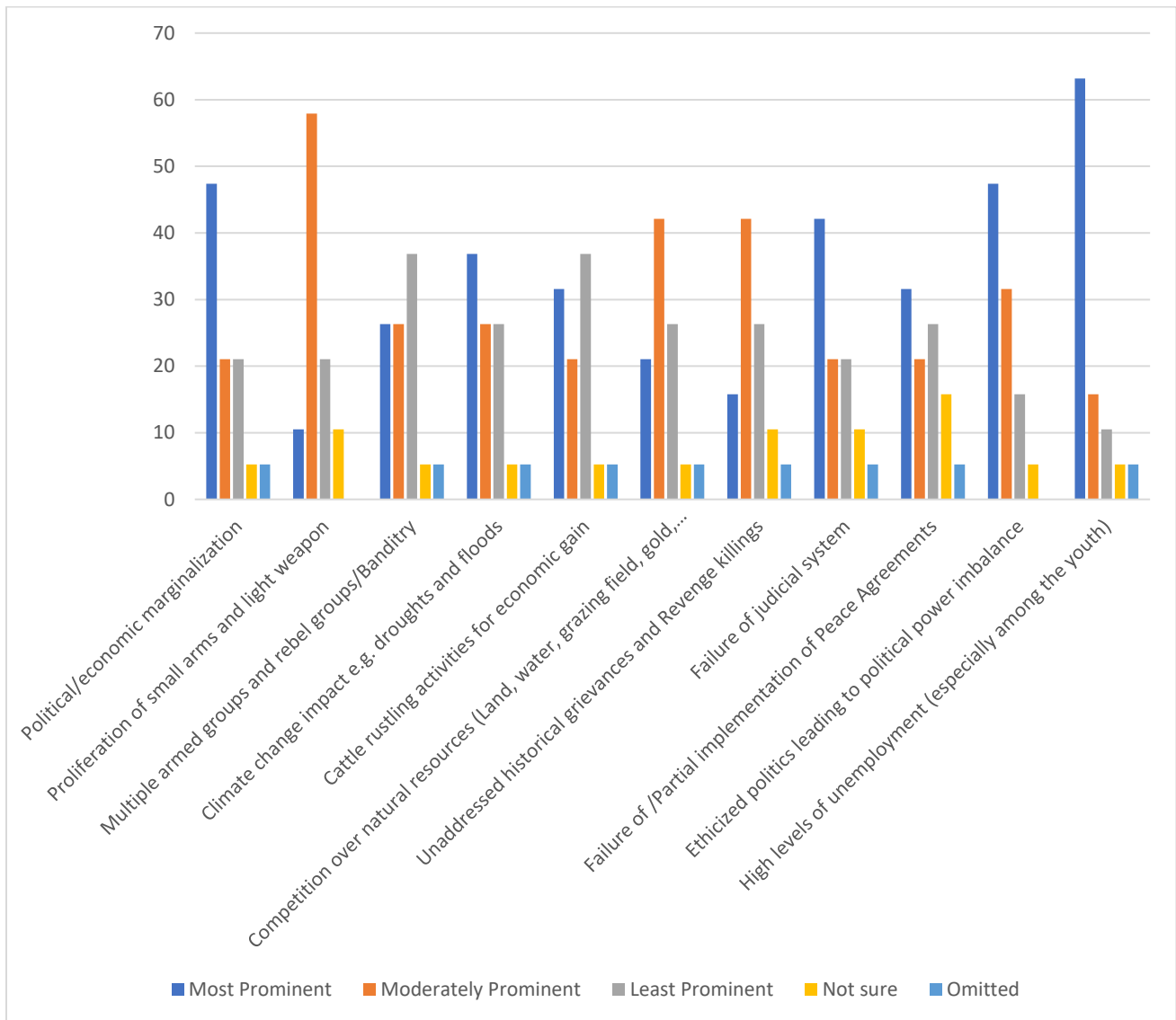
Figure 42: Prevalent Conflicts in Nairobi



Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to the conflict drivers in Nairobi, high levels of unemployment was identified by more than half of the respondents, approximately 63.16% of the respondents as the most prominent cause of conflict in the region. Additionally, ethnicized politics leading to political power imbalance was also identified by 47.37% of the respondents as the most prominent trigger of the cases of violence in the region. Other prominent conflict drivers in Nairobi includes political and economic marginalization (47.37%), failure of the judicial system (42.11%), climate change impact like floods and drought (36.84%) and the failure or partial implementation of peace agreements (31.58%). Figure 43 below shows the conflict drivers in Nairobi.

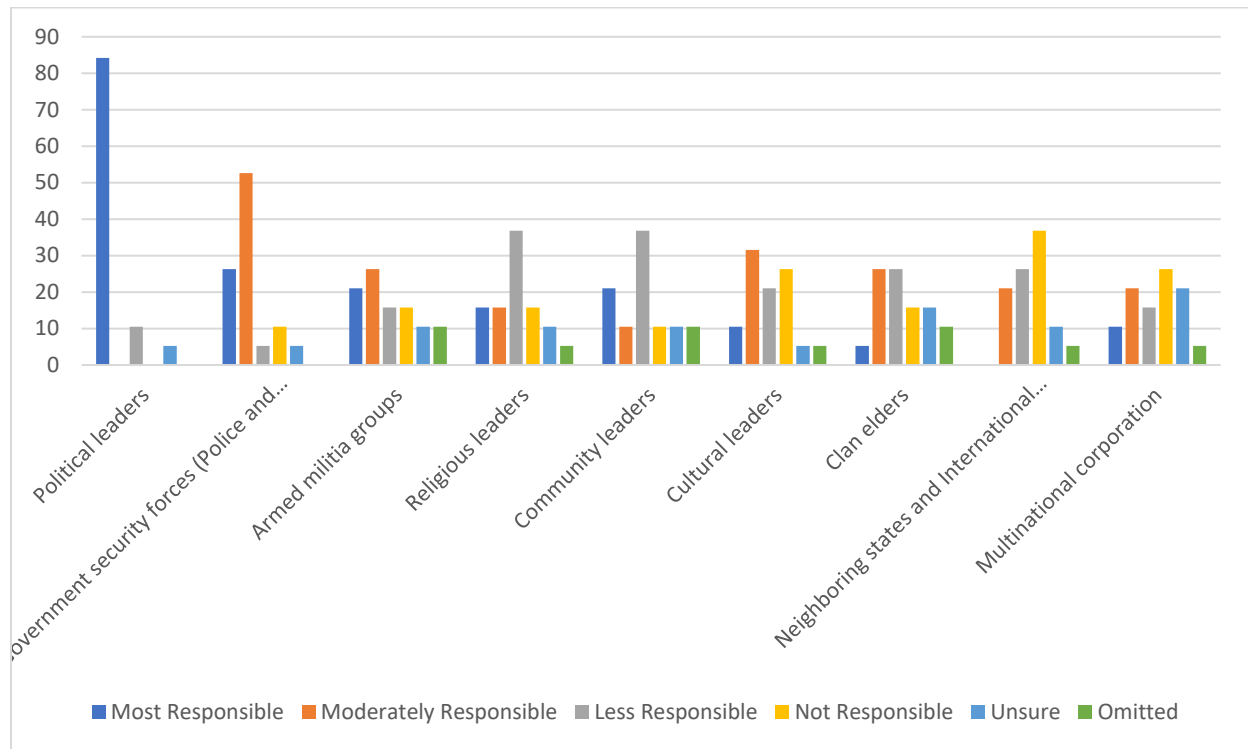
Figure 43: Conflict Drivers in Nairobi



Source: CMT Research Findings

The actors identified to be most responsible for the conflicts in Nairobi are political leaders. Of all the study respondents, a total of 84.21% noted that political leaders were the individuals most responsible for the conflicts occurring in Nairobi. The government security forces including the police and the army were identified by 52.63% of the respondents as moderately responsible for the conflicts occurring in Nairobi. Figure 44 below shows the responsible actors for the conflicts happening in Nairobi.

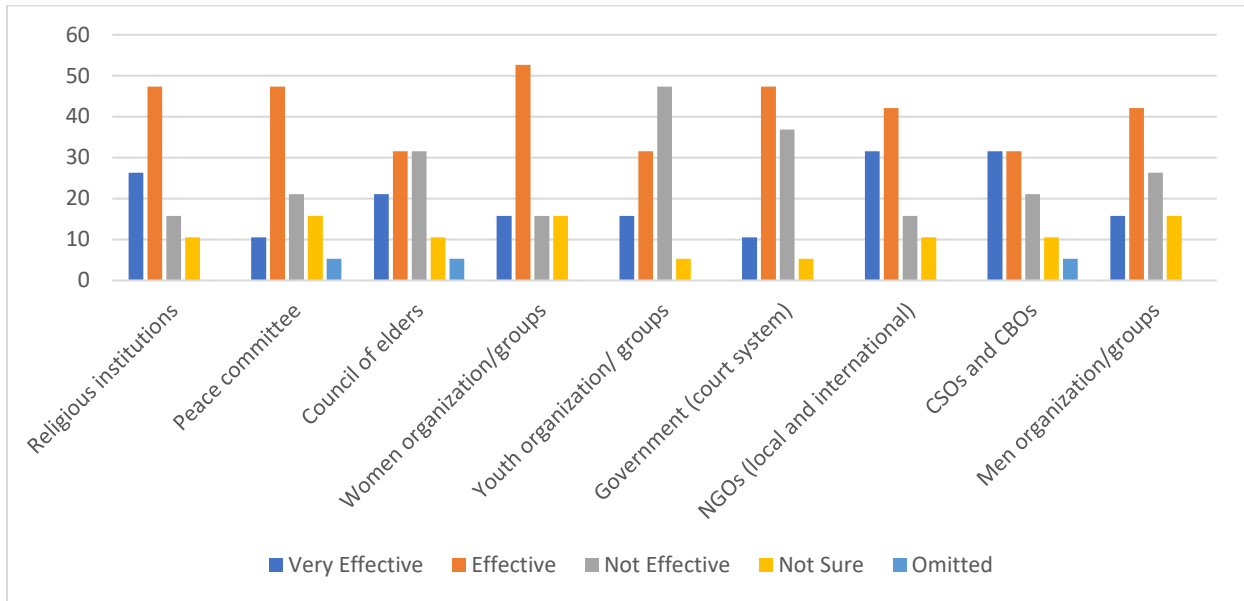
Figure 44: Actors in the Conflicts in Nairobi



Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to the institutions responsible for resolving conflicts in Nairobi, religious institutions and local and international NGOs were identified by 73.68% of the respondents as both very effectively and effectively responsible for resolving the ongoing conflicts in the region as shown in figure 45 below. Another significant institution identified by 63.16% of the respondents as both very effective and effective in resolving the conflicts in Nairobi are CBOs and CSOs. From the FGD held in Nairobi, the respondents reiterated the fact that CBO’s and NGOs were actively involved in initiatives to help resolve various conflicts in Nairobi.

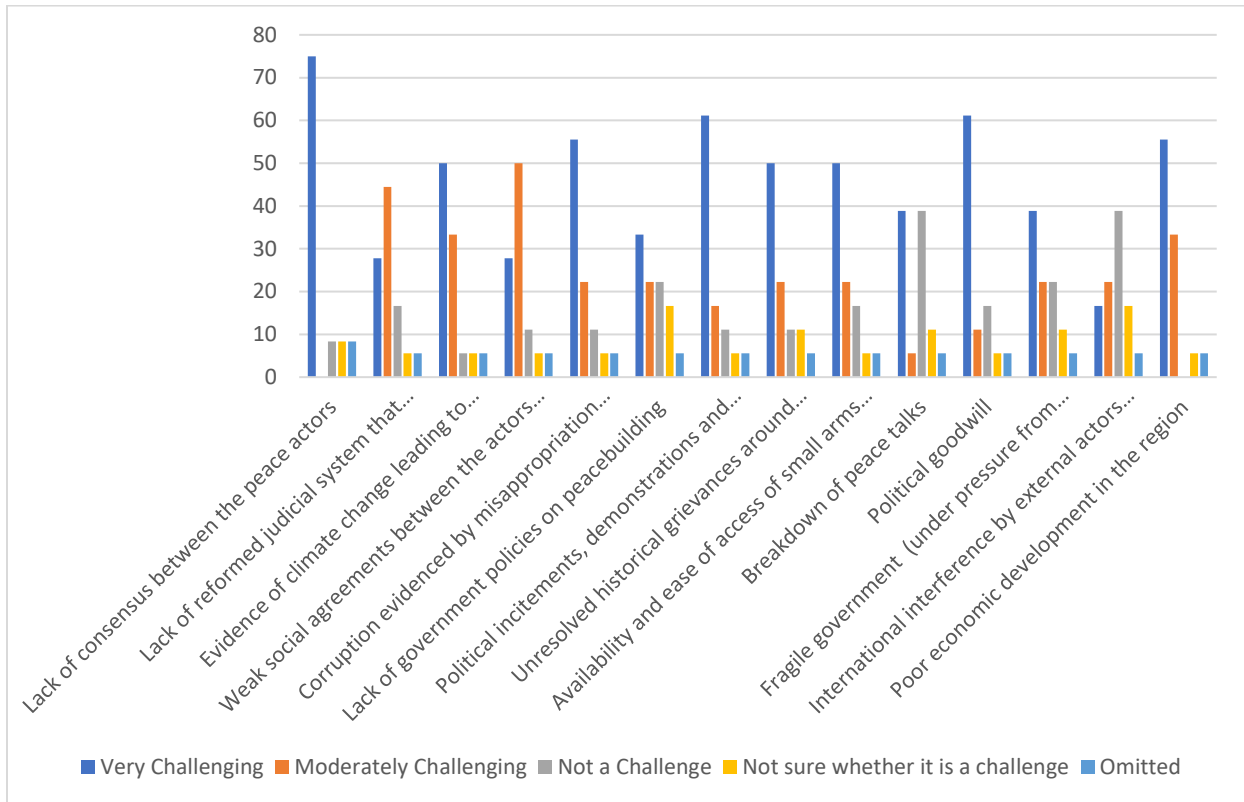
Figure 45: Institutions Responsible for Resolving Conflicts in Nairobi



Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to the challenges to resolving conflicts in Nairobi, the major challenges highlighted by the respondents included political incitement, demonstrations and hate-speech (61.11%), poor economic development (55.56%), corruption (55.56%), lack of consensus between peace actors (50%), evidence of climate change leading to floods, drought and poor harvest (50%), unresolved historical grievances (50%), and the ease to access small arms and light weapons (50%) as shown in figure 46 below.

Figure 46: Challenges of resolving conflicts in Nairobi



Source: CMT Research Findings

Recommendations

Peace Initiatives

To tackle conflicts in Nairobi, respondents recommended the active involvement of various peace stakeholders, including the government, civil society organizations, community leaders, and religious leaders, in initiatives targeting the root causes of community conflict. The respondents emphasized the necessity of national-level discussions to understand and address grassroots concerns, promoting awareness on critical issues such as police brutality, the high cost of living, and youth unemployment. Additionally, the respondents stressed the significance of local focus group discussions at the grassroots level to gain insights into the real-life experiences of the community, fostering dialogue. They underscored the need for community-based conversations, complemented by bold strategies like policy and institutional reforms, involving policymakers and holding them accountable for effective implementation.

Additionally, the respondents stressed the need for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to adopt a transformative approach to counteract negative radicalization driven by religious narratives. Conversely, the respondents noted that religious communities were falling short in addressing conflict-related issues, displaying complacency. Thus, they suggested the need for religious leaders to be actively included in workshops and seminars that spotlight the nation's significant challenges. This participation will enlighten them on their role in communities and empower them to effect positive change.

Further, the respondents suggested the need for inclusion of all parties concerned in dialogues aimed at enhancing cohesion in the nation. There was a concern that only the major political leaders are often engaged in peace talks while the people at the community level continue to live in discontent and hatred towards one another.

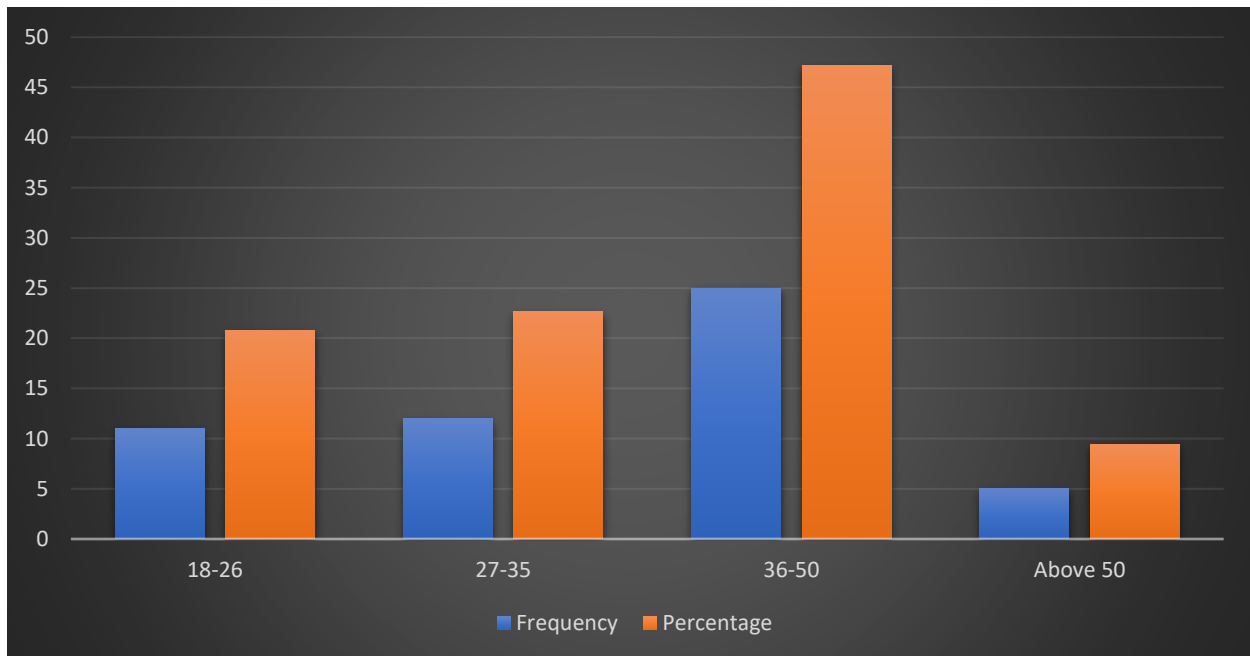
Government

The respondents suggested the need for the government to create strong independent peace promotion departments by act of parliament, with proper representation and with no political affiliation to help in enhancing peaceful co-existence in the nation. Further, the respondents suggested the need for the government to review the education system to create employment. The 2023 CMT findings show that unemployment is a major conflict driver in Nairobi. Therefore, addressing the issue of youth unemployment is key to addressing conflict in Nairobi region. Finally, there was a suggestion by the respondents of the need to have a robust collaboration between government and NGOs/CSOs in engaging in a well-coordinated peace intervention approach. Indeed, effective peace-building strategies should engage all actors, both state and non-state actors' i.e. religious leaders, government, ordinary citizens and NGOs working in unison.

WESTERN KENYA

The CMT 2023 also sought to understand the level of conflict, the conflict drivers, the actors of the conflicts and the challenges to addressing the conflicts that were often occurring in the Western Kenya region. Thus, from the individuals who filled the questionnaire, Western Kenya had a total of 53 respondents drawn from four counties namely; Kisumu, Siaya, Kakamega and Homa-Bay. Additionally, CRTP conducted a CMT focused group discussion in Kisumu that brought together participants who are peace practitioners, individuals actively engaged with local civil society organizations, youths, and individuals from the business community. For the respondents who filled the questionnaire, a significant number (47.17%) were individuals between the ages of 36-50 years. The age group of 27-35 years old represented 22.64% of the total respondents. The age group which encompasses individuals between 18 and 26 years old, comprised 20.75% of the total respondents. Respondents who are above the age of 50 years represented 9.43% of the total. Figure 47 below shows the age distribution of the respondents from Western Kenya.

Figure 47: Age-Bracket of Respondents from Western Kenya

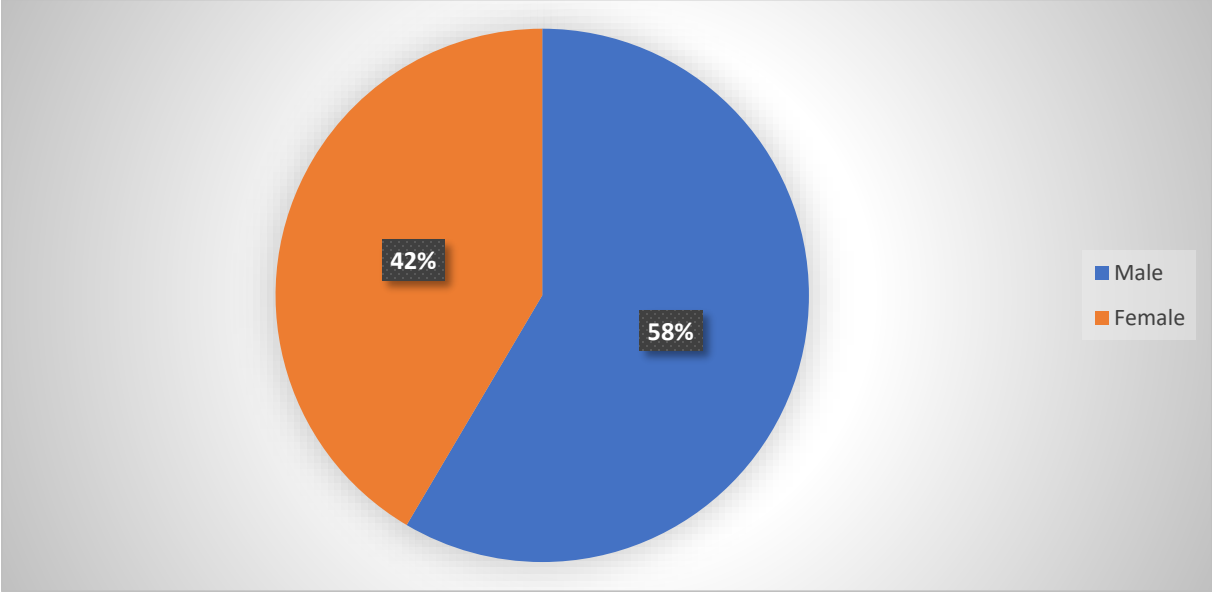


Source: CMT Research Findings

In terms of gender distribution, 58.49% of the respondents identified as male. This suggests that men make up the bulk of the respondents who filled the CMT questionnaire from Western Kenya. 41.51% of the participants identified as female. Despite being lower than the male ratio, this group

nonetheless accounts for a sizeable fraction of female respondents who filled the questionnaire. Figure 48 below shows the distribution of the gender of the respondents who filled the CMT questionnaire from Western Kenya.

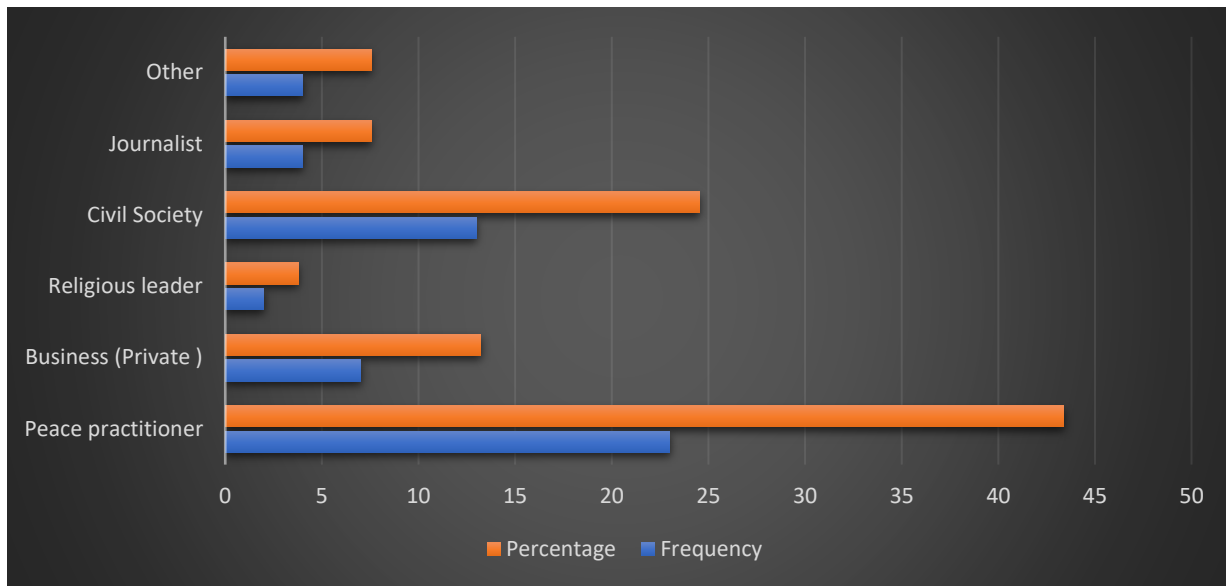
Figure 48: Distribution of the Gender of the CMT Respondents from Western Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to profession, a significant portion of the respondents from Western Kenya who filled the questionnaire, 43.40%, identified themselves as peace practitioners. These individuals likely have experience and expertise in conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. Another 24.53% of the respondents who filled the questionnaire identified themselves as being part of civil society. This group may include individuals affiliated with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other community-based organizations. Further, 13.21% of the respondents who filled the questionnaire work for themselves in private enterprise. These persons were key to the 2023 CMT study as they bring their perspectives on how the issues of violence and peace affect the economy of the region. Respondents who identified themselves as journalists make up 7.55% of the total. Their experiences as journalists covering conflicts may have an impact on their perspectives of violence and peace in the region. Finally, a small percentage, 3.77%, of the respondents who filled the questionnaire identified themselves as religious leaders. Figure 49 below shows the occupation of the respondents represented in graphs.

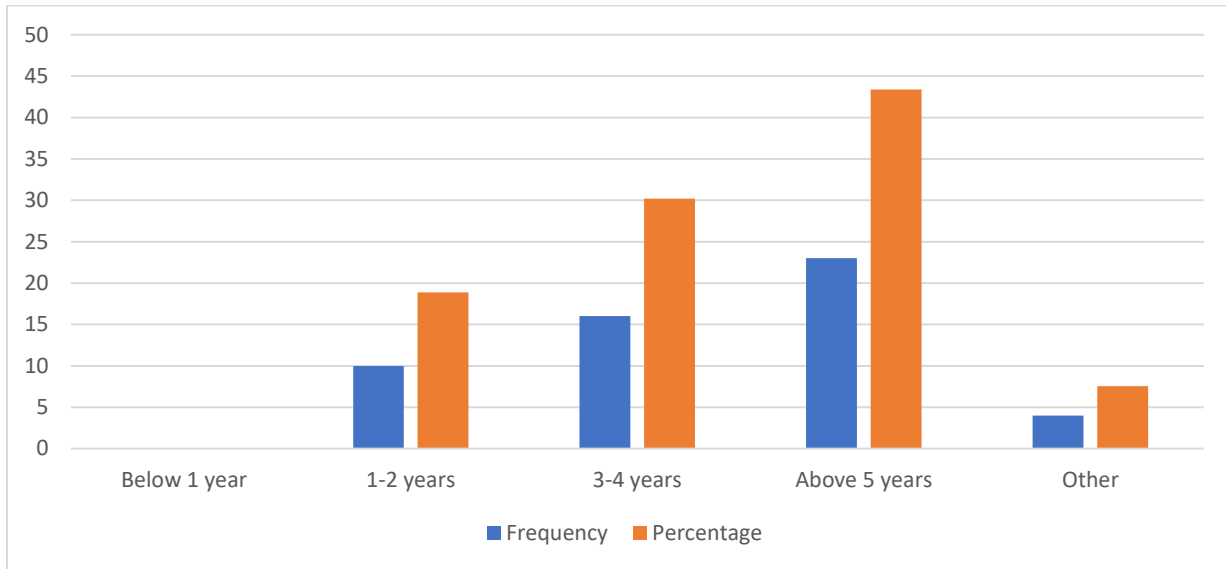
Figure 49: The Occupation of the Respondents from Western Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to years of work experience, as Figure 50 shows, the majority of respondents who filled the CMT questionnaire from Western Kenya, approximately 43.40%, indicated they had more than 5 years of experience in their fields. As such, these individuals are likely to have substantial expertise and knowledge related to the issues of peace and conflict in their region. Further, 30.19% of the respondents who filled the CMT questionnaire reported having 3 to 4 years of experience. Finally, 18.87% of the respondents who filled the CMT questionnaire indicated to have 1 to 2 years of experience.

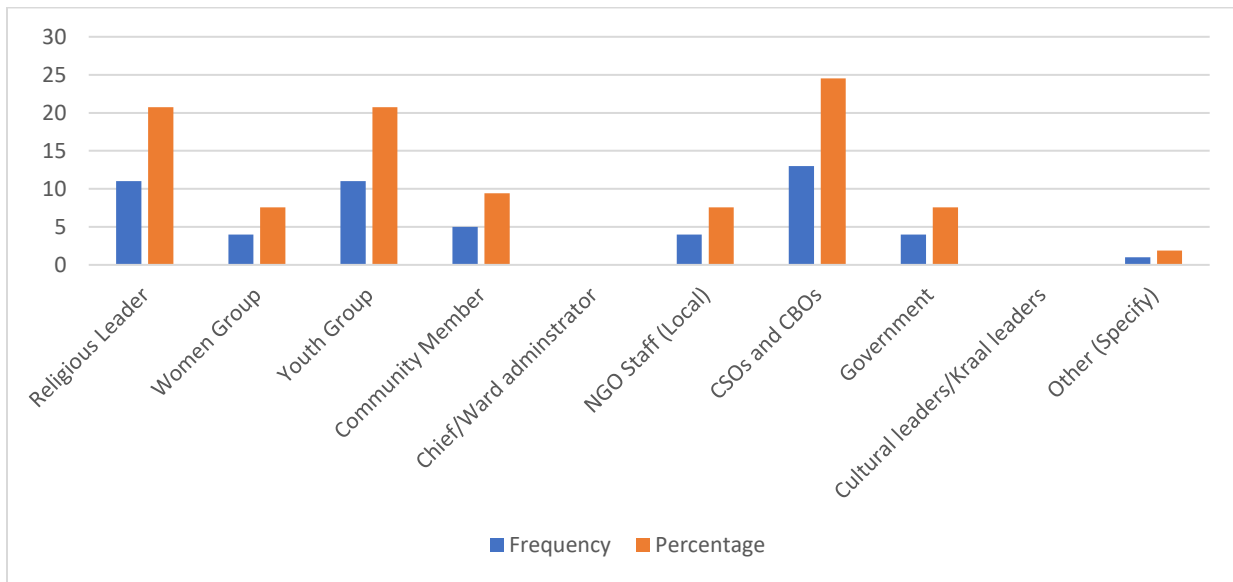
Figure 50: Years of Experience of the Respondents from Western Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

The CMT study also sought to understand the information about the stakeholders that the respondents who filled the questionnaire. A total of 24.53% of the respondents indicate that they are associated with CSOs and CBOs. Another 20.75% of the respondents identified themselves as religious leaders. An equal percentage, 20.75%, of the respondents indicated that they are associated with youth groups. Consequently, as shown in Figure 51 below, the data reveals a diverse representation of stakeholders among the respondents, including religious leaders, youth groups, community members, NGO staff, and civil society organizations.

Figure 51: Stakeholders of Respondents from Western Kenya



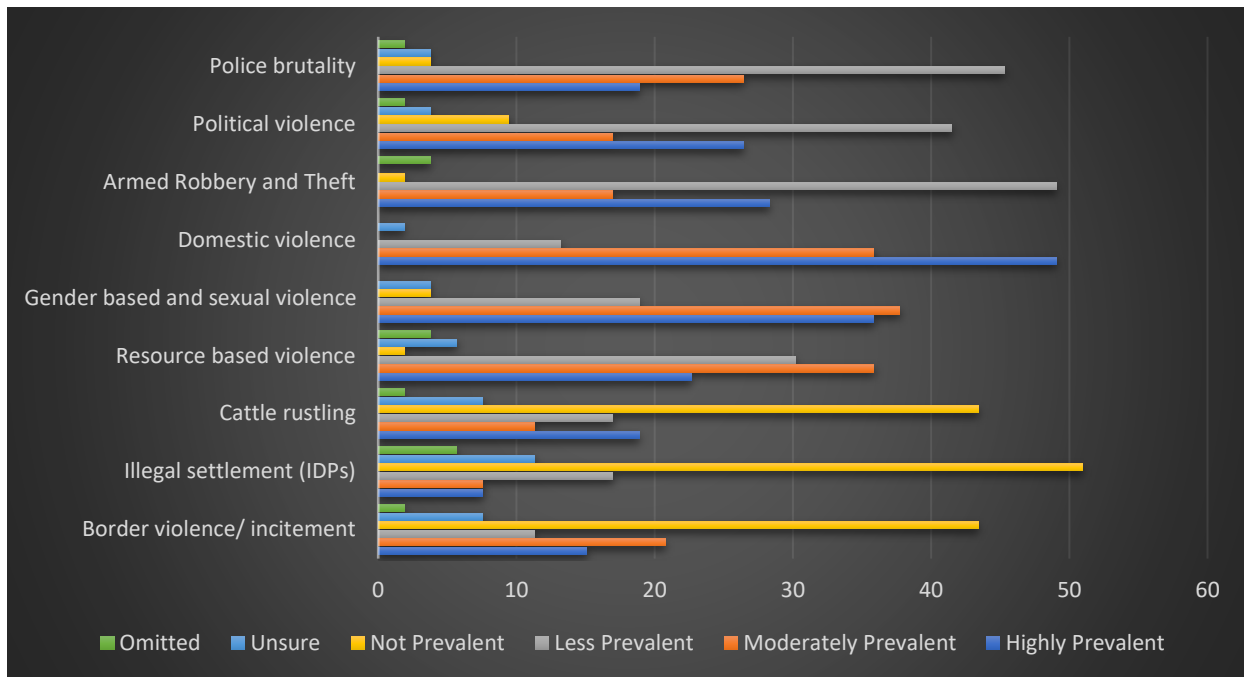
Source: CMT Research Findings

Understanding Conflict in Western Kenya

The conflict level for Western Kenya is at **1.9** which indicates that the region is at the peak of latent level of conflict. The latent level of conflict is often characterized by incompatible goals between one or more parties but hidden from the public. If the conflict at the latent level is not identified early enough and proper intervention mechanism employed to address the causes of the tension, a confrontation is more likely to occur.

Among the most prevalent conflicts identified by the respondents from Western Kenya are gender-based and sexual violence (38.85%) and domestic violence (49.06%). The moderately prevalent conflicts identified by the respondents from Western Kenya includes border violence (20.75%), resource-based violence (35.85%), political violence (16.98%), and police brutality (26.42%). In summary, the data indicates that gender-based and sexual violence, as well as domestic violence, are viewed as highly prevalent conflicts in Western Kenya by a significant portion of respondents. Other conflicts, such as political violence and police brutality, are seen as moderately prevalent, while some are considered less prevalent or not prevalent at all. Figure 52 below shows the prevalent conflicts in Western Kenya identified by the respondents who filled the questionnaire.

Figure 52: Prevalent Conflicts in Western Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

On the other hand, the participants from the FGD conducted in Kisumu identified political related conflicts, economic related conflicts, land disputes, domestic violence and other social related conflicts as the most dominant issues in the region. One of the FGD participant who was a Candidate for Ward County Assembly in the 2022 Elections pointed out that political related violence had taken various forms during the campaign period, the elections day, after the electoral results were declared and during the oppositions call for mass protests. The Candidate for Ward County Assembly in the 2022 Elections noted that:

During elections, we had social media bullying as far as campaigns were concerned. A number of aspiring politicians hired youths to manage their social media handles, mostly twitter and Facebook pages. Most of the politicians Facebook and twitter handles were used to bully opponents and supporters of opponents. Graphics, voice boxes and images of things happening elsewhere were imported and used to spew propaganda to intimidate other political candidates who were opponents. Another thing that was happening during the campaign period was the hiring of crowds to either cheer a candidate while addressing supporters or heckle the opponent while trying to articulate his/her manifesto. As a political candidate then, opponents would hire a crowd to heckle me when addressing a rally.

Additionally, still within the context of political dynamics in Kisumu, the respondents observed during the political campaign period which can be described as political intolerance. The

respondents noted that Kisumu region experienced a surge in the number of independent candidates who sought to challenge the dominance of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), the prevailing political party in the area. As such, several smaller political parties fielded candidates for various positions in Kisumu during the 2022 elections. However, it became evident that supporters of the ODM, the major political party, displayed a marked intolerance towards independent candidates and those representing other political parties. Any political candidate who contested on a platform different from the ODM party was often labeled as a betrayer of the community's collective interests, particularly within the Luo Community. Consequently, candidates from alternative political parties found it challenging to gain acceptance in the region, and their supporters frequently faced intimidation and threats. The above situation highlights a concerning trend of political exclusion and hostility towards diverse political viewpoints in Kisumu, illustrating the challenges faced by candidates and their supporters who are not aligned with the dominant political party.

The respondents noted that the political conflicts culminated in Kisumu with the call for protests by the opposition. According to FGD respondents, during the demonstration, the youths reportedly confronted the police, leading to running battles and injuries of both the protestors and some police officers. Additionally, several business premises in Kisumu were looted by some rogue youths taking advantage of the demonstrations. Tragically, there were reports of the loss of life, including a student and other individuals, in both Kisumu and Maseno. Furthermore, the political violence had a ripple effect on the economy. The FGD respondents noted that economic violence manifested in the form of business losses, the destruction of business premises, and the creation of an unfavorable environment for conducting business. As a result, individuals from different communities reportedly chose to relocate out of fear, further exacerbating the economic impact of the political violence.

With regards to the conflicts arising from altercation on land, the FGD respondents revealed that one of the protracted land disputes in the region centers around the Kanyakwar land. One of the respondents who is a sustainable livelihood coordinator at Obunga noted that according to government records, the acquisition of the Kanyakwar land dates back to the 1970s when it was obtained from the communities residing there, with the intention of using it for the expansion of Kisumu town. However, tensions have flared recently as members of the communities asserting

ancestral ownership of the land raised concerns of private developers subdividing the land, which they firmly believe belongs to the government. Consequently, individuals from Kanyakwar, Kajulu, Thim, Kolwa, and Kogony communities have demanded the return of the land or compensation, contending that it was originally ceded to the government. This contentious issue has frequently resulted in clashes involving the claimant communities, private developers, and law enforcement personnel.

In the discussion of domestic related conflicts, the FGD respondents from Kisumu noted that within households, there is a prevailing belief that the male figure holds the position of the head of the household. According to this belief, every member of the household is expected to adhere to the decisions made by the male head. Consequently, there was always conflicts when the male's head of the household imposed their political decisions on their wives. A community health volunteer who was part of the FGD in Kisumu noted that:

During the campaign period, the male heads of households were imposing their preferred political candidates on their wives. These decisions often led to domestic conflicts within the family, and, in certain instances, resulted in the dissolution of families. Regrettably, children bore the brunt of these separations, experiencing the adverse effects of their parents' separation. Coping with these challenges, particularly during the recent election, proved to be an immense struggle for many families.

The FGD respondents in Kisumu also highlighted those ethnic tensions often emerged within tertiary institutions during political campaign seasons. The respondents noted that students sometimes chose not to attend school during the periods of political campaigns and demonstrations due to concerns about potential attacks, particularly if they hail from different ethnic communities.

One of the students who was part of the FGD noted that:

At Kisumu Polytechnic, students representing diverse ethnic backgrounds from across the country coexist. However, following the announcement of election results in August 2022 and the subsequent reopening of schools, a significant number of Kikuyu and Kalenjin students failed to return, and those who did were often gripped by fear. Even presently, as preparations are underway for the saba-saba protests, some students intend to travel back to their home regions and return only after the demonstrations conclude. This underscores the influence of political dynamics on campus environments and the resultant impact on student populations.

Subsequently, the focused group discussions in Kisumu brought to light a multitude of complex conflict issues. It became evident that the spectrum of conflicts extended far beyond a singular dimension. Participants voiced concerns encompassing various facets of conflict, such as political

intolerance, economic ramifications arising from business disruptions, land disputes, domestic strife related to political influence, ethnic tensions and the displacement of indigenous populations. These multifaceted conflict issues underscored the intricate and interconnected nature of challenges faced within the community in the Western region. The discussions underscored the importance of addressing these conflicts holistically and underscored the need for comprehensive conflict resolution strategies that consider the intricate web of issues at play.

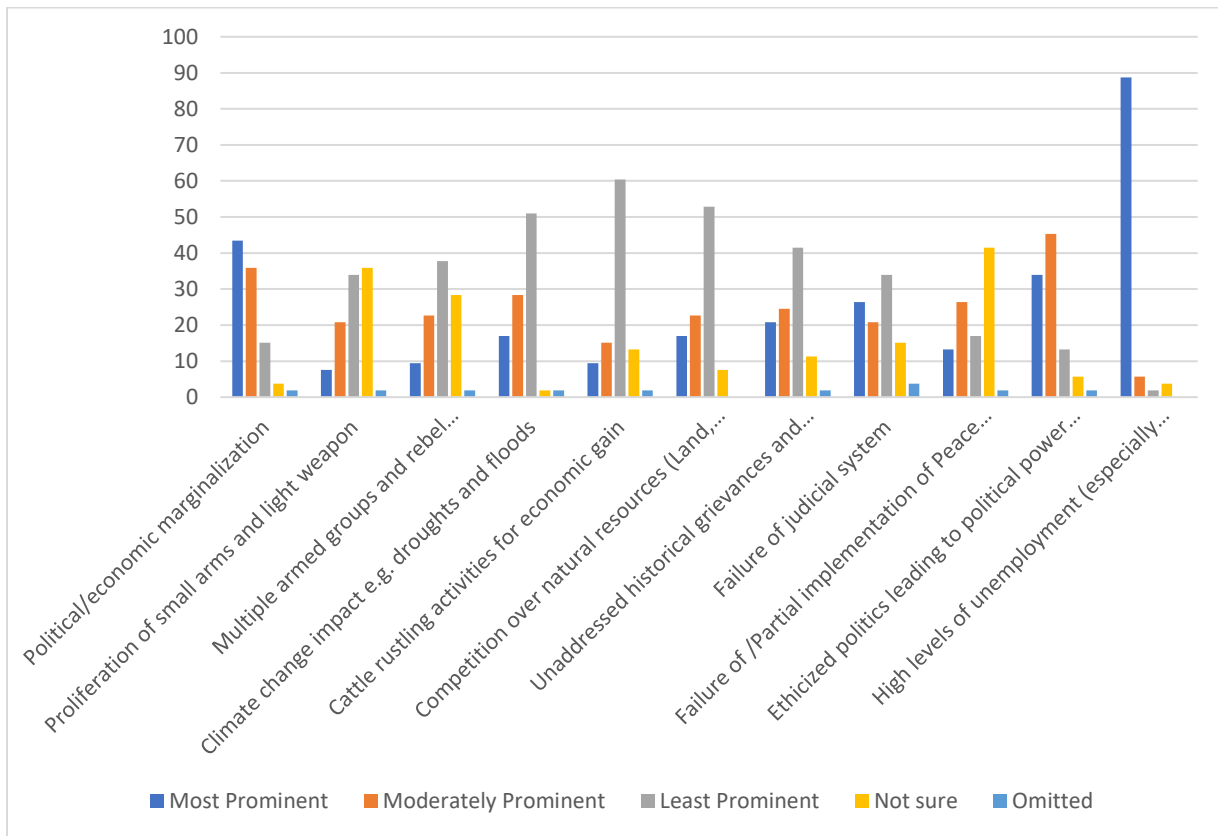
Conflict Drivers in Western Kenya

The CMT study also sought to understand the triggers of conflict in Western Kenya. As shown in figure 24 below, high levels of unemployment especially among the youth stands out as the most prominent conflict driver, as marked by 88.68% of the respondents, indicating that economic factors play a substantial role in driving the conflicts within Western Kenya. This fact was reiterated by one of the students who was part of the FGD in Kisumu who noted that:

Unemployment is a major driver that makes the youth to engage in political violence. During the elections, the youths were given as little as Ksh 200 by a political candidate to go and heckle or disrupt a rally of an opponent. For me, I was paid by a politician to spread negative propaganda for an opponent in social media. We opened various pseudo-Facebook accounts and used them to attack the opponent using messages that will discourage voters from voting for that candidate.

Another prominent conflict driver that was identified by 43.4% of the respondents that appear to be significant contributor to conflict in Western Kenya is political/economic marginalization. Ethnicized politics leading to political power imbalance was also identified by 33.96% of the respondents, which suggests that ethnicity has significant impact on political power dynamics in the region. Conflicts related to the competition for natural resources, including land, water, and grazing fields, was identified as a moderately prominent conflict driver. Overall, the CMT findings underscores the complex interplay of various factors contributing to conflicts in Western Kenya. It emphasizes the importance of addressing economic disparities, political imbalances, and the grievances related to these issues as key steps towards conflict resolution and peacebuilding in the region. Figure 53 below is an illustration of the various conflict drivers in Western Kenya.

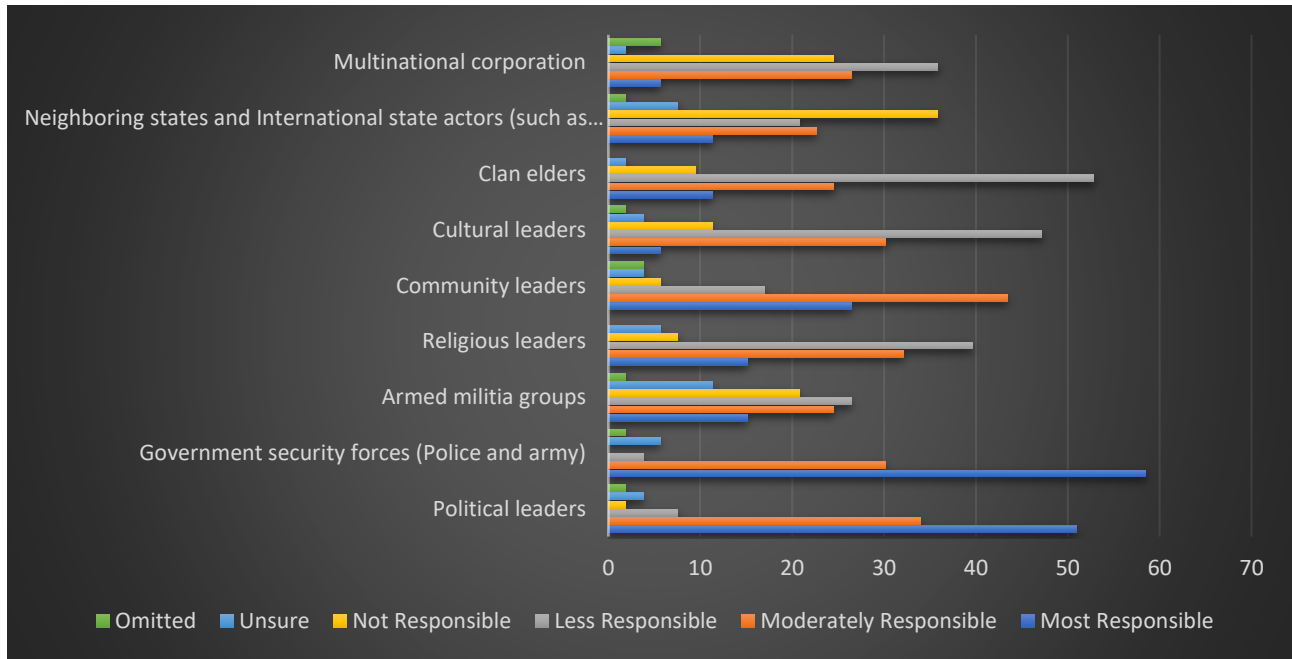
Figure 53: Prominent Conflict Drivers in Western Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to the institutions responsible for the conflicts, the government security forces were perceived by 58.49% of the respondents as the most responsible for conflicts in Western Kenya. This indicates concerns related to heavy-handed security responses particularly during the opposition demonstrations and other human rights abuses by the government security forces. Political leaders were also seen by 50.94% of the respondents to be highly responsible for the conflicts in Western region as shown in Figure 54 below, suggesting a link between political dynamics and conflicts in the region. Community leaders were also perceived by 43.4% of the respondents as moderately responsible, indicating their influence in local conflicts. The CMT findings also indicates that certain actors, such as religious leaders and clan elders, were perceived as not responsible for conflicts in the Western Kenya region, suggesting that their role in conflict dynamics is relatively minimal.

Figure 54: Institutions Responsible for Conflict in Western Kenya



Source: CMT Research Findings

The CMT also sought to understand the institutions or organizations that have been responsible for effective resolution of conflicts in Western Kenya. Respondents strongly believed that peace committees play a crucial role in conflict resolution, with the highest rating for effectiveness as indicated by 64.15% of the respondents. This suggests that community-based peace initiatives are highly regarded in the region. CSOs and CBOs were also viewed as very effective in resolving the conflicts in the region by 54.72% of the respondents. The above finding shows the importance of grassroots organizations in conflict resolution. On the other hand, the council of elders were considered effective by 64.15% of the respondents, indicating their role in traditional conflict resolution processes in the Western Kenya. Religious institutions were also perceived as effective in conflict resolution, highlighting their influence in promoting peace and reconciliation. Figure 55 below shows the illustration of the respondents’ choice of the institutions that have played key roles in resolving conflicts in Western Kenya.

From the FGD held in Kisumu, the respondents noted the important role that faith-based organizations had played to help address the drivers of conflict in the region. A community health volunteer noted that:

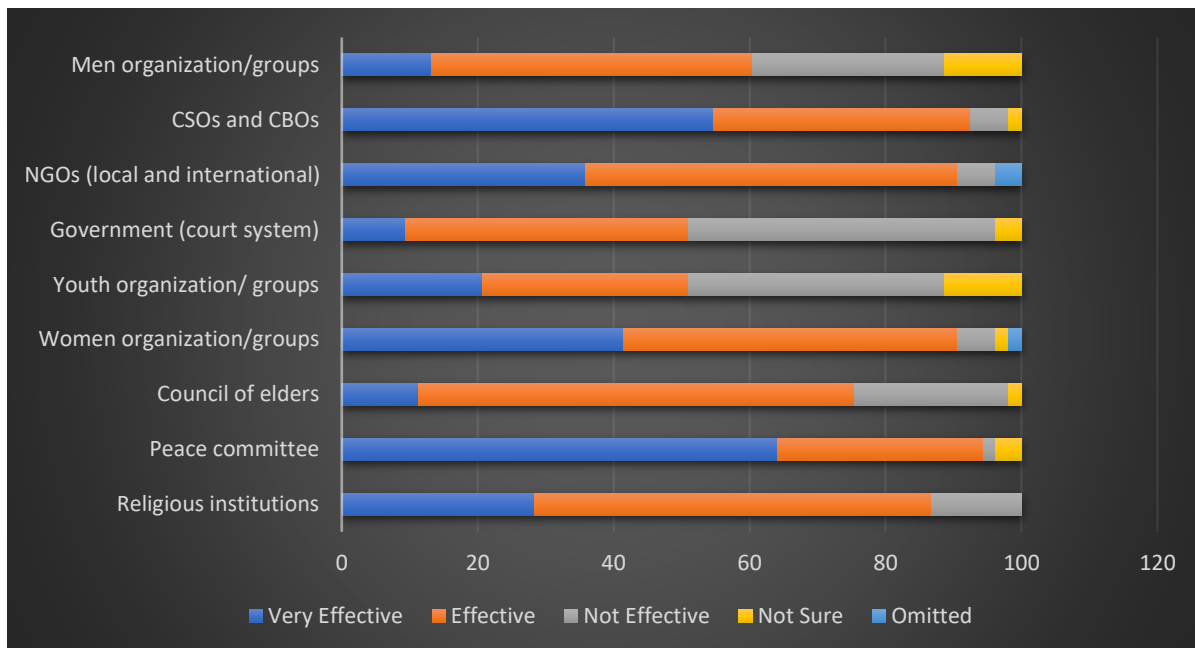
The Kisumu Muslims Association have recognized that the lack of employment opportunities for young people that make them become vulnerable to manipulation by politicians so that they engage in violence. In Obunga particularly, the Kisumu Muslims Association have sponsored selected number of youths and young married women to be trained in technical skills through short courses like tailoring, catering and carpentry.

The FGD respondents also noted the key roles that religious leaders have played in resolving conflicts in the region. A community focal, resource person and mobilizer noted that:

The Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB) have also been issuing statements on the state of the nation frequently and even in some circumstances, giving advice to both the government, the opposition and Kenyan’s at large. During the recent protests, KCCB issued a statement calling for dialogue between the government and opposition and urged Kenyans to refrain from engaging in violence. KCCB also condemned the police for using excessive force and shooting live bullets on protestors.

Finally, another CSO identified by a ward administrator who was part of the FGD in Kisumu is Local Capacities for Peace International (LCPI) which has worked with the 14 counties in the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB Counties) to develop a peace charter that helps in monitoring border issues and other political related conflicts. LCPI has been working with the LREB counties to develop policies on peacebuilding and conflict prevention in order to prevent inter-ethnic conflict in the LREB counties.

Figure 55: Institutions Effective in Resolving Conflicts in Western Kenya



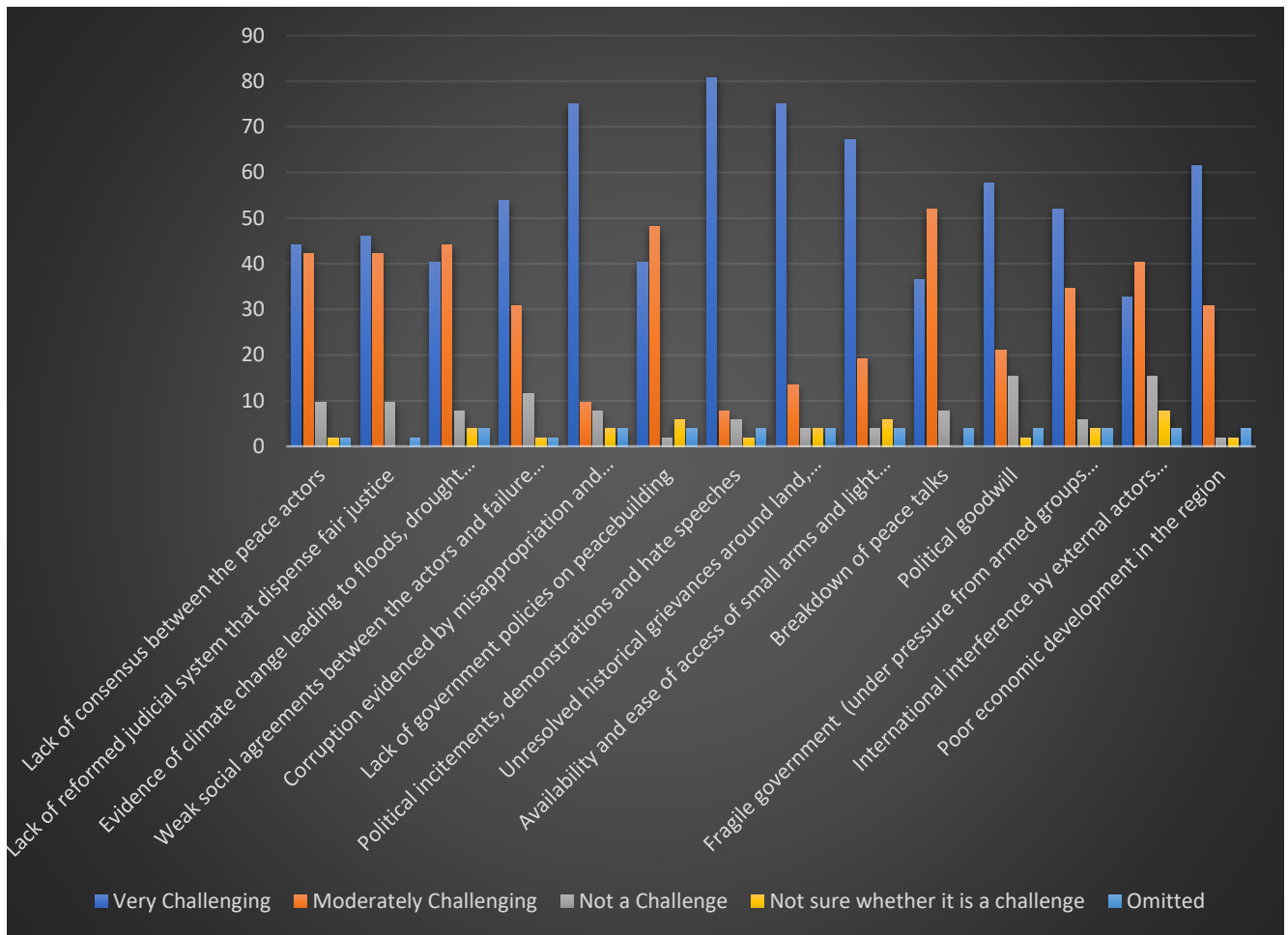
Source: CMT Research Findings

Challenges to Conflict Resolution in Western Kenya

The CMT also sought to understand the challenges to effective resolution of the conflicts occurring in Western Kenya. Political incitements, demonstrations, and hate speeches highlighted by 80.77% of the respondents who filled the questionnaire was identified as the most severe challenge, indicating that inflammatory political rhetoric and public protests significantly contribute to conflicts. High levels of corruption, particularly in the misappropriation of government resources, also pose a substantial obstacle to conflict resolution efforts in Western Kenya as identified by 75% of the respondents. Unresolved historical grievances, particularly historical land disputes, compensation issues, and restoration challenges was cited by 67.31% of the respondents as major sources of conflict in Western Kenya. Additionally, the exclusion of key groups such as youth, women, and religious organizations from peace negotiations was viewed by 51.92% of the respondents as a significant concern in Western Kenya. Figure 56 below shows the challenges to resolving the conflicts in Western Kenya.

In summary, the data reveals that political incitement, corruption, unresolved historical grievances, and the exclusion of key stakeholders are the most critical challenges to conflict resolution in Western Kenya. Efforts to address these challenges, promote good governance, and involve diverse groups in peacebuilding processes are essential for fostering lasting peace and stability in the region.

Figure 56: Challenges to Resolution of Conflicts in Western Kenya



Recommendations

Reform of the Electoral Body

The respondents suggested the need of the IEBC to address the perennial issues of mistrust and redeem themselves to be an independent body that is able to conduct a free and fair elections. The respondents noted that so many Kenyans felt that the IEBC was not independent. They noted that there were allegations that the IEBC chair and some commissioners had gone to meet some presidential candidates privately with certain offers.

Embrace a Peaceful Political Culture

The respondents noted that politicians should adopt a more measured and courteous communication style when addressing each other. This approach will prevent conflicts among their supporters during political rallies and campaigns. Additionally, politicians need to foster a culture of dialogue and handshakes to guarantee post-election peace.

Peace Initiatives

The respondents noted that there is a need to engage police officers in the community peace initiatives organized by the various non-state actors. One of the respondents observed that civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), the Church, and other non-state entities had consistently organized constructive dialogues and peace forums involving youth, politicians, and community members during election periods or times of conflict, such as the political violence witnessed in the demonstrations. Unfortunately, law enforcement officers are not included in these peace initiatives, despite their crucial role in either preserving or exacerbating the situation. Therefore, there is a need for the non-state actors should actively involve security personnel in discussions on maintaining sustainable peace, especially focusing on non-violent methods for handling protestors. Additionally, the respondents noted the need for the non-state actors to encourage the community to embrace alternative justice system that is more effective in addressing conflicts. This will help reconcile conflicting parties while resolving the conflict at the same time.

Government

The respondents suggested that the government should create employment opportunities for the youth so that they are engaged in constructive activities rather than violence. Most of the youths participate in violence not because they like it, but because they are paid to do so.

Inter-Generational Dialogue

There is a need for intergenerational dialogue between the youth and the elders, particularly parents. Respondents observed that conflicts often stem from inadequate child-rearing and misunderstandings, leading young individuals to rebel due to a perceived lack of understanding

from their parents. It is crucial for parents to provide a platform for youths to express themselves openly and be heard.

COAST REGION

For the Coast region of Kenya, the CMT 2023 research included Kwale, Kilifi and Mombasa counties.

Level of conflict 2.3

A total of 43 respondents filled the CMT questionnaire from the Coast region.

Gender-based and sexual violence emerge as highly prevalent in the Coast region as identified by 51.16% of the respondents, showing a significant and alarming issue in the Coast region. Additionally, domestic violence is also highly prevalent, with 48.84% of the respondents acknowledging its occurrence. Other notable conflicts in the Coast region identified by the respondents include armed robbery and theft (27.91%), political violence (23.26%) and resource-based violence. With regards to the drivers of conflict in the Coast region, the most prominent factor identified by respondents is high levels of unemployment, especially among the youth, with an overwhelming 76.74% considering it a major issue. This underscores the critical role of economic stability and employment opportunities in mitigating conflicts in the region. Political and economic marginalization emerged as another highly prominent factor, with 44.19% of respondents recognizing it as a significant driver of conflicts in Coast region. This suggests that addressing issues related to political and economic inclusion and equity is crucial for promoting stability and reducing tensions. Competition over natural resources, including land, water, grazing fields, gold, diamond, oil, and geothermal resources, is moderately prominent, with 37.21% of respondents acknowledging its significance in Coast region. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons is moderately prominent as well, recognized by 25.58% of respondents in the region.

Other factors, such as multiple armed groups and rebel groups, unaddressed historical grievances and revenge killings, and ethicized politics leading to political power imbalance, are also identified as moderately prominent by respondents, indicating a complex interplay of historical, political, and identity-based factors in the conflicts in Coast region. Consequently, the 2023 CMT findings points to a multifaceted landscape of conflict actors in the Coast region, with unemployment, political and economic marginalization, and competition over natural resources standing out as particularly prominent. Addressing these factors requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses economic development, political inclusivity, environmental resilience, and conflict prevention measures.

With regards to the challenges hindering the resolution of conflict in the Coast region, corruption, evidenced by misappropriation and embezzlement of government resources, stands out as the most challenging factor, recognized by 65.12% of respondents. Further, the evidence of climate change

leading to floods, drought, and poor harvest was identified as another major challenge to resolving conflict in the Coast region, with 60.47% considering it a very challenging issue.

Political incitements, demonstrations, and hate speeches are also identified as very challenging, with 55.81% of respondents acknowledging their impact. Other very challenging factors include a lack of reformed judicial systems dispensing fair justice (41.86%), weak social agreements between actors and failure to include all stakeholders in the peace negotiation process (53.49%), and unresolved historical grievances around land, compensation, and restoration (60.47%). These issues point to systemic challenges in the legal, social, and historical dimensions of conflict resolution. The above 2023 CMT findings suggests that addressing the identified challenges in the Coast region requires a multi-faceted approach, including environmental resilience strategies, anti-corruption measures, responsible political engagement, legal reforms, and efforts to reconcile historical grievances. Additionally, involving all stakeholders, including youths, women, and religious groups, in the peace negotiation process is crucial for building inclusive and sustainable solutions to the conflicts in the Coast region.

RIFT VALLEY REGION

For the Rift Valley region of Kenya, the CMT 2023 research included Nandi, Nakuru, Kericho, Baringo, Uasin Gishu and Elgeyo Marakwet counties.

Level of conflict 2.4

A total of 54 respondents filled the CMT questionnaire from the Rift Valley region.

Cattle rustling, a historically significant issue in some of the counties in the Rift Valley region, remains a highly prevalent conflict, identified by 46.30% of respondents. Additionally, armed robbery and theft was identified as highly prevalent conflict by 44.44% of respondents, indicating a significant security concern in the region. Gender-based and sexual violence also emerge as highly prevalent, identified by 33.33% of respondents, emphasizing a critical issue that demands attention and intervention. Domestic violence also stands out as highly prevalent, with 33.33% of respondents acknowledging its occurrence. Political violence and border violence/incitement were recognized as moderately prevalent conflicts by 35.19% and 29.63% of respondents, respectively. These results indicate that political tensions and border-related issues contribute to the region's overall conflict landscape but are not as widespread as some other conflicts. Illegal settlement, resource-based violence, and police brutality were also identified as moderately prevalent conflicts by varying percentages of respondents. Consequently, the Rift Valley region faces a complex set of conflicts, ranging from gender-based violence and domestic issues to security concerns related to cattle rustling and armed robbery.

The most prominent conflict driver identified by 72.22% of the respondents in the Rift Valley region is ethnicized politics resulting in a power imbalance. This suggests that the politicization of ethnicity plays a crucial role in shaping power dynamics, leading to conflicts within the region. Another prominent conflict driver in the rift valley region identified by 44.44% of the respondents is political and economic marginalization. This indicates a perception among the population of being excluded or disadvantaged in political and economic aspects, contributing significantly to conflicts. The presence of multiple armed groups and involvement in banditry is another highly prominent driver identified by 38.89% of the respondents. This underscores the security challenges posed by armed factions and criminal activities in counties such as Elgeyo Marakwet and Baringo in the Rift valley region. Consequently, political and economic marginalization, ethnicized politics, and the presence of armed groups stand out as the most prominent conflict drivers in the Rift Valley region. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach that involves inclusive governance, disarmament efforts, and effective peace-building strategies.

The prevalence of political incitements, demonstrations, and hate speeches was identified by 68.81% of the respondents as a major challenge to resolving conflicts in the Rift Valley region. This underscores the role of inflammatory rhetoric in fueling tensions and impeding peace-building efforts. Additionally, widespread corruption, including misappropriation and embezzlement of government resources, was considered highly challenging by 62.96% of the respondents. This indicates that corrupt practices undermine the effectiveness of peace initiatives. Another obstacle to effective resolution of conflict in the Rift Valley is the absence of a consensus among peace actors is identified by 51.85% of the respondents. This suggests that differing perspectives and goals among those involved in peace efforts hinder progress in the Rift Valley region.

NORTH-RIFT VALLEY REGION

For the North-Rift Valley region of Kenya, the CMT 2023 research included Turkana, West Pokot and Samburu counties.

Level of conflict 2.35

A total of 52 respondents filled the CMT questionnaire from the North-Rift Valley region.

Cattle rustling emerged as the most highly prevalent conflict identified by 82.69% of the respondents, indicating a significant issue in the North Rift Valley region. This underscores the challenges associated with livestock-related disputes, which often leads to violence. Additionally, border violence and incitement were highly prevalent as pointed out by 44.23% of the respondents, indicating tensions and conflicts related to territorial boundaries. These conflicts may be fueled by historical disputes or resource competition. Finally, armed robbery and theft was identified by 36.54% of the respondents as highly prevalent, highlighting challenges of security within the North Rift Valley region.

Cattle rustling emerged as the primary catalyst for conflict in the North Rift Valley region, as reported by 78.85% of the respondents, indicating economic motivations behind conflicts related to livestock. Additionally, 61.54% of the respondents identified climate change impacts, such as droughts and floods, underscoring how these environmental changes have intensified resource competition in the region, thereby contributing to conflict. The competition over natural resources, encompassing land, water, grazing fields, and valuable minerals, was highlighted as a substantial conflict driver by 55.77% of respondents. Furthermore, the widespread availability of small arms and light weapons, identified by 34.62% of respondents, significantly contributes to conflict in the North Rift Valley region, emphasizing the importance of controlling weapon flow and implementing disarmament initiatives.

Political incitement, demonstrations, and hate speeches were deemed highly problematic by 65.38% of participants, underscoring the influence of inflammatory language on conflict resolution in the North Rift Valley region. The lack of governmental strategies for peacebuilding was perceived as a substantial challenge to resolving conflicts in the North Rift Valley counties by 59.62% of respondents, emphasizing the necessity for a strategic and all-encompassing approach to peace initiatives. Political goodwill posed a significant challenge to conflict resolution in the North Rift Valley counties, with 55.77% of respondents expressing doubt about the sincere commitment of political entities to peace efforts. The ready availability of small arms and light weapons among locals was considered a major obstacle to conflict resolution in the North Rift Valley counties by 53.85% of respondents, highlighting the imperative for effective arms control measures. Lastly, the adverse effects of climate change, such as floods, drought, and poor harvests, were regarded as highly challenging to conflict resolution in the North Rift Valley counties by 53.85% of respondents, accentuating the intricate environmental factors contributing to conflict.

SOUTH SUDAN

The 2023 CMT findings reveal that the conflict level for South Sudan is **2.8**. This finding shows that South Sudan is experiencing confrontational level of conflict. At the confrontational level, the conflict is more open. There could be intolerance that may lead to a confrontational behaviour, and if no intervention mechanisms are employed, the situation may be polarized leading to a crisis. The findings of the CMT (2023) are discussed in details in the following section.

Having gained independence from Sudan on July 9, 2011. South Sudan experienced a brief reprieve from conflict before disintegrating back into violence in December 2013 and later in July 2016.²¹¹ As a result of long periods of conflict the country has lagged in development and consequently this has led to a severe humanitarian crisis in the country. While the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan in 2018, brought an end to the widespread violent conflict in the country, the government in the country has the task of restoring peace and stability throughout the country in addition to addressing the underlying causes of conflict.²¹² Salva Kiir, the president, and Riek Machar, the head of the opposition, were significant figures in the R-ARCSS, which resulted in the establishment of a transitional administration in South Sudan. The country's problems were to be solved cooperatively by the transitional administration. However, it is significant to emphasize that the political and security situation in South Sudan is complicated and unstable, and that the transition process has encountered multiple difficulties and setbacks. The dedication of all parties to the peace deal, the efficacy of governance reforms, and the readiness to address underlying problems like corruption and ethnic conflicts all play a significant role in the transition's success.

This section provides an overview of the conflict landscape in South Sudan, offering insights into the ongoing and pervasive conflicts, their underlying drivers, the key actors involved, and the persistent challenges that hinder conflict resolution efforts. Additionally, it presents the recommendations put forth by respondents, offering potential solutions to address the complex conflicts plaguing South Sudan. But just before delving into the conflict situation of South Sudan, this section first presents a detailed demographic profile of the respondents of this study. The profile of the respondents offers valuable insights into the characteristics of the individuals who

²¹¹ The World Bank, "The World Bank in South Sudan," October 13, 2020, Accessed December 22, 2020, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview>

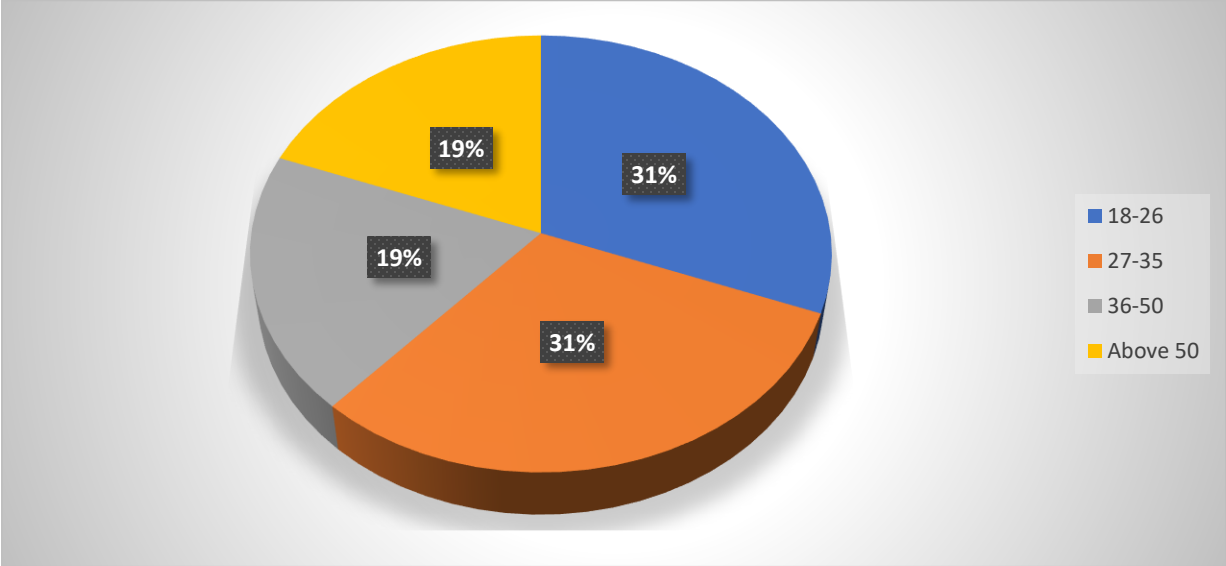
²¹² Ibid.

participated in the CMT study. It includes information such as age, gender, occupation, geographical location, and affiliations. This comprehensive demographic analysis serves as a foundation for understanding the diverse perspectives and backgrounds of the respondents, enriching the context of the CMT study and providing a deeper understanding of their viewpoints and experiences.

Age Bracket of Respondents

As Figure 57 below shows, the age distribution of the respondents from South Sudan who filled the questionnaire reflects a diverse and evenly spread demographic. The largest groups fall within the age brackets of 18-26 and 27-35, each representing 30.83% of the total respondents. This suggests a significant representation of younger individuals who bring fresh perspectives and energy to the discourse of understanding the conflict situation in South Sudan. Additionally, respondents aged 36-50 and those above 50 each constitute 19.17% of the total, demonstrating a balanced inclusion of more experienced voices in the CMT research. This diverse age range ensures a comprehensive and multi-generational perspective are included in the CMT research, enriching the depth of insights gathered.

Figure 57: Showing Age Bracket of Respondents

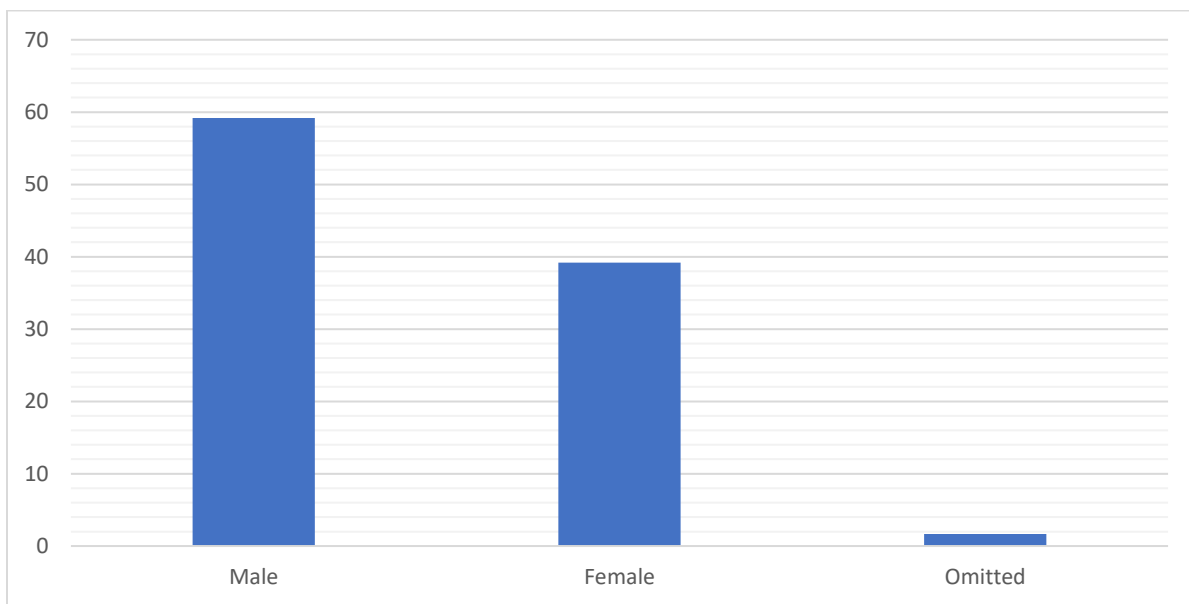


Source: CMT Research Findings

Gender of the Respondents

The gender composition of the respondents from South Sudan who filled the questionnaire reveals a predominantly male representation, with 71 respondents, constituting 59.17% of the total as shown in Figure 58 below. This indicates a significant male presence were engaged in the CMT study in South Sudan. On the other hand, female respondents, while slightly fewer in number, still make up a substantial portion, with 47 individuals, accounting for about 39.17% of the total. It's noteworthy that a minimal proportion, 1.67%, falls under the category of “Omitted,” suggesting a small number of respondents whose gender information may not have been provided or categorized among the respondents who filled the questionnaire from South Sudan. This gender-diverse respondent pool ensures a comprehensive range of perspectives and experiences, enhancing the depth and inclusivity of the CMT research findings.

Figure 58: Showing the Gender of Respondents



Source: CMT Research Findings

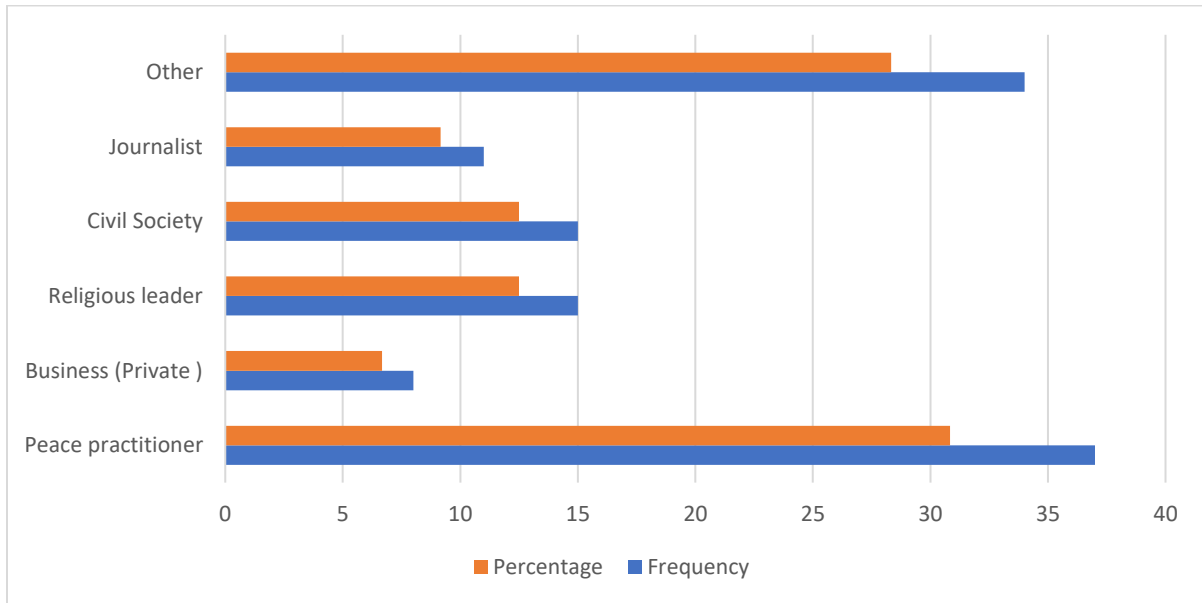
Occupation of Respondents

The CMT questionnaire also sought to understand the occupation of the respondents in order to understand the context of the study participants’ daily experiences of conflict in their nation. The largest group of respondents who filled the CMT questionnaire identified themselves as peace practitioners, with 37 individuals, comprising approximately 30.83% of the total. This group likely includes individuals actively involved in peace-building efforts, conflict resolution, and related

fields. Therefore, their perspectives on the conflict situation in South Sudan can provide valuable insights into the intersections of the key issues of peace and security in the nation. Another portion of respondents, 8 individuals, or about 6.67% of the total, identified their occupation as being in the private business sector. These respondents may have unique perspectives on how conflict situations impact the business and economic environment in South Sudan. Religious leaders constituted 15 respondents, making up approximately 12.5% of the total. As such, the involvement of religious leaders in matters of faith and community leadership positions makes them key persons who can offer insights into the moral and ethical dimensions of conflict situations in South Sudan and its implications on the people whom they serve. Another equal number of respondents, that is 15 individuals, identified themselves as being part of civil society organizations. Finally, journalists who filled the CMT questionnaire were 11 respondents, which accounts for about 9.17% of the total. Given their role as watchdogs and communicators, journalists provide a unique viewpoint on the different conflict situations reported, covered, and its impact on the media landscape in South Sudan.

Consequently, as Figure 59 below shows, the CMT data from South Sudan reflects a diverse range of occupations among the respondents, with a significant presence of peace practitioners, followed by religious leaders, civil society members, and individuals from various other backgrounds. This diversity in occupational backgrounds ensures a broad spectrum of viewpoints and experiences are captured to help in the understanding of the conflict level of South Sudan.

Figure 59: Showing the Occupation of Respondents from South Sudan

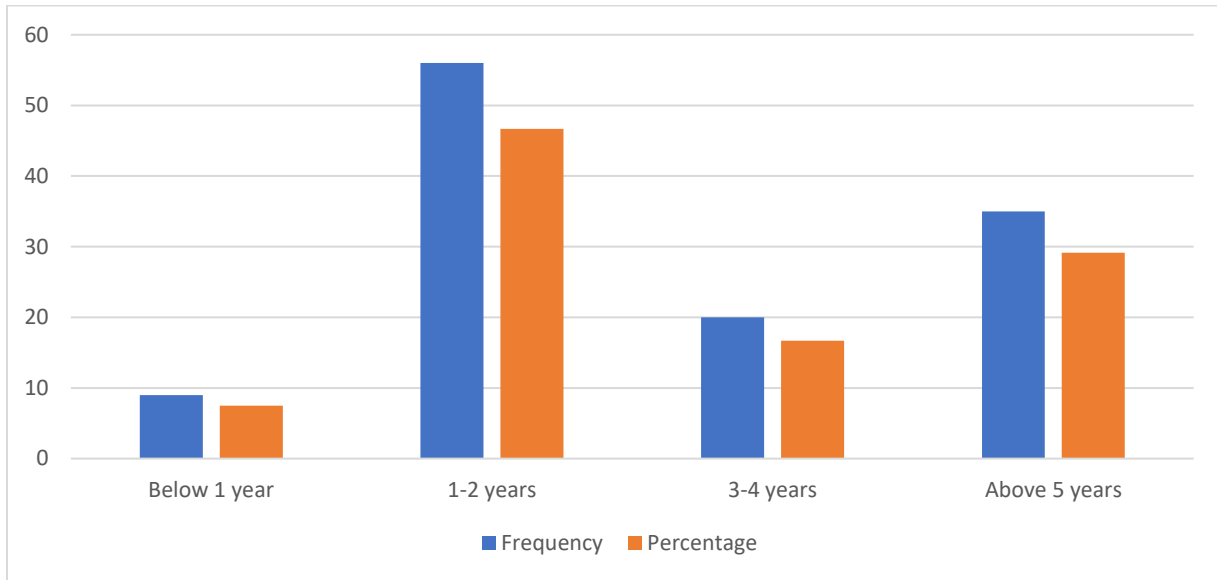


Source: CMT Research Findings

Experience of Respondents

This study also sought to understand the level of experience of the respondents in order to have a clear understanding of various perspectives, behaviour, decision-making processes and expertise that informs various conflict intervention mechanisms in South Sudan. As Figure 60 below shows, a small portion of respondents, 7.5%, reported having below 1 year of experience. The largest group of respondents, making up 47% of the total, indicated that they have 1-2 years of experience. Another smaller but still notable group, comprising 16.67% of respondents reported having 3-4 years of experience. Finally, another substantial group, representing 29.17% of the respondents indicated that they have more than 5 years of experience. Consequently, the data reflects a diverse range of respondents with varying levels of experience. This diversity in experience levels provides a well-rounded perspective on the conflict situations and intervention mechanisms used to effectively address cases of violence in South Sudan. These perspectives are key to informing the CMT on the conflict level of South Sudan and the best intervention mechanisms that can be employed to address the conflict.

Figure 60: Showing Years of Experience of Respondents

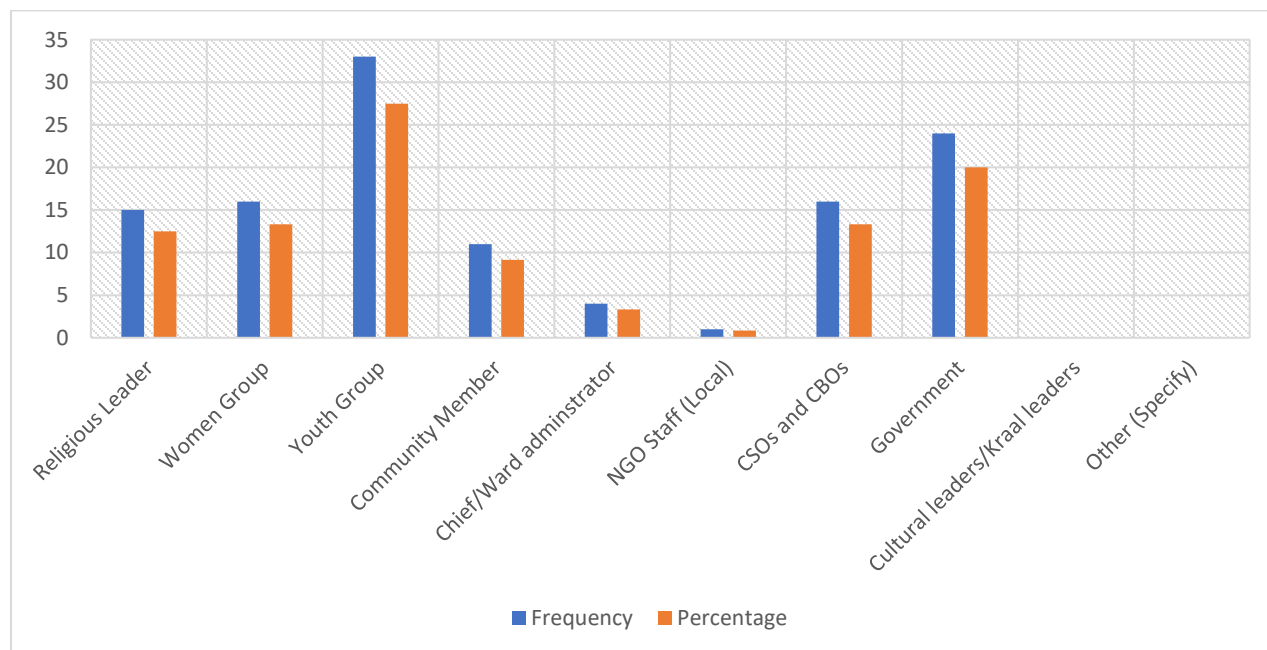


Source: CMT Research Findings

Additionally, the research aimed to comprehend the affiliations of the respondents who completed the CMT questionnaire with various stakeholders. As shown in Figure 61 below, the largest group of stakeholders who filled the CMT questionnaire fall under the youth groups, with 33 respondents, making up 27.5% of the total. This suggests a strong engagement and interest from the youth in the issues of conflict affecting their nation. Further, it is also important to consider the perspectives of the younger generation when designing a conflict monitoring tool for strategic intervention. Government stakeholders were the second-largest group, with 24 respondents, representing around 20% of the total. Their perspectives on issues of conflict are significant, as they play a crucial role in policy formulation and implementation related to conflict management and intervention. Women's groups were the third-largest group, with 16 respondents, making up 13.33% of the total. Women groups participation in the CMT study is important for gender-sensitive conflict analysis and solutions. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) also had 16 respondents, accounting for 13.33% of the total. CSOs and CBOs engagement in the CMT study indicates a strong presence of grassroots-level organizations perspectives on conflict monitoring and resolution in South Sudan. Religious leaders constituted 15 respondents, representing 12.5% of the total. Their involvement in the CMT study was crucial as they are key persons engaged in the promotion of peace and reconciliation within communities in South Sudan. Other stakeholders who were engaged in the CMT study include community members (9.17%),

chiefs (3.33%) and local NGO staff (0.83%). In summary, the data reflects a diverse range of stakeholders who filled the CMT questionnaire. This diversity is valuable for comprehensive conflict analysis and the development of inclusive conflict resolution strategies.

Figure 61: Showing the Stakeholders of Respondents



Source: CMT Research Findings

Understanding Conflict in South Sudan

The South Sudanese conflict situation is dire, with UNCHR data from May 2023 revealing that there were 2.3 million internally displaced people and 308,374 registered refugees.²¹³ Recent conflicts have been attributed to the elites' continued ethnopolitical competition and feuding over power and control of natural resources, as well as their support for past human rights violators. From the CMT data analysis, the conflict level for South Sudan is **2.8** which means that it is experiencing confrontational level of conflict.

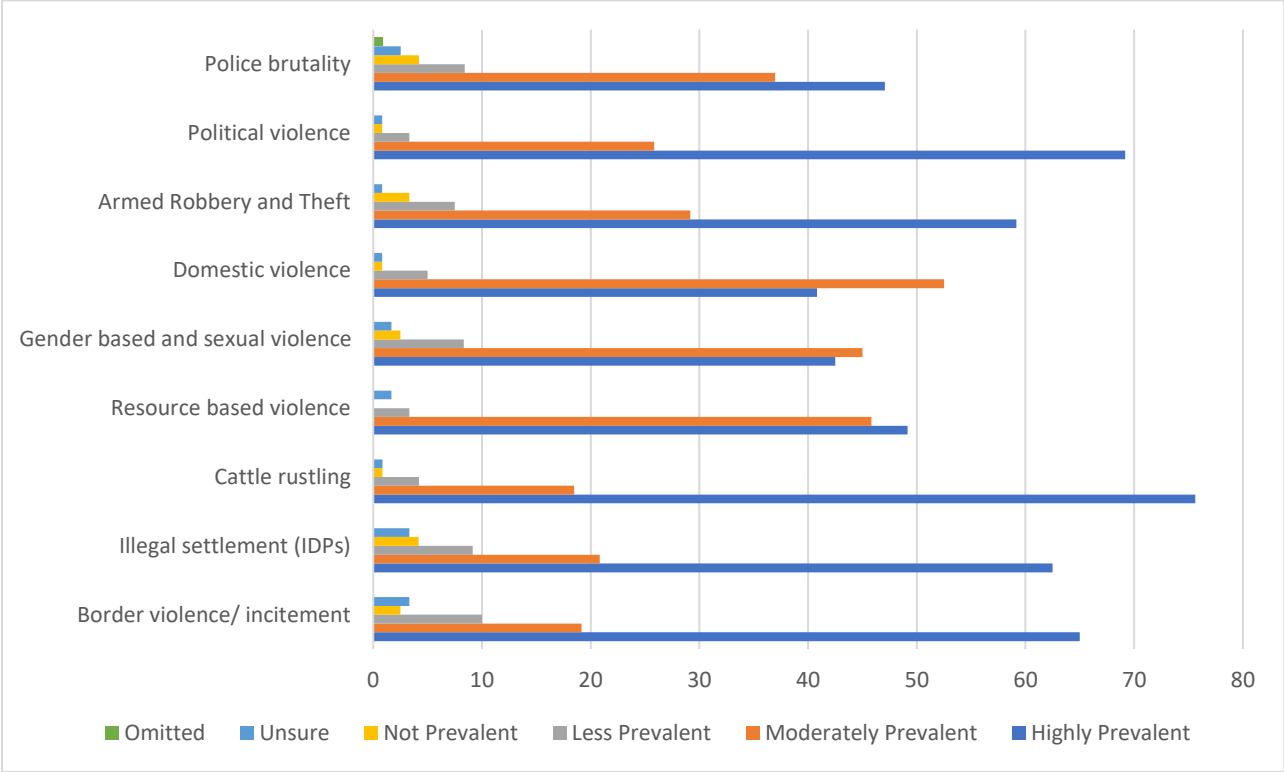
Of the most prevalent conflicts in South Sudan, border violence or incitement was reported as highly prevalent by 65% of respondents who filled the questionnaire, indicating that a significant number of respondents perceive this as a widespread issue. 19.17% view border violence or incitement as moderately prevalent, while 10% consider it less prevalent. Illegal settlement,

²¹³ *Situation South Sudan*. (n.d.-b).

<https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/southsudan#:~:text=By%20the%20end%20of%20March,further%20846%2C345%20refugees%20fro...>

particularly among internally displaced persons (IDPs), was seen as highly prevalent by 62.5% of respondents. Another 20.83% view illegal settlement as moderately prevalent, indicating substantial concern about this issue. Cattle rustling was considered highly prevalent by 75.63% of respondents, suggesting it is one of the most concerning conflicts in South Sudan. A smaller percentage, 18.49%, sees it as moderately prevalent. Resource-based violence was viewed as highly prevalent by 49.17% of respondents. However, 45.83% see resource-based violence as moderately prevalent, indicating a significant level of concern in both categories. Political violence was perceived as highly prevalent by 69.17% of respondents, indicating a high level of concern. Approximately 25.83% view political violence as moderately prevalent. Figure 62 below shows the level of prevalence of various conflict issues in South Sudan. Consequently, the data suggests that South Sudan faces a range of conflicts with varying levels of prevalence. Some conflicts, such as cattle rustling and political violence, are perceived as highly prevalent and of significant concern, while others, like domestic violence and armed robbery, also raise substantial concerns.

Figure 62: Prevalent Types of Conflicts in South Sudan



Source: CMT Research Findings

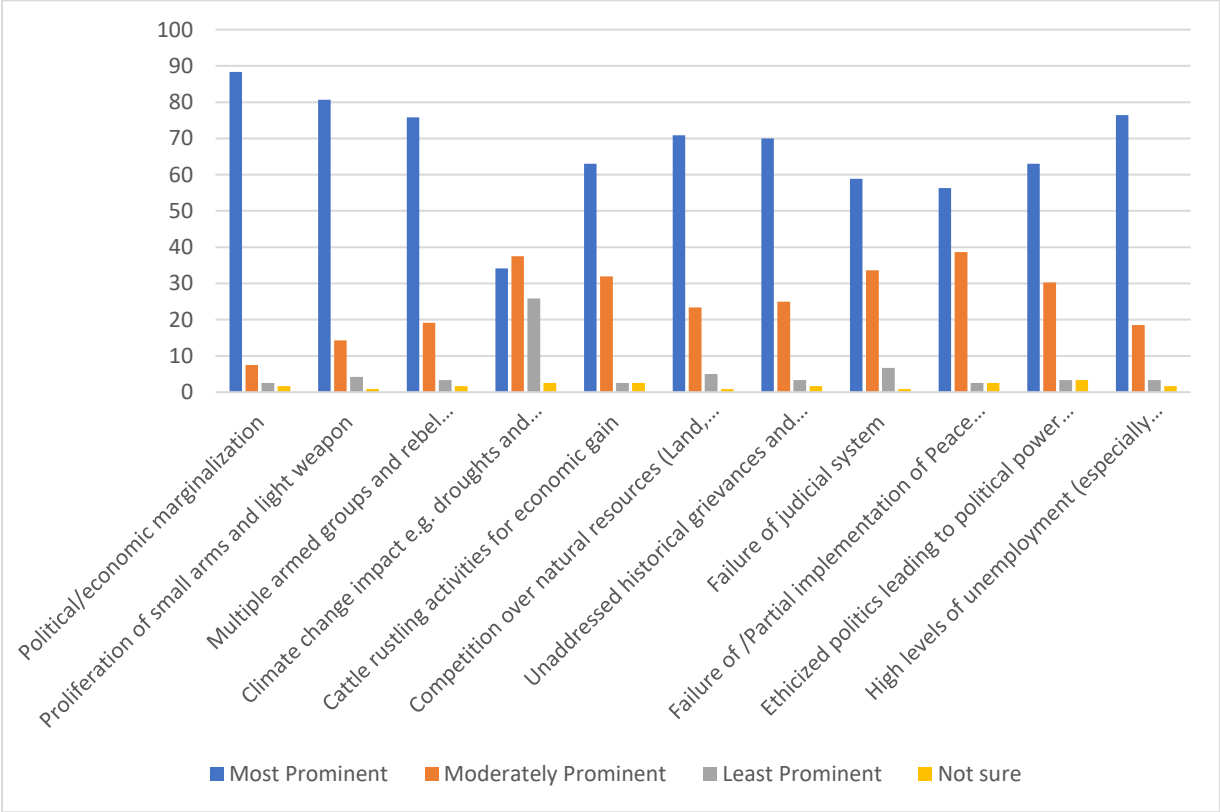
The Conflict Drivers in South Sudan

Having established that South Sudan is at the confrontational level of conflict at **2.8**, the CMT also sought to understand the key factors that triggers conflicts in the nation. Political and economic marginalization was identified as the most prominent cause of violence in South Sudan, according to 88.33% of respondents. Indeed, tensions and grievances often arise in an environment where there is political and economic marginalization. The majority of respondents—about 80.67%—saw the spread of light and small weaponry as the main cause of the violence in South Sudan. Widespread access to firearms has the potential to intensify and worsen conflicts in any given nation. The significance of multiple armed groups and rebel groups/banditry was likewise acknowledged by 75.83% of respondents as being among the most prominent driver of conflict in South Sudan. Indeed, the multiplicity of armed groups and rebel factions is a contributor to insecurity and violence. While still significant, 37.5% of respondents considered the impact of climate change to be moderately prominent factor that triggers conflict in South Sudan. It is without any doubt that droughts and floods are the major climate-related problems that can make resource-based conflicts worse.

According to 63.03% of respondents, cattle rustling is the one of the most prevalent drivers of conflict in South Sudan. Cattle rustling frequently serves as a catalyst for conflict and economic incentives in South Sudan. The competition over natural resources was viewed as being most prominent trigger of conflict in South Sudan by about 70.83% of respondents. Indeed, competition for resources like land, water, grazing areas, and precious minerals like gold, diamonds, oil, and geothermal energy are all examples of factors that fuel tension and violence in South Sudan. Further, unresolved historical grievances and revenge killings were viewed as the main causes of fighting in South Sudan by about 70% of respondents. Certainly, conflict can cycle indefinitely as a result of previous clashes such as revenge killings. Another 58.82% of respondents thought the South Sudanese court system's failure to function was a very prominent trigger to conflict and violence. It is a fact that the absence of justice and accountability which is exacerbated by a poor or incompetent legal system may make individuals/groups to resort to violence.

Approximately 56.30% of respondents viewed the failure of or partial implementation of peace agreements in South Sudan as most prominent driver of conflict in the nation. This reflects ongoing challenges in achieving lasting peace. Additionally, ethnicized politics leading to political power imbalance was perceived as the most prominent driver of conflict in South Sudan by 63.03% of respondents. Ethnicized politics can lead to power imbalances and ethnic tensions. Finally, high rates of unemployment, especially among young people, was cited by about 76.47% of respondents as the main cause of conflict in South Sudan. Indeed, instability can be exacerbated by youth unemployment. Figure 63 below shows the distribution of the various conflict drivers in South Sudan. Consequently, the CMT findings suggests that different conflict events are viewed as having varying degrees of prominence in South Sudan. In contrast to topics like climate change and specific economic causes, which are seen as relatively prominent, political and economic marginalization, the availability of weapons, and the presence of armed groups are considered the most significant drivers of conflict in South Sudan.

Figure 63: Conflict Drivers in South Sudan

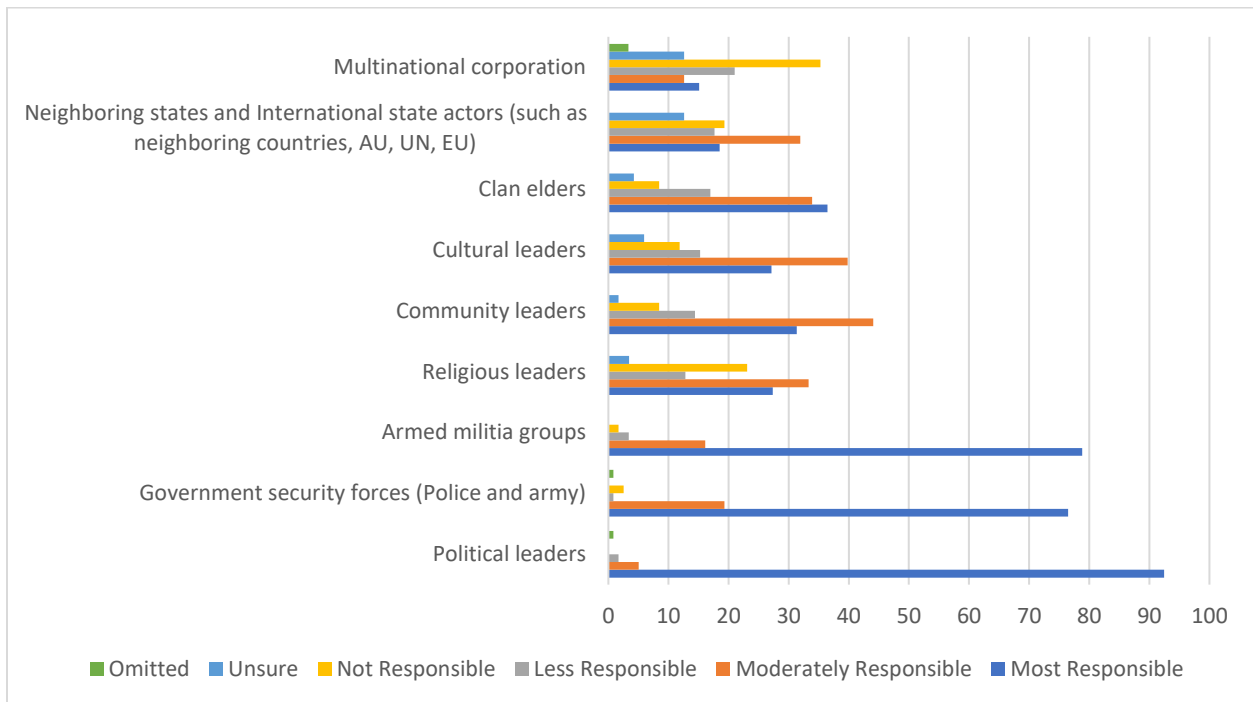


Source: CMT Research Findings

Actors in the Conflict in South Sudan

With regards to the actors, 92.44% of respondents who filled the questionnaire believe that political leaders are the main participants in conflicts, making them the group that is most accountable. This shows that many people hold political leaders liable for conflict dynamics in South Sudan. The government security forces, including the police and army, were also considered to be most responsible for conflict in South Sudan, with 76.47% of respondents recognizing their significant role. This finding reflects the recognition by the citizens of the role the state plays in the various conflict situations. The armed militia groups were perceived as moderately responsible for the conflict in South Sudan by 44.07% of respondents. While armed militia groups are still seen as significant actors, they share responsibility with other groups. In summary, the data highlights the complex web of actors involved in conflicts in South Sudan, with political leaders and government security forces perceived as the most responsible actors. Armed militia groups, community leaders, and cultural leaders also play significant roles, while the responsibility of religious leaders, clan elders, and multinational corporations are seen as relatively less prominent as shown in Figure 64 below. The perceptions of responsibility can vary, reflecting the multifaceted nature of conflicts in South Sudan.

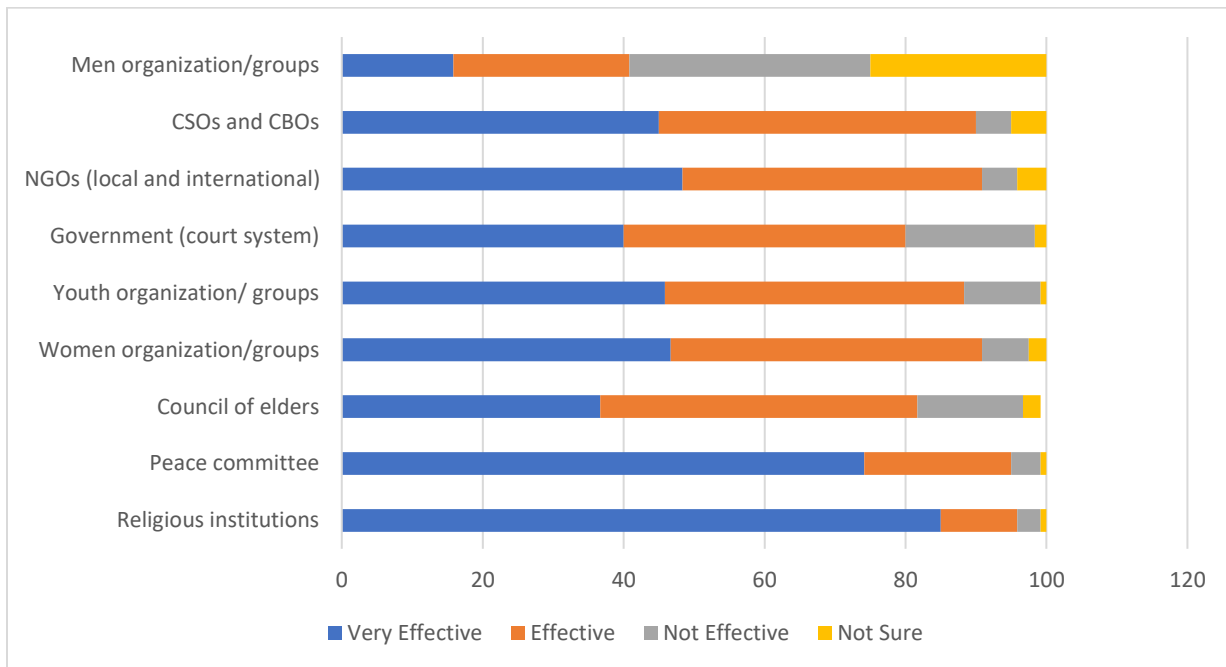
Figure 64: Actors of the Conflicts in South Sudan



Source: CMT Research Findings

With regards to the resolution of the ongoing conflicts in South Sudan, the religious institutions were viewed as very effective by the majority of respondents, with 85% perceiving them as highly effective in conflict resolution. This suggests that religious institutions hold significant influence in promoting peace and reconciliation in South Sudan. Peace committees were also considered very effective in resolving the conflicts in South Sudan by a substantial portion of respondents (74.17%). Indeed, peace committees play a crucial role at the community level in resolving disputes. Thus, the data suggests that religious institutions and peace committees are highly regarded as effective actors in conflict resolution in South Sudan. Councils of elders, women organizations/groups, and youth organizations/groups are also seen as effective contributors to peace efforts. The government's court system, NGOs, and CSOs/CBOs are recognized for their effectiveness to varying degrees as shown in Figure 65 below. Men organizations/groups are perceived as less effective in comparison to other peace actors.

Figure 65: Institutions Responsible for Resolving Conflicts in South Sudan

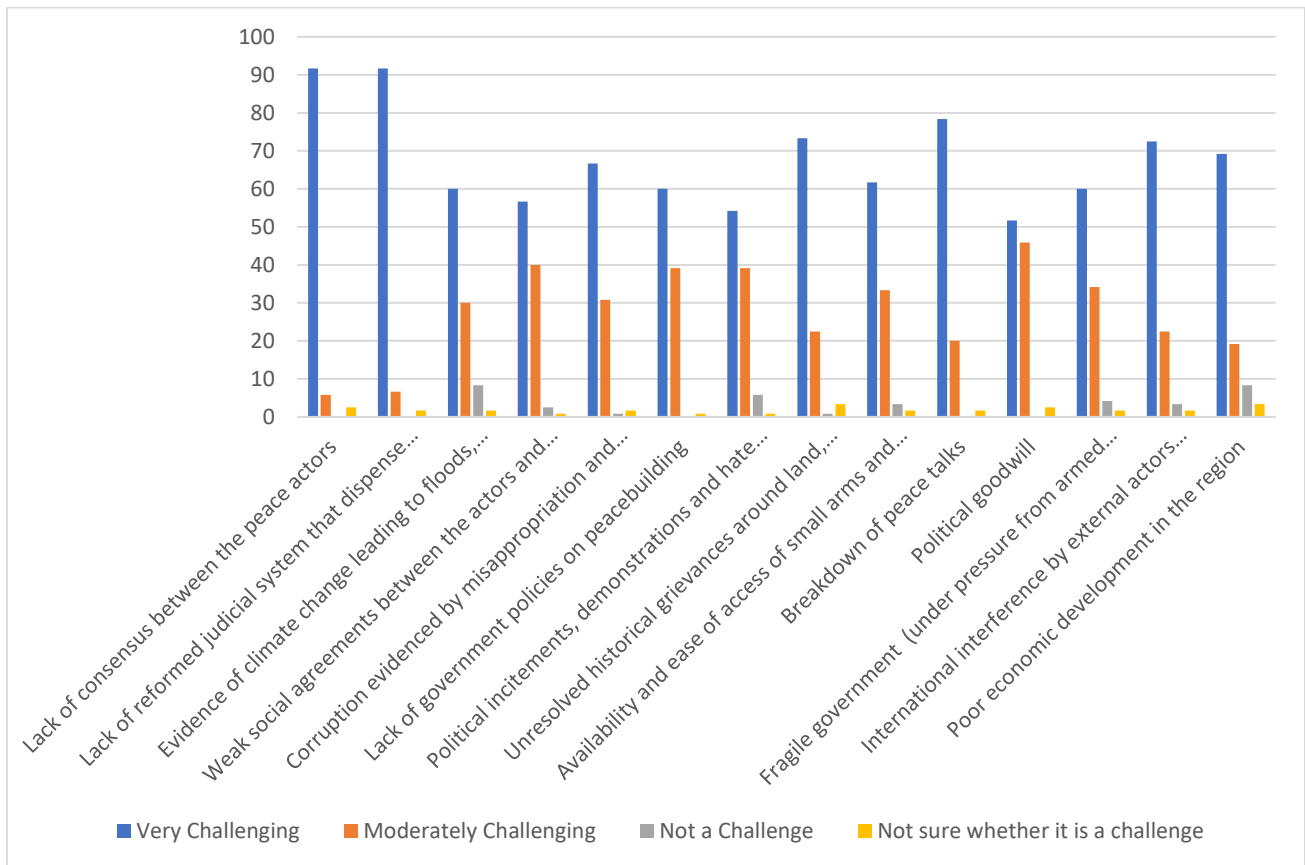


Source: CMT Research Findings

Challenges to Resolving Conflict in South Sudan

Lack of Consensus between the Peace Actors was identified to be very challenging by a vast majority of respondents (91.67%). The lack of consensus among key actors can hinder progress in peace negotiations. The lack of a reformed judicial system that dispenses fair justice was also viewed as very challenging by 91.67% of respondents. This highlights the importance of fair and effective justice in conflict resolution. Historical grievances were also considered very challenging by 73.33% of respondents, indicating their significance in perpetuating conflicts. A fragile government was seen as very challenging by 72.5% of respondents, reflecting the importance of stable governance in conflict resolution. In summary, the data underscores the complexity of challenges in resolving conflicts in South Sudan. Key challenges as shown in Figure 66 below includes the lack of consensus among peace actors, a reformed judicial system, historical grievances, and a fragile government. While other challenges like climate change, corruption, and political incitements are recognized, they may not be perceived as the most critical impediments to peace. These perceptions highlight the multifaceted nature of conflict resolution efforts in South Sudan.

Figure 66: Challenges to Resolving Conflicts in South Sudan



Source: CMT Research Findings

Recommendations for Resolving Conflict in South Sudan
Reorganization of the Government

Calls for political transformation in South Sudan were voiced by respondents, encompassing various suggestions. Some proposed a shift to a federal system of government, while others advocated for a rotational presidency among three regions. Additional suggestions included the retirement of active army generals, requiring significant political will. Alternatives put forth involved the formation of a technocrat government and the establishment of functional systems. Alongside encouraging opposition parties to make practical demands, some advocated for reducing the number of states to ten. Judicial reforms were also recommended to uphold the rule of law, and there was a consensus on the necessity of electoral reforms to ensure free and fair elections in the upcoming 2024 general elections.

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration

The respondents suggested the need to impose a complete embargo on aid and arms to warring factions alongside conducting a disarmament exercise. Ex-combatants were also recommended to be re-integrated back into society. In other words, there was a call for a comprehensive disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) process. The international community, in collaboration with the warring parties and other non-state actors, was urged to undertake the DDR exercise involving fighters. Unification of security forces was also cited as an important measure to end the country's conflicts. In addition, many people proposed the idea of cantonment.

Investment in Economic and Social Sectors

Some participants called for huge investment in economic and social sectors especially in conflict zones. In addition, many people proposed the need to promote equitable distribution of resources. People's lives should be prioritized over resources. As a result, many people called for the development of physical infrastructure; roads, health facilities, schools, and so on. Provision of basic needs to the citizens should be emphasized. Other people called for promotion of job creation especially for marginalized communities and groups such as women and youth. There is also need to address corruption to ensure that people, especially the youth, are employed on merit. In addition, there is need to equip the youth with life skills. Trust, transparency and understanding amongst the political parties should be improved in administration of resources. In this case, there is need for the creation of a financial monitoring system of oil income and expenditures. There is need to appeal for aid to support development and rehabilitation initiatives that improve the overall wellbeing of the people in war-torn areas. This would encourage the active combatants to lay down arms and work towards re-building the country.

Reconciliation

Promoting education on peace and reconciliation initiatives. This should be accompanied by increased awareness about the peace agreement and the active involvement of the non-state actors in the peace process to ensure that citizens own the process. Many people called for encouragement of forgiveness. Love and tolerance where South Sudanese respect the opinion of others even if they do not agree. Some people called for enhanced freedom of expression and political space. Trauma healing was also proposed where all traumatized actors to the conflict would be involved. However, some participants called for punishment of the perpetrators of violent crimes. In their argument, there is need to call for support from local and international justice mechanisms to bring

to book the perpetrators of war in order to serve as an example that deters escalation of the conflict. This would also be part of the efforts to address the root causes of the conflict including addressing historical grievances. In addition, it would also involve promotion of peaceful coexistence among members of different ethnic communities.

CONCLUSION

Democratic Republic of Congo

The Eastern part of DRC has been in conflict for several decades. The conflict in the region has caused the citizens untold suffering, leading to mass displacement, family separation, injuries and loss of life. CMT-2023 sought to understand the conflict situation in DRC with an aim of proposing intervention mechanisms that can decisively address the protracted conflict in the region. According to the CMT-2023, the conflict level for DRC was **2.6**. This means that DRC is on the confrontational stage of conflict. The CMT 2023 highlights a complex landscape of conflicts in the DRC, with resource-based violence, gender-based violence, domestic violence, armed robbery, political violence, and police brutality being prominent concerns in the region.

With regards to the divers of conflict in DRC, high levels of unemployment among the youth, the availability of small arms and light weapons, multiple armed groups in the region and the failure of the judicial system to help resolve the arising disputes are underlined as the major issues that trigger the conflicts in the region. Additionally, the CMT-2023 findings reveal a complex network of actors involved in conflicts in the DRC, including multinational corporations, political leaders, neighboring states, government security forces, armed militia groups, and community leaders. The involvement and accountability of these actors vary, and understanding their roles is essential for addressing the root causes of conflicts and promoting peace and stability in the DRC. The CMT-2023 also notes that the religious institutions, peace committees, and certain community-based organizations, including council of elders, women groups, youth groups, government court systems, and various NGOs, are the most effective contributors to conflict resolution in the eastern DRC.

However, DRC faces significant challenges in achieving effective conflict resolution, with issues related to governance, corruption, climate change, and historical grievances recognized as the major hindrance to the realization of conflict transformation in the region. Nonetheless, some of the proposals made that would help in conflict resolution in DRC include the government taking the initiative to invest in economic development and poverty reduction programs to alleviate high levels of unemployment among the youth. Further, was proposed that the government need to

implement stringent measures to control the availability and access to small arms and light weapons in DRC. Finally, the findings emphasize on the need for the government and other multi-lateral peace keeping missions to promote disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs for former combatants.

Ethiopia

The conflict level for Ethiopia is **2.4** which shows that the nation conflicts are characterized by incidences of open disputes and violence with the increased intolerances by rival actors. Ethiopia indeed offers an interesting study of inter-state conflict where the state government are clashing with the national federal government. Ethnic federalism has taken the center stage of the conflicts in Ethiopia with boarder violence and incitement being the most prevalent conflict in the nation. The territorial disputes that have erupted in the recent past in Ethiopia has been the key issues often escalating to protracted political violence. The recent call by the national government urging the federal states to let their army be absorbed into the national government army has intensified the conflict that has seen some of the federal states like the Tigray demanding for cessation from the federal government of Ethiopia. Other prevalent conflict situations ongoing in Ethiopia identified by the CMT-2023 include political violence, the illegal settlement of internally displaced persons, cattle rustling, gender-based and sexual violence, resource-based violence and domestic violence.

The CMT-2023 also reveals a complex web of conflict drivers in Ethiopia, with political and economic marginalization, the proliferation of small arms, and the presence of multiple armed groups being among the most prominent factors that triggers conflicts in the nation. With regards to the actors, the CMT-2023 analysis highlights a diverse range of perceptions regarding the responsibility for ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia. Political leaders and armed militia groups are seen as most responsible, while government security forces, religious leaders, and community leaders also play significant roles in conflict dynamics in Ethiopia.

On the perceptions regarding the effectiveness of different groups and institutions in resolving conflicts in Ethiopia, the CMT-2023 data reveals that the religious institutions, peace committees, and councils of elders are the most effective actors that have played a key role in promoting effective conflict resolution efforts in Ethiopia. Finally, the CMT-2023 data reveals a diverse range of perceptions regarding the challenges of resolving ongoing conflicts in Ethiopia. Lack of consensus among peace actors and corruption are seen as very challenging, while the reformed judicial system, political tensions, and historical grievances are perceived as moderately challenging.

South Sudan

The conflict level for South Sudan in 2023 is at **2.8** (2.774076). This shows that South Sudan is experiencing confrontational level of conflict. The prevalent conflicts in South Sudan were identified as cattle rustling, political violence, domestic violence and armed robbery. The CMT-2023 also noted that climate change effects and specific economic causes were the most prominent conflict drivers in South Sudan while political and economic marginalization, the availability of weapons, and the presence of armed groups were considered as significant drivers of conflict in South Sudan.

With regards to the actors, CMT-2023 data highlights the complex web of actors involved in conflicts in South Sudan, with political leaders and government security forces perceived as the most responsible actors. Armed militia groups, community leaders, and cultural leaders also play significant roles, while the responsibility of religious leaders, clan elders, and multinational corporations are seen as relatively less prominent. The challenges to resolving the conflicts in South Sudan includes the lack of consensus among peace actors, a reformed judicial system, historical grievances, and a fragile government. While other challenges like climate change, corruption, and political incitements are recognized, they may not be perceived as the most critical impediments to peace. These perceptions highlight the multifaceted nature of conflict resolution efforts in South Sudan.

Kenya

Kenya has experienced widespread electoral related violence in various parts of the nation, consequently, the CMT-2023 analysis placed Kenya at the confrontational level of conflict with a calculated numerical value of **2.3**. Resource based related violence has been rampant in the arid and semi-arid lands in Kenya with rising cases of banditry. The conflicts that the CMT-2023 identified as highly prevalent in Kenya include cattle rustling, domestic violence, armed robbery and theft while others, like political violence and police brutality are highlighted as issues of that raises substantial concerns. The key drivers of conflict in Kenya identified by the CMT-2023 includes high levels of unemployment, political and economic marginalization, cattle rustling activities for economic gain, climate change impact, competition over natural resources, multiple armed groups and rebel groups, unaddressed historical grievances and revenge killings and failure of judicial system. Further, the CMT-2023 revealed that there are multiple actors playing diverse roles in shaping Kenya's stability. The political leaders were identified as the most responsible actors of the ongoing conflicts in Kenya while security forces, armed groups, and international actors were also seen to have significant roles to play in addressing and mitigating conflicts in the nation.

Consequently, the CMT-2023 data underscores the multifaceted nature of challenges to conflict resolution in Kenya. Factors such as lack of consensus, corruption, climate change impacts, and political dynamics present significant hurdles that need to be addressed for effective peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Kenya. In order to address the conflicts in Kenya, there was a suggestion for the IEBC should address the perennial issues of mistrust and redeem themselves to be an independent body that is able to conduct a free and fair elections.

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APPENDIX

DATA COLLECTION TOOL

Section A: Preliminary Questions

Q1a. Please indicate your age bracket?

18-26 27-35 36-50 Above 50

Q1b. Please indicate your gender?

Male Female others (specify)

Q1c. Please indicate which country you work in?

DRC Ethiopia Kenya South Sudan

Q1d. Please specify the geographical location you work (e.g. state, county, district, province or region) in the country that you will be giving information on?

Q2. Please indicate your main occupation and the years of experience you have in the field

Profession	Please Mark	Below 1 year	1-2 years	3-4 years	Above 5 years
Peace practitioner					
Business (Private)					
Religious leader					
Civil Society					
Journalist					
Others (Specify)					

Q3. Please tick which group of stakeholder listed below you represent

Stakeholder Type	Please Tick
Religious Leader	
Women Group	
Youth Group	
Community Member	
Chief/Ward administrator	
NGO Staff (Local)	
CSOs and CBOs	
Government	
Cultural leaders/Kraal leaders	
Others (Specify)	

Q4. Does exclusion of social groups (youths, women or religious leaders) in the peace building process affects the peace stability of your country? Explain.....

.....

Q5. Are you aware of any on-going conflict in your country?

Yes No If Yes, which ones?.....

Q 6a. Is there any country that have joined your country (s) on the on-going conflict?

Yes No, if Yes, which ones?.....

Q6b. How do they contribute to the on-going conflict? Please select (Multiple choice)

Through sponsoring rebel groups

Engagement in peace talks

Through security reinforcement

Through humanitarian support (provision of basic needs such as food, health care)

Others (Specify)

Section B: Conflict, Conflict drivers and Conflict resolution

Q7. Which of the following conflicts or human rights violation are present in your location.

Kindly rate the following according to what you perceive as highly prevalent, moderately prevalent, less prevalent, not prevalent and unsure? (Please Tick)

Conflicts	Highly Prevalent	Moderately Prevalent	Less Prevalent	Not Prevalent	Unsure
Border violence/ incitement					
Illegal settlement (IDPs)					
Cattle rustling					
Resource based violence					
Gender based and sexual violence					
Domestic violence					
Armed Robbery and Theft					
Political violence					
Police brutality					

Q8. Please select the key conflict drivers in your region according to what you perceive as the most prominent to the least prominent driver?

Conflict drivers	Most Prominent	Moderately Prominent	Least Prominent	Not sure
Political/economic marginalization				
Proliferation of small arms and light weapon				
Multiple armed groups and rebel groups/Banditry				
Climate change impact e.g. droughts and floods				
Cattle rustling activities for economic gain				
Competition over natural resources (Land, water, grazing field, gold, diamond, oil and geothermal)				
Unaddressed historical grievances and Revenge killings				
Failure of judicial system				
Failure of /Partial implementation of Peace Agreements				
Ethicized politics leading to political power imbalance				
High levels of unemployment (especially among the youth)				
Others (specify)				

Q9. Out of the actors listed below, please rate those you believe are responsible for the conflict situation in your region? Please rate according to who you perceive as most responsible, moderately responsible, less responsible, not responsible and unsure? **(Please tick)**

Actors	Most Responsible	Moderately Responsible	Less Responsible	Not Responsible	Unsure
Political leaders					
Government security forces (Police and army)					
Armed militia groups					
Religious leaders					
Community leaders					
Cultural leaders					
Clan elders					
Neighboring states and International state actors (such as neighboring countries, AU, UN, EU)					
Multinational corporation					

Q10. How effective have the following institution or organizations been effective in resolving conflicts in the past?

Institution/ Organization	Very Effective	Effective	Not Effective	Not Sure
Religious institutions				
Peace committee				
Council of elders				
Women organization/groups				
Youth organization/ groups				
Government (court system)				
NGOs (local and international)				
CSOs and CBOs				
Men organization/groups				

Q11. Please indicate the extent to which you have observed the following situations as an indicator of peace stability in the past two years?

Description of the Conflict	Not Observed	Rarely Observed	Sometimes Observed	Consistently Observed
There is reduced number of conflicts resolved through community elders/ court system				
There is increased inter-ethnic peaceful coexistence and marriage				
There is reduced revenge killings and crime activities(e.g. cattle raiding and theft)				
There is an observed increase in youth and women employment				
There is an enabling environment that allows economic activities to prevail without interruption				
There is perceived equitable resource distribution and services by the government				
There is perceived low level of corruption				

Q12 Please indicate to what extent have you observed the following situation that show that your region is experiencing socio-political tension that can result into conflict?

Pre-conflict	Not Observed	Rarely Observed	Sometimes Observed	Consistently Observed

There is increase of access of light weapons by ordinary citizens				
There is increase in political-based hate speeches and demonstrations				
There is rise in the level of criminal activities/gang groups e.g. cattle raiding				
There are cases of ethnic social discrimination and exclusion by government authorities				
Increased cattle rustling activities				
Lack of gender inclusion and social groups (women, youth, labour/workers association)) in conflict management process				
Disappearance of men and young people in the community				
Unresolved historical grievances/revenge attack and killings				
Lack of full implementation of Peace Agreements				
There is an increased complaints of economic hardships e.g. High cost of living				

Q13. In your opinion, to what extent have you observed the following scenarios that show there is open conflict in your region (confrontation conflict level?)

Confrontation	Not Observed	Rarely Observed	Sometimes Observed	Consistently Observed
There are occasional low key armed conflict in the country (between different armed groups/government forces, etc)				
There is frequent acquisition of small arms and light weapons by residences.				
There are reported cases of police brutality in the process of enforcement government orders such as disarmament process				
There are community demonstrations/riots against insecurity in the country				
There is an increased movement of people displaced by conflict				
There were observed cases of criminal activities (theft and robbery) due to hard economic situations				
There is an increased political incitement /negative propaganda that tend to generate violence				

There is existence of inter-ethnic/cross-border clashes				
There are cases of people being pushed out of their homes for political reasons (e.g. ‘ethnic cleansing’)				
There is increased reports on violation of human rights e.g. armed robbery, gender and sexual based violence, police brutality				
There is disruption of economic activities due to conflicts/violence (such as trading, food supply, market activities etc)				

Q14 Based on the following active armed conflict indicators, please rate your observation on the presence of armed conflict in your region

Active armed conflict	Not Observed	Rarely Observed	Sometimes Observed	Consistently Observed
There is increased deployment of government armed security officers on the affected region.				
There are increased cases of armed conflicts in some parts of the country				
There is rise in violence and killing of innocent citizens				
There is increased inter-communal conflict (ethnic, religious or political)				
There is media information blackout				
There is displacement of communities and refugees influx into neighboring communities				
There is inter-border movement restriction in conflict affected areas				
There is presence of international peace keeping bodies such as UN, AU & EU in the affected regions				

Q15. Please rate the following statements based on your perception/ view on the decline of the armed conflict (outcome level)

Conflict Intervention level	Not Observed	Rarely Observed	Sometimes Observed	Consistently Observed
There are increased conflict intervention activities to end the conflict (mediation, negotiation, peace talks, sanctions)				
There is evidence of reduced conflict in the country due to agreement between the rival groups				
The active participants of the conflict have agreed to have peace talks				
People are seen as slowly taking on normal daily activities like resumption of business				
Reconciliation and peace building programs have been initiated				
There is ceasefire (the parties from both sides have agreed to suspend their aggressive actions)				
The protagonist have agreed to sign a peace agreement				
The citizens holding arms illegally are surrendering to the government in a demilitarization/disarmament program				
There is presence of international peace keeping bodies such as UN, AU & EU in the affected regions				

Q16. Please rate the following post-conflict reconstruction indicators in your region based on your perception on the frequency of observation

Post-Conflict Reconstruction	Not Observed	Rarely Observed	Sometimes Observed	Consistently Observed
There is evidenced full resumption of daily activities by the residence				
The parties to the conflict have agreed to demobilize their forces				
There is a wider inclusion in the peace-building process/activities (includes women, youth, different ethnic groups, religious group)				
There is reduced tension and fear between different ethnic/religious/armed groups				
The refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are returning to their homes				

There is an improved security in the region with more police posts and security camps established				
There is improved economic situation for citizens (resumption of economic activities, opening of markets/shops)				
The causes of conflict are currently being addressed				
Government justice processes have been initiated to address conflict crime				

Q17 a. Are there any peace restoration (like reconciliation or signing of peace agreements) strategies that are currently being used by the government or other actors to restore peace in your region/country/location?

Yes

No

Q17b. If yes, please indicate the strategies undertaken locally (local actors), regionally (regional actors e.g. neighboring countries) and internationally (by international organization e.g UN or AU)

Communally(Peace interventions within & by the local community/ state/ location/county)	
Nationally (Peace intervention at national level)	
Regionally (EAC, IGAD, Africa Union etc.)	
Internationally (UN, Other countries/organizations outside Africa)	

Q18a. List any peace agreements that have been signed towards peace restoration in your country

.....

Q18b. List any **THREE** factors that contribute to peace stability in your country.

.....

Q18c. Please suggest ways to improve peace stability in your country

.....

Q19. Please rate the effectiveness of the following challenges to peace restoration in your region

Challenges	Very Challenging	Moderately Challenging	Not a Challenge	Not sure whether it is a challenge
Lack of consensus between the peace actors				
Lack of reformed judicial system that dispense fair justice				
Evidence of climate change leading to floods, drought and poor harvest				
Weak social agreements between the actors and failure to include all the stakeholders (youths, women and religious groups) in peace negotiation process likely to cause conflict				
Corruption evidenced by misappropriation and embezzlement of government resources				
Lack of government policies on peacebuilding				
Political incitements, demonstrations and hate speeches				
Unresolved historical grievances around land, compensation, and restoration				
Failure of signed peace agreements				
Availability and ease of access of small arms and light weapons by the locals				
Breakdown of peace talks				
Political goodwill				
Fragile government (under pressure from armed groups and political groups)				
International interference by external actors (neighboring states, international bodies such as UN, EU, AU)				
Poor economic development in the region				

Q20. Based on your experience and own opinion, please recommend on the best strategies to peace stability for government, peace actors, youth, religious leaders, NGOs etc?

.....

